

SYSTEM OF PREVENTIVE, CORRECTIVE- EDUCATIONAL AND RESOCIALISING ACTIVITIES WITH CHILDREN IN THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA AND IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC – COMPARATIVE STUDY

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Abstract. The report represents the structure of the system of institutions for preventive, corrective-educational and resocialising activities with children with deviant and delinquent behaviour in the Republic of Bulgaria and in the Czech Republic. The activities of institutions within the system are characterized by a range of specific features across social, organizational, managerial, educational and methodological dimensions. These characteristics are formulated as operational recommendations, tailored to the prevailing socio-pedagogical conditions. A thorough understanding of these specificities is crucial for professionals working in the social, educational, and judicial sectors. Interdisciplinary cooperation is essential for the effective functioning of the system, both within the system itself and externally, with other bodies addressing the issues related to individuals with behavioural disorders or those exhibiting antisocial and illegal behaviours.

Keywords: children with deviant and delinquent behaviour; prevention; correction; resocialisation; system of institutions; Republic of Bulgaria; Czech Republic

Introduction

Complex and crucial aspects of social policy and education both in Bulgaria and in the Czech Republic revolve around the structure and functioning of the system of institutions centring on preventive-educational care, institutional and protective education, as well as resocialisation. A vital part of this is having a system that takes care of persons who exhibit risky or socially maladaptive behaviours; its effectiveness has far-reaching consequences in terms of reducing re-offending rates

and reintegrating these persons into society. This is particularly significant to the issue of proper operation of institutions in view to enhance prevention measures and resocialisation conditions in the modern society which encounters many problems with social stability and security.

Objectives and Significance of the Article

This article aims to analyse and compare the structures and functioning of the systems of institutions for preventive-educational care, institutional and protective education, and resocialization in the Republic of Bulgaria and in the Czech Republic. A relevant comparative study also addressed the topic of child resocialisation, emphasising structural models and approaches in various international contexts (Kriviradeva et al., 2016). The purpose of this study is to establish the major points contributing to the effectiveness of these institutions and give recommendations for better achievements. This article emphasises giving practical and theoretical ideas that can help understand how these systems work to develop them further.

The research methodology employs a multifaced approach, incorporating: an analysis of legislative frameworks and strategic policy documents; a review of relevant theoretical and methodological literature; an analysis of the structure of the system of institutions and social services for prevention, correction and resocialisation; and an analysis of the cultural and historical contextualisation of the issue within the Bulgarian and Czech socio-historical landscape.

The conceptual clarification of key terms is essential for understanding the nature and scope of preventive, corrective-educational and resocialising interventions for working with children at risk with a particular focus on those who exhibit deviant and delinquent behavior. In the scientific literature and practical frameworks, several closely related but distinct concepts are used, each carrying specific pedagogical, social and legal implications.

Children at risk is a broader category encompassing individuals whose living conditions expose them to heightened danger of social exclusion, deviant or delinquent behaviour. Risk factors may include poverty, family violence, neglect, lack of parental care, institutionalisation, insufficient educational support, etc. This category includes children with “emotional and behavioural disorders” (Chervenka, 2014, 2016; Trichkov, 2019). In the absence of effective early prevention, these children are highly vulnerable to committing deviations and delicts.

Deviant behaviour refers to actions that violate established social norms, but which do not necessarily constitute a criminal offence (Manasieva, 2010). Such behaviour may include truancy, aggression, running away from home, or substance abuse. These acts indicate difficulties in the process of socialisation and require preventive and corrective interventions of educational and social character.

By contrast, delinquent behaviour is defined as socially dangerous behaviour that violates legal norms and may be subject to legal sanctions (Manasieva, 2010).

It involves actions such as theft, vandalism, violence or participation in organised criminal activities. Delinquency is therefore more closely linked to the juvenile justice system. In scientific literature and in practice, children with delinquent behavior are also called “child offenders” (Manasieva, 2003, p. 23; Mateeva, 2008; Margaritova-Vuchkova, 2011) or “children in conflict with the law” (Petrova-Dimitrova, 2014, p. 52; Georgiev, 2019).

The term prevention is etymologically rooted in the Latin “*praeverto*”, denoting “to protect, to avert, to forestall, to keep from”. In the context of deviant behaviour, prevention refers to protecting individuals from engaging in actions that contradict social norms and values. The preventive efforts encompass a comprehensive set of approaches, methods, forms and resources aimed at fostering competences across all structural elements of the educational process, with the objective of “formation of such consciousness, behaviour and emotions in children that will assert their moral position in any situation” (Rangelova, 2003, p. 18).

The concept of correction derives from the Latin “*correctio*”, signifying “amendment, rectification”. Corrective interventions are implemented as a consequence of inadequately executed preventive and educative measures (Chavdarova-Kostova, 2016, p. 66). Correction of deviant and delinquent behaviours entails addressing and modifying behavioural traits that lead individuals away from socially acceptable conduct. Corrective-educational activities involve a complex of approaches, methods, forms and resources designed to develop competencies within all structural components of the educational process, specifically aimed at redirecting the child’s behaviour toward prosocial pathways (Manasieva, 2003, pp. 229 – 230). The ultimate aim of such intervention is “re-education by correcting the reinforced negative patterns of behaviour and, in parallel, mastering basic skills for the full functioning of the personality in society” (Manasieva, 2003, p. 230).

Resocialisation is a process of “re-inclusion of the individual in society” (Manasieva, 2003, p. 230). It includes 3 interrelated subprocesses: re-education – understood as a process of “complete reconstruction of the internal structure of the person temporarily excluded from society” (Rangelova, 2000, p. 60); social adaptation – “a process of personality adaptation (...) to the requirements of the new social environment (...), and through this – to the requirements of the macro environment” (Rangelova, 2000, p. 66) and social readaptation – “a process related to the mastering of new social experience as well as mastering the new requirements of the environment for a qualitatively new personal, moral, professional and civic expression of the child with deviant behaviour” (Rangelova, 2000, p. 66).

Therefore, considering the importance of these processes, it can be summarised that the system of preventive, corrective-educational and resocialising activity constitutes “an organic part of the educational system” (Rangelova, 2000, p. 109). While structurally and content-wise aligned with the general educational framework, its distinctiveness lies in relative emphasis assigned to its components, particularly the

prominence given to the processes of re-education and self-education for individuals exhibiting deviant and delinquent behaviour (Rangelova, 2000, p. 109).

1. System of Preventive, Corrective-Educational and Resocialising Activities in the Republic of Bulgaria

The system of preventive, corrective-educational and resocialising activities in the Republic of Bulgaria exhibits considerable institutional complexity in terms of subordination and intrasystem subordination. It may be analytically disaggregated into 3 subsystems: social, socio-pedagogical and penitentiary. As T. Manasieva emphasises: “The different subordination of the institutions and the specific normative regulation of their activity, along with some documents valid for all or groups of institutions, are related to their particular functions, which in turn arise from the specific needs of the children placed in them” (Manasieva, 2013, p. 31).

Social Subsystem

The social subsystem includes “institutions in which children are not placed on the basis of behaviour, but whose social conditions make them, in a number of cases, become ‘children at risk’” (Manasieva, 2010, p. 54). It is important to note that the word “institution” does not only include the traditionally accepted institutions, but also the social services introduced by the Social Services Act¹. The broad meaning of the word implies that even the family should be included in the scope of institutions.

SSA introduces various social services in the community that provide “activities of supporting individuals in: 1. prevention and/or overcoming social exclusion; 2. exercising rights; 3. improving the quality of life” – art. 3, para 1 of the SSA. Depending on the main groups of activities, they are divided into: “1. information and counselling; 2. advocacy and mediation; 3. community work; 4. therapy and rehabilitation; 5. skills training; 6. support for the acquisition of work skills; 7. day care; 8. residential care; 9. provision of shelter; 10. assistant support” – art. 15 of the SSA. In practice, these are: family-type accommodation centres; transitional, sheltered and supervised housing; crisis centres for accommodation of domestic violence and human trafficking victims, as well as non-boarding vocational training centres, centres for public support; preventive information centres.

The overall state policy in the field of social services is defined by the Council of Ministers, art. 19 of the SSA. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP) plans, develops, coordinates, implements and supervises the execution of state policy on social services with operational support from the Agency for Social Assistance (ASA) and the Agency for the Quality of Social Services (AQSS), art. 20 of the SSA.

The ASA provides methodological support, coordinates planning and development of social services, approves state-funded service provision changes, proposes financial standards, participates in legislative revisions and maintains the national information system on social services, art. 21 of the SSA.

The AQSS conducts control and monitoring, licenses service providers, proposes quality standards, offers methodological support, identifies best practices and submits them for national endorsement, art. 22 of the SSA.

The provision of residential care for children is subject to mandatory judicial oversight, restricted to children under 3 (except in cases of permanent disability requiring continuous medical supervision). It is also limited to a maximum duration of 2 years for children under 18 (with semi-annual reviews) and may be extended only in the absence of reintegration, adoption or alternative family replacements.

The State Agency for Child Protection (SACP) operates on a national level, enhancing interinstitutional coordination in child policy, conducting monitoring and oversight of children's rights compliance and managing the work of the National Council for Child Protection.

Socio-pedagogical Subsystem

The socio-pedagogical subsystem "is oriented towards the so-called secondary prevention and is intended for children at higher risk of manifestation or actually manifest deviant and delinquent behaviour" (Manasieva, 2010, p. 54). It includes the following institutions, introduced by the Act on Combating Juvenile Delinquency²: commissions for combating anti-social manifestations of juveniles and minors, children's pedagogical rooms, socio-pedagogical boarding schools, educational boarding schools and homes for temporary accommodation of juveniles and minors, art. 2 of the ACJD.

Operating under the Council of Ministers, the Central Commission for Combating Juvenile Delinquency develops and proposes prevention programmes, coordinates and supervises the activities of local commissions, facilitates interinstitutional cooperation with governmental and non-governmental organisations and conducts research and public reporting on juvenile deviant and delinquent behaviour, art. 8 of the ACJD.

Local Commissions for Combating Juvenile Delinquency are established at the municipalities and regional levels. They coordinate preventive activities, examine juvenile cases, impose educational measures under art. 13 para 1 – 10 and 12 of the ACJD (moral, corrective, supervisory, restrictive, labour-oriented), supervise implementation of measures, support parents in educational efforts and propose preventive policies to governmental and non-governmental organisations, art. 10 of the ACJD.

Appointed to the local commissions, public educators supervise juveniles under educational measures, assist families and provide individual support in the upbringing, training and development of at-risk children, art. 41 of the ACJD.

School Commissions for Combating Juvenile Delinquency address anti-social behaviour of students within educational institutions. However, following the adoption of the Law on Preschool and School Education (LPSE)³, their establishment has been optional, with responsibilities partially integrated into the personality development support teams, art. 188, para 4 of the LPSE.

Children's Pedagogical Rooms, subordinate to the Ministry of Interior, are established to the municipal and district structures. Headed by inspectors holding higher pedagogical qualifications, their functions include: identification and investigation of juvenile offenders and child victims of crime, abuse or neglect; assessment of the causes and contributing factors of antisocial and criminal acts; submission of reports to competent authorities; monitoring of the implementation of restrictive educational measures imposed on minors, art. 27 of the ACJD.

The Homes for Temporary Accommodation of Minors and Juveniles, functioning under the Ministry of Interior, serve as boarding facilities for individuals aged 6 to 18 years who meet specific statutory criteria: absence of permanent or current address; involvement in vagrancy, begging, prostitution, psychoactive substance abuse or drug distribution; unauthorized departure from compulsory education and treatment institutions; commitment antisocial behaviour combined with severe neglect rendering family care inappropriate (article 35 of the ACJD). Initial accommodation is limited to 24 hours, extendable up to 15 days with prosecutorial approval and in exceptional circumstances – up to 2 months. Upon admission, medical, psychological and pedagogical assessments are conducted, family tracing efforts are initiated and individualised recommendations for subsequent intervention and support are formulated.

Social-pedagogical Boarding Schools (SPBS) and Educational Boarding Schools (EBS) are special educational institutions within the Bulgarian school system, operating under the authority of the Ministry of Education and Science. Contrary to the frivolous use of the non-governmental sector and media space in our country, it is important to emphasize that placement in these institutions is not imprisonment (Manasieva, 2024, pp. 36 – 48). It is an educational measure carried out upon the proposal of the LCCJD with a court decision, art. 10, para. 1, letter a of the ACJD. SPBS and EBS accommodate juveniles aged 8 to 18 years with a maximum placement duration of 3 years, art. 30, para. 2 of the ACJD. The period for placement may continue for educational and vocational training purposes until the age of 16, and upon written request of the minor – up to 18 years of age. Under certain conditions, the pedagogical council, in coordination with the prosecutor and the LCCJD, may authorize continued stay beyond majority until completion of relevant qualification, art. 30 para. 3 of the ACJD.

The two types of institutions differ in both purpose and structure. EBS accommodate juveniles placed due to delinquent behaviour (art. 44, para. 8 of the LPSE), whereas SPBS serve children lacking adequate family care or supervision, in addition to juvenile delinquents, art. 44, para. 9 of the LPSE. EBS are gender-segregated by institutional design (separate facilities for boys and girls), while SPBS operate as co-educational facilities with gender-based segregation limited to residential quarters. This is a result of deinstitutionalisation and depenalisation reforms, connected with significantly decreasing the number of such

institutions – currently, 2 EBS and 1 SPBS remain operational, compared to 12 EBS and 25 SPBS in 1996/1997.

The core activity of the SPBS and EBS is corrective-educational work, defined as a set of methods and approaches applied with two primary objectives – prosocial education and transforming maladaptive negative patterns in behaviour and fostering integration competences (Manasieva, 2010, p. 47).

Penitentiary Subsystem

The penitentiary subsystem in the Republic of Bulgaria encompasses all penal institutions subordinate to the General Directorate “Execution of Punishments” within the Ministry of Justice. It includes prisons, prison dormitories (both open and closed type), correctional facilities, probation services and arrests. These institutions execute penal measures that affect personal liberty, including imprisonment, life sentences (with or without the possibility of commutation) and probationary supervision, as well as execution of the measure of detention in custody (in arrests).

In recent years in the Bulgarian public space a number of research reports and analytical papers – particularly those developed by non-governmental organisations – are presenting critical assessments of the Bulgarian system for prevention, correction and support of children in conflict with the law. These studies often highlight structural and operational weaknesses, resource limitations and coordination gaps. At the same time, there are also opposing perspectives, which take into account the capacity of the system and established good practices, while also highlighting positive developments. They confirm the need to bring the legal framework into line with international standards, progress in deinstitutionalization and early prevention practices. A balanced and evidence-based assessment therefore requires taking into account both critical and affirmative perspectives in order to reflect the complexity of the system.

In summary, effective institutional functioning within the system of preventive and corrective-educational interventions requires robust interinstitutional collaboration and coordination with external actors addressing the needs of children exhibiting deviant and delinquent behaviour, as interaction both between the institutions themselves and with external factors is of critical importance (Manasieva, 2010, p. 85). Therefore, the establishment of a functional mechanism for both the prevention of antisocial conduct and the adequate treatment of criminally irresponsible persons remains essential (Mateeva, 2008, p. 192).

2. System of Preventive, Corrective-Educational and Resocialising Activities in the Czech Republic

Following part focuses on the structure of the whole system. Describing and explaining main purposes and importances of institutions are creating the core of this section. It is also very important to communicate this topic for the change of perspective on those institutions. Nowadays, the institutions are taken as a

repressive side of raising children. It is necessary to change this perspective and start to perceive the system as a place where parents and children can find support not a punishment.

Educational Care Centres

Preventive-Educational Care is provided by the Educational Care Centres in the Czech Republic. The yearbook for the year 2023/2024 of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports shows that there are 33 educational care centres in the Czech Republic and the yearbook records a total of just under 18,000 clients.

According to the Czech law, centres provide services to clients, who are:

a) “children at risk of behavioural disorders or with already developed signs of behavioural disorders and negative phenomena in social development, as well as to young adults until the completion of vocational preparation, but no longer than up to the age of 26,

b) persons responsible for upbringing and educational staff,

c) children for whom a court has decided to place them in the centre or to implement an educational measure according to a specific legal regulation⁴⁴.

Educational Care Centres provide four different types of support – outpatient, day care, boarding and outreach. Most of the clients are in the outpatient form of support (Statistical Yearbook of Education – Performance Indicators for the 2024/2025 School Year). Day care support is offered for those clients who need a more intensive type of work. It usually works similarly to school with more therapeutic interventions with the child as well as with parents. To picture it well, tab 1 shows statistics about Educational Care Centres.

Table 1. Educational Care Centres – Statistics last 5 years

	Number of Centres	Number of clients in outpatient care	Number of clients in day care	Number of clients in boarding care	Number of clients (all together)
2019/2020	33	13 476	218	1225	14 919
2020/2021	33	12 268	192	904	13 364
2021/2022	32	11 614	149	1016	12 779
2022/2023	32	14 313	240	1194	15 747
2023/2024	33	16 041	337	1212	17 590

Notes: Statistical Yearbook of Education – Performance Indicators for the 2024/2025 School Year⁴

The yearbook shows that the number of clients has been slowly increasing during the last 5 years. There were 14 919 clients only in the Educational Care Centres in 2020. This year, the statistics registered 17 590 clients. Although there

is an increase of almost 3000 clients the number of centres remains the same. It creates a pressure on the staff in centres to work less time with a client which does not have to be always sufficient.

Diagnostic Institution

Another institution which provides support to children with behavioural problems or disorders is a diagnostic institution whose care is based on the court decision. A stay in a diagnostic institute usually lasts 8 weeks or for as long as necessary. Thereafter, the individual should be placed in a suitable facility.

The Diagnostic Institute accepts children with a precautionary measure, institutional education or protective education; it also places children with protective education on the basis of the results of a comprehensive examination, the health condition of the children and the available capacity of individual facilities in children's homes with schools or educational institutions – Act 109/2002 Coll.

The diagnostic institute performs tasks according to the needs of the child:

a) “diagnostic, consisting in the examination of the child’s level in the form of pedagogical and psychological activities,

b) educational, in the framework of which the level of knowledge and skills achieved is ascertained, and specific educational needs are determined and implemented in the interest of developing the child’s personality in accordance with his or her age, individual prerequisites and possibilities,

c) therapeutic, which, through pedagogical and psychological activities, aim at correcting disorders in the child’s social relations and behaviour,

d) educational and social, relating to the child’s personality, his or her family situation and the necessary socio-legal protection of children; it shall, if necessary, arrange for the child’s health examination,

e) organisational, relating to the placement of children in facilities within the territorial area of the diagnostic institute as defined by the Ministry, or outside the territorial area; it shall cooperate with the child social protection authority in preparing its proposal for the ordering of a provisional measure to be carried out in a diagnostic institute or in another facility and in preparing a statement to the court concerning the determination of the facility for the performance of institutional education to which a child with an order for institutional education is to be placed,

f) coordination, aimed at deepening and unifying the professional procedures of other establishments within the territorial area of the diagnostic institute, verifying their effectiveness and unifying cooperation with State authorities and other persons involved in the care of children“⁵

Table 2 shows statistics from the last 5 years about the number of beds, clients and girls in diagnostic institutions in the Czech Republic. The number of institutions remains the same. Also, the number of clients is more or less the same every year.

Table 2. Diagnostic Institutions – Statistics last 5 years

	Number of Diagnostic Institution	Number of beds	Number of clients (all together)	Number of girls
2019/2020	13	468	391	174
2020/2021	13	468	368	156
2021/2022	12	443	365	142
2022/2023	12	443	381	161
2023/2024	12	430	363	152

Notes: Statistical Yearbook of Education – Performance Indicators for the 2024/2025 School Year

Rehabilitation Institution

The rehabilitation institution usually takes care of children over 15 years of age with serious behavioural disorders who have been ordered to undergo institutional education or protective education. A child over the age of 12 may be placed in a rehabilitation institution if he or she has been placed in protective custody and his or her behaviour is so seriously disturbed that he or she cannot be placed in a children's home with a school⁵.

Seeing the tab 3, the number of institutions, beds and clients remains the same for the last 5 years. In the rehabilitation institutions in the Czech Republic, there are around 1000 clients from which there are around 350 girls.

Table 3. Rehabilitation Institutions – Statistics last 5 years

	Number of Rehabilitation Institution	Number of beds	Number of clients (all together)	Number of girls
2019/2020	25	1063	1012	366
2020/2021	25	1061	1035	380
2021/2022	25	1066	923	318
2022/2023	25	1050	980	332
2023/2024	25	1046	991	367

Note: Statistical Yearbook of Education – Performance Indicators for the 2024/2025 School Year

From the unofficial perspective, the rehabilitation institutions are sorted out on those which are more focused on the clients with institutional care and institutions caring about clients with protective care. All the rehabilitation institutions have so-called educational groups which include a maximum of 8 clients and one 5).

Children's home and children's home with school

The purpose of the children's home is to provide care for children who have been ordered to be institutionalised and who do not have serious behavioural disorders. These children are educated in schools that are not part of the children's home. There are children from 3 to 18 years of age.

The purpose of a children's home with school is to provide care for children

- a) "with ordered institutional education,
 - if they have serious behavioural disorders, or
 - who, because of a temporary or permanent mental disorder, require educational and therapeutic care, or
- b) who have been ordered to undergo protective education,
- c) if they are minor mothers and meet the conditions set out in (a) or (b), and their children who cannot be educated in a school which is not part of a children's home with a school"⁴⁵.

Table 4. Children's home and children's home with school – Statistics last 5 years

	Number of children's home	Number of children's home with school	Number of clients in children's home	Number of clients in children's home with school
2019/2020	137	28	4345	805
2020/2021	137	28	4303	740
2021/2022	138	28	4247	699
2022/2023	138	28	4261	733
2023/2024	137	28	4298	744

Note: Statistical Yearbook of Education – Performance Indicators for the 2024/2025 School Year

The statistics regarding children's home and children's home with school from the last 5 years shows that data remains the same over the years. Nowadays, there are 137 children's homes and 28 children's homes with school. Altogether, there are around 5000 children in those two institutions.

3. Comparison of the systems

Structural Organization

Bulgaria:

The Bulgarian system is divided into three main subsystems: the social, socio-pedagogical, and penitentiary subsystems. Each subsystem is tailored to meet the specific needs of children, depending on their social conditions and level of deviant behaviour. For example, children without adequate family care are managed under the social subsystem, while children exhibiting deviant behaviours fall under the socio-pedagogical subsystem. The penitentiary subsystem handles more severe

cases involving legal penalties for crimes committed by sane individuals over the age of 14.

This system is highly integrated within the broader educational system, yet its components are distinguished by their specific focus, such as prevention, correction, or resocialisation.

Czech Republic:

The Czech system emphasizes educational care centres, diagnostic institutions, and rehabilitation institutions. Educational care centres primarily handle children with emerging or potential behavioural issues, offering outpatient, day-care, boarding, and outreach services. Diagnostic institutions provide short-term, court-mandated placements for detailed evaluations and tailored educational and therapeutic interventions. Rehabilitation institutions cater to children with severe behavioural disorders, particularly older children over 15 years of age.

The system appears more centralized, with institutions operating under clear legal frameworks⁵ and structured hierarchies.

Focus on Prevention, Correction, and Resocialization

Prevention:

In Bulgaria, prevention involves coordinated activities within the social subsystem, including family-type accommodation centres, crisis centres, public support centres as well as from educational institutions – including schools through the figures of the pedagogical advisor and the psychologist. Their main goal is to provide a stable environment to prevent anti-social behaviours from developing.

In the Czech Republic, prevention is primarily addressed through educational care centres, which offer outpatient care for children at risk and work closely with families to address behavioural issues early.

Correction:

Bulgaria's socio-pedagogical subsystem takes the lead in corrective measures, using commissions, pedagogical rooms, and specialized boarding schools to rehabilitate and educate children exhibiting delinquent behaviour. Specific educational measures range from counselling to supervised educational isolation.

The Czech Republic employs diagnostic institutions for correction, where children undergo psychological, pedagogical, and therapeutic assessments. Based on these findings, tailored interventions are provided to address the root causes of deviant behaviours.

Resocialisation:

Both systems emphasize resocialization but approach it differently. In Bulgaria, institutions focus on “re-education”, “social adaptation”, and “social readaptation” to reintegrate children into society. The penitentiary subsystem also plays a role for children involved in criminal activities.

In the Czech Republic, resocialisation is handled primarily in rehabilitation institutions, which work intensively with older children exhibiting severe behavioural issues. Their efforts focus on social integration and vocational preparation.

Institutional Coverage and Scale

Bulgaria:

The Bulgarian system is notable for its diverse range of institutions tailored to specific needs – from temporary homes to socio-pedagogical and educational boarding schools and penitentiary facilities. However, deinstitutionalisation and depenalisation trends have significantly reduced the number of boarding schools. For example, the country now has only two educational boarding schools and one socio-pedagogical boarding school compared to dozens in the late 1990s.

Czech Republic:

The Czech system has fewer institutional types but a broader coverage through the same facilities. For example, there are 33 educational care centres serving nearly 18,000 clients as of 2023/2024, showing a gradual increase in demand despite no significant rise in the number of centres. Diagnostic and rehabilitation institutions have remained stable in terms of capacity, though they face a consistent number of clients.

Challenges and Limitations

Bulgaria:

The Bulgarian system struggles with coordination across subsystems, as institutions are often governed by different ministries (e.g., Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Interior). This fragmentation can hinder unified approaches to care and support. Additionally, deinstitutionalisation has reduced the number of boarding schools, potentially limiting options for long-term corrective-educational activities.

Czech Republic:

The Czech system faces challenges of resource strain due to increasing client numbers in educational care centres without a corresponding increase in institutional capacity. This may reduce the quality of care as staff have less time per client.

Conclusion

A comprehensive understanding of the system of preventive, corrective-educational and resocialising activities is of a critical importance for all professionals engaged in the social, educational, police and legal sectors. The effective functioning of these systems fundamentally depends on interinstitutional cooperation, both within the internal structure of the system and in interaction with external factors addressing the needs of individuals exhibiting deviant or delinquent behaviour.

Given the complexity of the challenges faced in this field, it is essential to promote international cooperation and the exchange of good practices. Partnership between countries can serve as valuable platforms for addressing shared difficulties and for enhancing the professional and institutional capacities necessary for effective prevention, correction and resocialisation of children and juveniles with deviant or delinquent behaviour.

NOTES

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