

**Country report SLOVAKIA 2020**

**How FGC is organized in the Country**

* Since 2006 - first group of the FGC coordinators in Slovakia trained by Rob van Pagée (Eigen-Kracht Netherlands)
* FGC´s implemented and run by NGO Usmev ako dar (largest and oldiest NGO in Slovakia focusing on endangered children and families)as a decision making model
* 40 independent FGC coordinators all around Slovakia working on volunteer base
* 8 FGC branches: Training, support, coaching, supervision for FGC coordinators
* Team work: Planning and development of the implementation process (promotion, lobbying, public education)
* Networking, cooperation with other NGO´s to encorage them to use FGC in their work – (gipsy communities, disadavntages children) ...personal limites, financial obstacles.
* Most of the referrals come from the NGO field workers who find the services and support from the state system unsufficient and often even harmful
* Demand for FGC´s mostly for the families who are already involved in the system (as a prevention out of home placement or as a part of the reunification process)
* Absence of the preventive system, no early intervention in Slovakia – no support services for families (25% children in agenda of Child Care Protection System)
* Regional and national meetings: coordinators with referrers, training for referrers from municipalities, family judges, Child Care Protection System – FGC building the bridge between the system world and the life world. **SAFE for EVERYONE**

Areas:

* children at risk, endangered families (accommodation 40%, educational problems, broken relationship, psychological problems, drug addiction, parental conflicts, kinship /foster family support- prevention out of home placement
* vulnerable babies, pregnant women
* children living in institutional care – retuning home, kinship care, connection with close persons – ties empowerment

**Public Education, PR**  for FGC´s ...best PR from the FGC participants....**LET THEM experience....** Positive feedback from SW, families and children encouraged another families/professionals initiate another FGC process.

* 40% referrals initiated from people who experienced circle...
* the great PR way is sharing Family Stories (radio, TV, newspapars, social networks)

**Evaluation and research**

* Cooperation with University of St.Elisabeth continuosly evaluating of FGC benefits for children, families, professionals, care system... questionnaires collected from FGC - conduct interviews with family members and professionals who have experienced FGC.
* Quantitative and qualitative evaluation of 250 FGC´s in 2020 – remarkable results

**Legislative mandate for FGC since 2017**

* Child Care Protection Law – duty for SW of the state CHCS to involve family circle
* Duty to evaluate possibilities and resources of the family and close people of endangered child to solve the situation within the family

**Pilot Project: Implementation of FGC into the Child Protection system-**  run by Ministry of the Labor, Social Affair and the Family in Slovakia

* has started in January 2020 (since May till October training by our organisation)
* contribution of the big national FGC Conference and EU FGC annual meeting in 2019 in Bratislava☺
* since 1st October 2020 has started to work the first group of regional FGC coordinators at the support Centres for the Child and the Family in 10 regions (from 48 regions in Slovakia are involved in this state pilot project) - the plan of the Ministry is to have FGC coordinator in each region ( in the 2022).
* FGC coordinators work independently from the Child Protection departments
* the role of our organisation - training and permanent methodological support, guard the purity of the model in the work of the state FGC coordinators

**Challenges**

- Implementation of the FGC´s as a service for enedangered families **by the local authorities**

- FGC as a tool of prevention and early intervent. – implementation into the school and health system

- Association for FGC coordinators - **support and guarding purity of the FGC principles**

