**17th June 2022 – 16.00 CET**

**Good practices to support Autistic refugees and their families**

**Draft Programme**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **16.00-16.10** | **Welcome – Liga Berzina, member of the executive committee** |
| **16.10-16.25** | **Evheniia Panichevska, Communications Director of Child with Future Foundation, Head of Parents Association of Children with Autism, Ukraine**  Autism Unity - ensuring access to therapeutic care for Ukrainian children with autism and other developmental disabilities in countries of relocation.  (10 minutes presentation followed by 5 minutes Q&A) |
| **16.25-16.40** | **Malgorzata Wokacz-Zaborowska, Autism-Poland Association**  Various types of support services provided within Autism-Poland Association organizations for refugee families with autistic members.  (10 minutes presentation followed by 5 minutes Q&A) |
| **16.40-16.55** | **Anastasiya Gorodnicha, Inspire Foundation, Malta**  Presentation of the specific support services designed by the Inspire Foundation to support refugees  (10 minutes presentation followed by 5 minutes Q&A) |
| **16.55-17.10** | **Anna Knausz, Hungarian Autistic Society (AOSZ)**  Presentation of the specific support developed by theHungarian Autistic Society (AOSZ) to support autistic refugees  (10 minutes presentation followed by 5 minutes Q&A) |
| **17.05 -17.20** | **Mishka Sibert, Happy Autism, Slovakia**  Mental Health struggles and support of siblings of children with autism.  (10 minutes presentation followed by 5 minutes Q&A) |
| **17.20-17.50** | **Discussion with panel and participants** |
| **17.50** | **Closing** |

**Practices outlines and issues for reflection and discussion**

|  |
| --- |
| **Evheniia Panichevska, Communications Director of Child with Future Foundation, Head of Parents Association of Children with Autism, Ukraine**  We are supporting the Autism Unity initiative [https://autismunity.org/](https://autismunity.org/?fbclid=IwAR3PRAA35Z7kVcVoaiPn8-WdRUqstmRlkL_lrSsd45DJTcVgo1Xddz1rzPU) that connect Ukrainians with specialists |
| **Malgorzata Wokacz-Zaborowska, Autism-Poland Association**  Approx. 3,5 million people from Ukraine have arrived in Poland since February 24. Some people went to other countries as destinations, some decided to come back to Ukraine, but not many. It is estimated that more than 2,5 million Ukrainian people remained in Poland among them the majority are women and children. The current situation is still very unstable. Today we are facing a reduced influx of refugees, but it may change within 24 hours depending on the war situation.  There are various types of support services we are providing within Autism-Poland Association organizations for refugee families with autistic persons. Each member, according to its own possibilities, is offering support in diffrent areas like e.g. material assistance, accommodation, translation services, education, daily classes for children, therapy, including trauma therapy, integration classes, language classes, consultation and help in searching for e.g. school or kindergarten, respite care, support in finding employment for both people with ASD and their caregivers, leisure activities, providing legal aid, support in completing formalities in administration offices and other institutions, support in obtaining recognition of certificate of disability, and others. In our presentation we will provide you with some examples of support activities. The main challenges nowadays are insufficient funding, shortage of many resources like infrastructure, housing area, moreover staff limitations. We need to develop the infrastructure and create new branches of our organizations, employ more specialists, more social workers. Most of the response thus far has been to provide immediate help and meet basic needs, but we urgently need to begin thinking long-term. It is like moving from the crisis mode into management mode, which would be a huge challenge. We need proper coordination and further development and strengthening of the assistance system within EU. |
| **Anastasiya Gorodnicha, Inspire Foundation, Malta**  Introduction Inspire Foundation (Malta) is a non-profit Voluntary organisation that employs around 150 full-time and part-time professionals to provide a range of services to children with disability. We operate a number of programmes for different client cohorts, including many children on the autistic spectrum, challenging behaviour as well as young adults with profound and multiple disabilities. Our focus Inspire Foundation actively promotes diversity and inclusion, and employs employees from different cultural, ethnic and educational backgrounds, all with the aim of delivering a service which is accessible and accepting to everyone. we also believe in promoting in ourselves and our colleagues a social conscience, standing up for everyone’s rights, especially those whose voice needs amplifying. The Ukraine War As soon as the Ukraine war broke out, management together with employee representatives came together to understand how we can help. We are so lucky to have with us a Ukrainian person who, apart from being a Team Leader within one of our programmes, is also the coordinator and spokesperson within the Ukrainian community in Malta. Together with Anastasiya, who will be presenting to the group, we came up with a service we can offer sustainably to any of the refugees who knock on our door. The Service The service consists of an initial assessment which is conducted by a relevant professional (according to the requirements the potential client lists in their application) together with a person able to translate, according to necessity. Following the assessment, a 10-week programme is given to the client, including interventions by therapists and use of our specialised facilities (including Hydrotherapy pool, hippotherapy facilities, Multi Sensory Rooms etc). After the 10-week programme, the person is re-assessed and decisions on future and/or additional services are made. Inspire Foundation also offers free membership to Ukrainian refugees who need to use our hydrotherapy pool. Staff members involved in delivering the service include but are not limited to psychological support and assessments, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, teachers and tutors. While Inspire Foundation is offering resources, materials and facilities, all our employees have offered to deliver these services on a voluntary basis as part of their commitments towards social responsibility. |
| **Anna Knausz, Hungarian Autistic Society (AOSZ)**  Introduction: The Hungarian Autistic Society (AOSZ) plays a key role in protecting the interests of autistic families in the country. Issue we faced: Many families fled the country with autistic family members and started their journey in Hungary. We found that these families needed: - help in travel arrangements - autism friendly accommodation - special education classes with professionals - schools - computers for e-learning How we addressed it: We recruited volunteers. Our offices around the country searched accommodations in the surroundings. We have created a website: https://specialissegitseg.aosz.hu/ We provided all our offices with tools, games, and communication cards. We cooperate with autism specialists who provide professional help to families. Cooperation: People can ask for our help through our website: https://specialissegitseg.aosz.hu/ or via e-mail: autisticrefugees@esoember.hu. We can also be contacted by phone or viber. Our partner (Toldi Ház) offers recreation opportunities for families. |
| **Mishka Sibert, Happy Autism, Slovakia**  Mental Health struggles and support of siblings of children with autism. Understanding the experiences of siblings, the unspoken & unseen challenges they face and emotional states they go through and how to support them in navigating those emotional states to prevent emotional neglect trauma.  Tools: Emotional States Cheat Sheet PDF, Communication Needs Sheet PDF, my book |