

Community-based living for individuals with different support needs

Pro ACT Support Association, Community-based living for individuals with different support needs

Pro ACT supports individuals living in institutions to transition successfully to community-based settings, be included in society, acquire independent living competencies and vocational skills in order to successfully enter the labour market. The association focuses on the deinstitutionalisation of adults with disabilities and offers vocational training services to its users. Through complex but successful partnerships, they improve the living conditions of persons with disabilities.

Beneficiaries of the service

The people supported are **individuals with intellectual or physical disabilities**, with **multiple diagnoses** and **mental health challenges**.

The staff

The staff consists of **social care workers, psychologists, a social worker, a career counsellor, a general manager, two regional coordinators, a financial manager, an innovation manager, and a communications officer**.

An ongoing training programme is provided to the staff by international experts.

The approach

The services provided vary depending on the needs of the individuals.

- 1 The needs of the individuals are assessed.
- 2 The support provided is based on person-centred planning with the cooperation of the users and the staff.
- 3 Personal planning tools (PATH and MAPs) are used to identify the needs and the preferences of the users.
- 4 The practice supports the inclusion of individuals in the community.



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Contacts

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The model

Pro ACT has developed 11 pilot services supporting the transition of individuals from public institutions in different counties and regions of Romania to community-based living and is in the process of developing 2 more services. Nineteen former users have successfully transitioned to unassisted independent living, fully included in the community and in the local labour market.

Some services provide 24 hour support, others provide support only during the night and in the remaining services, users live with no additional support.

Pro ACT cooperates with institutions, where it introduces its services to the residents, who can then decide for themselves whether they are interested in the given services. When individual express interest, they can visit the various services located in the countryside or in the city and can stay in each one of them for 2-3 days. This initial period might take up to 3 months before they can transition to one of the services. During the transition, a team is present which supports them and helps them to stay connected with both residents or staff from their previous life in the institution. Individuals first transition to a service which offers 24/7 support, where they can acquire the necessary independent living skills.



Users successfully transitioned to unassisted independent living



24 hours support services



Night support services



2-3 days trial periods



Strengths

- Innovative models of social inclusion.
- Recognised by the Ministry of Labour and Social Justice in Romania.



Weaknesses

- Not flexible quality standards imposed by the state.
- Legislation prohibits people with disabilities to work.
- Challenges with funding.
- Challenges with staff training.