

SOS Children's Villages Bulgaria

ANNUAL REPORT 2021



SOS CHILDREN'S
VILLAGES
BULGARIA



CONTENTS

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE ACTIVITY OF SOS CHILDREN`S VILLAGES ASSOCIATION IN 2021

OUR MISSION	3
ABOUT US	3
SOCIOECONOMIC SITUATION	4
ACTIVITY OF THE ASSOCIATION IN “PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT” STRATEGIC AREA	6
PROGRAM SOS CHILDREN`S VILLAGES VELIKO TARNOVO - GABROVO - TRYAVNA	14
PROGRAM SOS CHILDREN`S VILLAGES SOFIA - PERNIK	17
ACTIVITIES OF THE ASSOCIATION IN “FUND DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS” STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	19
ACTIVITIES IN “ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT” STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	27
ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2021	
BALANCE SHEET	36
PROFIT AND LOSS REPORT	38
PROFIT AND LOSS REPORT RESULTS FROM ECONOMIC ACTIVITY	39
OWN EQUITY REPORT	40
CASH FLOW REPORT	41
REGISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT	42
LIST OF BOARD MEMBERS 2021	42

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE ACTIVITY OF SOS CHILDRENS` VILLAGES ASSOCIATION IN 2021

OUR MISSION

SOS Children`s Villages Bulgaria is a non-governmental association focused on guaranteeing every child`s right to have a family and to grow up in a loving, respectful and safe environment and home.

ABOUT US

SOS Children`s Villages Bulgaria Association is the first civil human rights organization in the country which provides direct care for children at risk. For the first time after democratic changes in the country, the Association provides an alternative to the intuitional care for children – care in the SOS family.

SOS Children`s Villages Bulgaria Association is part of the big international family SOS Children`s Villages International which provides care for almost 2,500,000 children in 137 countries worldwide.

In Bulgaria, the Association begins its activity in 1990. For more than 30 years SOS Children`s Villages Bulgaria ensures family and healthy environment for development and raising children that were deprived of parental care or at risk of losing the protection of their parents. The Association offers family-like care and support to the family and actively advocates for the rights of children`s and young people.

In 2021 SOS Children`s Villages Bulgaria continued to develop and stabilise successfully in the Association`s second year of full financial selfsufficiency – the challenge had already turned into confidence about our own potential and the beginning of specific intentions for expanding our social impact – geographically going beyond the current locations of work, developing new social services, innovations in the process of transforming the traditional **SOS Children`s Village into SOS Child Care**.

In the course of developing care and support closest to the family care for children deprived of or at risk of

losing their parents` protection, as a natural response to the needs of society, the children`s villages have expanded beyond fences and houses and turned into **clusters of activities and services related to children and families**: in addition to placement in and support to foster families and children, and placement and support to children in the Family Homes, we have been developing services for family strengthening and child abandonment prevention, and support for young people on their way to independent living. SOS Children`s Villages have been developing not only as places offering support and social services but also as meeting places for large groups of society – venues for training, recreation of children, families, partners devoted to the cause, children`s camps, rehabilitation centres, etc.

In 2021 too, the restrictions due to the pandemic in the country continued to determine and pose limitations on some of the activities – both in society and in our Organisation. We were more confident in continuing to implement measures, in making changes to our way of work and the established rules and stereotypes. Over this year, in addition, this new and unforeseen element continued to motivate us in our efforts to achieve financial stability and it acted as a catalyst to our successful dealing with challenges.

The Association`s development and achievements in 2021 on the road to our next strategic goals – sustainability, growth and maximum applicability and quality of the SOS social services – have already delineated our capacity and tendencies to grow and expand our work, impact and support to society.

LOCAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

Political situation

In 2021, two parliamentary elections were held in the Republic of Bulgaria, the second one being combined with a presidential election. The political situation was unstable and fickle, the expectations of all Bulgarian citizens being aimed at a changed style of governance, in particular changed social system management. Meanwhile, Bulgaria was run by a caretaker government appointed by the President and not supported by a working Parliament.

The prolonged instability of the political situation has created pressure among the population, negatively affected all citizens of the country, put pressure on the employees and the activities of our program units.

Economical situation

The European Commission has lowered significantly its economic growth forecast for Bulgaria in 2021 to 3.8% from 4.6% predicted in its July report as the national annual rate. Bulgaria's estimated 2022 gross domestic product (GDP) growth remains unchanged at 4.1% i.e. the growth will be accelerating; however, for 2023 the EC expects a slow-down to 3.5%.

Our country's economy shrank by 4.4% in 2020, the EC document reminds; it also reads about Bulgaria that the country's **recovery is postponed due to the challenges in the short run related to the low levels of vaccination and the high-energy prices.**

There is a serious increase in the prices of staple foods in the basket of consumer goods, of fuels and heating, which started in 2021 but is forecasted to continue into 2022 too. The forecast includes also an **increased inflation rate of over 6%**, which will affect poor households the most.

Hikes in energy and food prices will erode the purchasing power of low-income households, the EC warns as well.

The social transfers and pensions increase this and the next year, however, should compensate the effect

of higher prices on household budgets. The increase of consumer demand is expected to continue, in the context of the tight labour market, high consumer confidence and strong credit activity. The export of goods will grow in parallel with external demand, while recovery in the service sector will be more gradual, the EC forecasts.

Bulgaria and Romania are the EU countries with the largest proportion of their populations exposed to poverty and material deprivation. This is what the latest Eurostat data indicates; it informs that the two countries are among the four EU Member States with over one quarter of their population at risk of poverty. **Romania ranks first (35,8 %), followed by Bulgaria (33,6 %)**, Greece (27,5 %) and Spain (27,0 %).

In the next two years it is expected that the favourable economic perspective will tighten the labour market, the unemployment rate gradually dropping to 4,6% in 2022 and to 4.4% in 2023. Meanwhile, resuming work on a full-time basis and the projected increase in activity rates will partially reduce the pressure on the labour market and remuneration. **The rise of remunerations is expected to remain strong – 9% for 2022 and 7,9% for 2023.**

Inflation, as measured by the harmonised index of consumer prices, accelerated abruptly during the second and third quarters of 2021 due to the higher energy and unprocessed-foods prices. It is expected that Bulgaria's annual inflation rate will continue to grow in 2022 too, backdropped by the high energy prices and their knock-on effects.

The overall economic situation in the country in times of pandemic, shrinking of the economy and entire clusters of businesses, as well as the lack of clear perspective, affected the Association in the following main areas:

- significantly increased need of direct material and financial support to community groups (food,

medication, education materials, computers for remote schooling, etc.);

- securing of the budgeted local FR incomes;
- reconsideration of expenditure and prioritising expenditure necessary for the normal and uninterrupted operation of the social services;
- a package of different measures to retain staff, and secure the financing of remunerations to correspond to the increasing inflation rate and energy prices;
- maintaining the reserve to cover operations but also provision of reserves to expand the social activities and investments required to do so.

Social situation

The situation in the social field was directly affected by Bulgaria's political and economic development. The Covid-19 pandemic and the vast divisions within the Bulgarian society as regards the management of the process by those in power and the distrust for the pandemic measures should be seen as the common denominator. The gap between rich and poor, between Northern and Southern Bulgaria, between the majority and the minorities continued to widen despite the efforts of the Governments to enhance the welfare of the Bulgarian citizens.

The latest social blow came just as 2021 elapsed and 2022 started with the drastic increase of fuels and energy prices.

From a purely financial point of view, the social services constituting the core of our work remained unscathed by the crises due to the Governments' decision to fund them to the full in accordance with the negotiated capacity despite the reduced occupancy rate.

Covid -19, however, affected us in all the regions we are based in – throughout the year co-workers and users were falling sick, people were afraid to use the services due to potential contacts and the possibility to get infected; purely financially speaking, the repercussions were smaller due to the consistent

application of measures and the developed system of supply of protective materials and disinfectants.

The effects of the high electricity prices and the high inflation rate were felt in 2021 and increasingly so in 2022.

Legal framework

Though effective since 2020, the Social Services Act (SSA) was the main challenge social service providers were facing. Two key Ordinances were adopted in late 2020 and early 2021 – on the planning of social services and on the standards for remuneration of staff in social services. 2021 saw active work undertaken on the Ordinance on the Quality of Social Services and the service quality standards contained therein.

Unfortunately, the inconsistent attitude in relation to the Social Services Act on the part of the national authorities had an extremely negative impact on social service providers and service users.

We had to get licensed under the new Law, using the old Ordinance on the Criteria and Standards for Social Services for Children and Families. Despite this, by mid-2021 the Association had obtained ten licences which cover the main areas of our work in social services.

Environment

The Association needs to analyse the heating options for the two Children's Villages – Tryavna and Dren by drawing up a plan with technical and financial indicators for transition from heating oil to another type of more environmentally friendly and cost-effective fuel.

It is necessary to analyse the energy expenditure and consumers, together with the relevant measures for improvement.

The Training Centre has long-term plans aimed at training and working with children and their parents with a view to enhancing the environmental awareness of the community and young people.

ACTIVITY OF THE ASSOCIATION IN “PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT” STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

In 2021 SOS CV Bulgaria continued to build on its role as a major provider of social services and an advocate for the rights of children and families at risk. Through its Programmes SOS CV Sofia-Pernik and Veliko Turnovo-Gabrovo-Tryavna, the Association was an active player influencing the processes of prevention, deinstitutionalisation and care in four large regions of the country.

Highlights of our work in 2021:

✓ We transformed the **Semi-Independent Living Program** into a social service to assist the first steps of young male and female care leavers in their independent, autonomous life.

✓ We continued to run successfully the **Regional Foster Care Team** in Sofia City and advocate for the SOS Foster Care Model.

✓ We joined the **Working Group on the SSA** which was drafting the Ordinance on the Quality of Social Services and the quality standards contained therein. This enabled all co-workers in the Organisation to get to know the documents being drafted and to have an active role in influencing the process. With the help of activist networks, we are part of – the National Network for Children, Childhood 2025 Coalition – we managed to become an indispensable factor in the development of all aspects of the secondary legislation under the SSA.

✓ We obtained **licences within the specified deadlines, for the social services of SOS Children’s Villages Bulgaria**. We got licensed by the Agency for the Quality of Social Services for the following social services: “*Information Provision and Counselling*”, “*Advocacy and Mediation*”, “*Therapy and Rehabilitation*”, “*Community Work*”, “*Skills Training*”, “*Residential Care*”, “*Residential Care – Supervised Housing*”, “*Provision of Shelter – Mother and Baby Units*”, “*Day Care for Children with Long-Term Disabilities and Young Adults with Long-Term Disabilities*” and “*Support for Work Skills Acquisition by Young Adults with Long-Term Disabilities*”. The licenses enabled the implementation of the work of our programme facilities in compliance with the SSA;

✓ **Advocacy for the observance of the rights of children and families at risk.**

In the course of continuing restrictive measures because of COVID-19, the Association’s place

was on the side of our users in alternative care and in the Family Strengthening Programmes (FSPs). Efforts were also focused on our proactive position and measures aimed at preventing violence and incidents with service users and our service co-workers;

✓ **Developing the activities of SOS Children’s Village Dren**

In early 2021 our Organisation took the challenge to start working on a project seeking to resume our work in SOS Children’s Village Dren (SOS CV Dren). Transforming the Children’s Village in Dren back into an independent SOS structural facility is of social relevance to the local community and in line with the SOS Children’s Villages’ philosophy and mission. The Project was structured around the so-called Policy of Small Steps, with a view of minimising the investment risk during the successful piloting of the selected activities. Work on SOS Children’s Centre for Early Childhood Learning and Development “Drencheta” started as part of this Project, the effective launch being planned for the beginning of 2022.

In essence, the both SOS CV Programmes are a complex of social services for children and families at risk, brought together and provided on a regional basis.

In 2021 SOS Children’s Villages Bulgaria Association had two SOS CV Programmes:

✓ **The Programme “SOS Children’s Village Veliko Turnovo – Gabrovo – Tryavna”** – it includes 11 programme facilities running 5 types of social services, where the Association is registered as a provider;

✓ **The Programme “SOS Children’s Village Sofia – Pernik”** – it includes 6 programme facilities running 4 types of social services.

The social services for children and young people delivered by the Association in 2021 were 5 in total, 3 out of which also being state delegated activities:

✓ **Foster care** – support to communities of foster families;

✓ **Family-type residential care** – running of SOS Youth Homes and Small Family Homes

(registered as Family-Type Placement Centres (FTPCs));

✓ **Family strengthening programmes** (registered as Community Support Centres – CSC);

✓ **Support to young alternative-care leavers** – Start of Independent Living Programme (SILP);

✓ **Mother and Baby Unit** – a service in support of pregnant women and young mothers at risk of abandoning their newborn babies.

In mid-2021 in pursuance of the SSA requirements, the Association was successfully licensed by the Agency for the Quality of Social Services to provide the following social services: *“Information Provision and Counselling”, “Advocacy and Mediation”, “Therapy and Rehabilitation”, “Community Work”, “Skills Training”, “Residential Care”, “Residential Care – Supervised Housing”, “Provision of Shelter – Mother and Baby Units”, “Day Care for Children with Long-Term Disabilities and Young Adults with Long-Term Disabilities” and “Support for Work Skills Acquisition by Young Adults with Long-Term Disabilities”.*

By doing so, we have guaranteed the operation of the existing programme facilities, which by early 2023 will **need to be transformed in compliance with the SSA** and the related secondary legislation.

With one of the above-listed licences we have created a future opportunity to work on services novel to the Association, targeted at people with disabilities.

An important part of the Organisation’s work is the partnership with local and national authorities in the social sector. We are active partners in delivering social services together with Sofia City Municipality, Pernik Municipality, Breznik Municipality, Veliko Turnovo Municipality, Gabrovo Municipality, Tryavna Municipality. In our advocacy and amendments to social legislation work, in addition to working with the National Network for Children and *Childhood 2025* Coalition, we are partners and colleagues with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP), the Agency for the Quality of Social Services (AQSS), the Agency for Social Assistance (ASA) and its local structures – the Directorates for Social Assistance (DSAs) and the Child Protection Departments (CPDs).

In 2022 the national authorities are expected to develop and adopt the Map of Social Services and the funding principles for the services, that should enter into force in early 2023, thus completing the process of SSA introduction.

As an NGO we liaise daily with our colleagues from the entire sector who are working in the area of social

services, advocacy for the rights of the child and the family, and organisational development.

Public funding and financial sustainability of programme work

In 2021, both programmes continued to operate with public funding, providing social services under state-delegated budgets. The exception is two social services: Foster care, which in 2021 continued to be funded at the state level under the Project „Accept Me 2015“, as well as the Program Start of Independent Life, which is a social service developed and managed independently by the Association.

Great efforts were put in the work on **projects with public funding**. A few major projects allowed us to alleviate the funding of our operations and be innovative as advocates for the rights of excluded social groups.

✓ In its second year, the Project **“Pathways to Freedom: Empowering Young People in Alternative Care to Start an Independent and Meaningful Life”** expanded significantly the geographical coverage of its support to young people, providing development opportunities to young people from a total of 7 regions in Bulgaria – Sofia City, Pernik, Veliko Turnovo, Gabrovo, Rousse, Stara Zagora and Plovdiv. This project provided support for independent living to 103 young males and females in 2021. The advocacy campaign involved a series of media publications and participation in events by the team and the supported young people, as well as 3 webinars with stakeholders, with the aim to seek ways to incorporate the “Semi-Independent Living Program” social service in Bulgaria’s Map of Social Services.



✓ The team of the Project **“Safe Places, Thriving Children – Embedding Trauma-Informed Practices into Alternative Care Settings”** successfully developed the Trauma-Informed Child Care Practice Guidance and a Training of Trainers Programme; 5 groups of professionals were trained in two-module trainings, each 3 days long. A wide range of professionals from different public sectors have the chance to use freely the online course on trauma-informed care offering additional resources to expand the

knowledge and skills of those working with children and families.

got to know each other, even if just virtually, and prepared their meetings in person in 2022.



✓ For the second year in a row the Association has also been implementing activities under *the global project of the International Organisation YouthCan!* funded by the pharmaceutical company Janssen. Project funds were used to pay for the training courses of young care leavers, for electronic devices to assist the online training of the young people; a mentoring programme was also implemented for the young people in our services, with Janssen staff as mentors.

✓ Under the **“Power4Youth”** Project, SOS Children’s Villages Bulgaria partnered with the Associations in North Macedonia, Serbia, Kosovo, Albania and Poland. In 2021 a series of online meetings were held where the young participants

The projects with public funding achieved their planned objectives for 2021, the results being focused in three areas – support for young alternative-care leavers, increased capacity of the professionals to provide better support to children and young people who have experienced trauma, and meaningful child and youth participation.

Alternative care

Achievements

SOS Children’s Villages Bulgaria Association continued to develop and maintain its networks of SOS foster families in Sofia, Pernik, Breznik, Veliko Turnovo, Gabrovo and Tryavna. In 2021 we provided care to a total of 109 children in 68 foster families, 66 foster families supported by SOS Children’s Villages looking after 81 children at the end of the year.

In Sofia the SOS Foster Care Centre (FCC) continued its active work; there we managed to increase the number of foster families from 33 to 37. The SOS Foster Care Centre is staffed with two social workers and a manager who manages also the Regional Foster Care Team in Sofia City. Our foster care teams in Veliko Turnovo, Gabrovo, Tryavna, Pernik and Breznik are part of the teams of our SOS Community Support Centres (CSCs). In some of the foster families we also support children placed with them under the provisions for placement in kinship care. We had plans to change the way we work with this target group in 2021 but we did not manage to implement them.

In the summertime we delivered a programme for the children and the foster families – swimming pool visits, outdoor trips, various amusing individual and group games. Together with the foster parents we also organised seaside holiday camps for the children.

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the foster care teams continued to implement the prescribed measures, supplying all SOS foster families with protective equipment (masks, disinfectants, gloves). All children in SOS foster families were provided with electronic devices for remote schooling.

Our SOS Youth Homes (YHs) and SOS Small Family Homes (SFHs) in Sofia, Veliko Turnovo and Gabrovo continued to provide successfully care to the children and young people placed there. The teams of the four SOS Youth Homes and the two SOS Small Family Homes provided care to a total of 43 children and





young people. As of the end of the year, a total of 29 children and young people lived there. A total of 12 children were referred to the YHs and SFHs during calendar year 2021.

The capacities of “Dreamers” and “Friends” Youth Homes in Sofia were reduced to 6 young people each. The idea behind the change is to improve the quality of the care for young people in both services, by developing the Family Home model.

A total of 9 graduates left successfully the care in the SOS YHs, the SOS SFHs and the Semi-Independent Living Programme (SILP). Four of them continued

their education in a university, support for them on the part of the Association continuing via the SILP.

A Conceptual Framework for our residential services and a National Concept Note for Youth Development were drafted. Their final adoption by the Association’s teams and approval by the Management Board is forthcoming.

Challenges

The main challenges in the SOS foster care had to do with preserving the life and health of the children and the SOS foster parents in the times of a complicated epidemiological situation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. The Association’s foster care teams actively monitored the psycho-emotional state of children and foster parents and provided the required help, intervention and therapy, wherever needed.

This challenging situation affected also the partnership work with the foster care providers – the Agency for Social Assistance (ASA), the municipalities and the colleagues from the NGO sector. Foster care in Bulgaria in 2021 too was provided under the ASA’s “Accept Me 2015” Project with over 140 municipalities across the country acting as partners. This will be the case throughout 2022 too. Difficulties due to the Covid-19 pandemic were also experienced in the process of placing children and young people in our residential services.

Remote schooling posed new challenges to the teams and young people in our residential services that had to do with the temporary lack of a sufficient number of electronic devices to work on. Thanks to donors and projects with public funding, we managed to provide all young people with sufficient number of technical devices and aids so that they can complete successfully the school year.



Family strengthening

Achievements

The Family Strengthening Programmes (FSPs) in Sofia, Pernik, Breznik, Veliko Turnovo, Gabrovo and Tryavna continued their successful work in 2021 too. Four of them operate as a ‘state delegated activity’. Over the last year 631 children and 479 adults were supported under these programmes. The support of each child and family was based on a specialist assessment of the parental capacity, an assessment of the child’s needs and an individual service plan. All FSPs employ professionals from various areas: social workers, psychologists, teachers, speech therapists so as to have a holistic impact on improving the state of the beneficiaries using the Service. The work of the professionals involves individual counselling



sessions, home visits and organising group activities and events. There are regular individual and team supervisions.

A number of interesting initiatives with different users were implemented:

A Social Workshop in the Sofia-based 148 Primary School “Prof. Dr. Lyubomir Milech” and in 109 Primary School “Hristo Smirnenski” was held under the Defensive Behaviour Programme. A total of 138 children from 7 first-grade classes were supported, each class benefitting from three sessions;

Expanding and strengthening the network of support provided by the professionals in FSP Pernik via development of good partnerships in the towns of Breznik, Batanovtsi and the village of Noevtsi by means of home visits or individual counselling sessions in administrative buildings provided for use free of charge;

The FSP in Veliko Turnovo continues with its innovative practice SOS Foster Parents Club where in a protected space foster parents can share their concerns and difficulties, get feedback from professionals and build on their skills, get information and discuss topics of interest. Two of the social workers from the FSP were awarded *Social Worker of the Year, Children Category certificates of honour by the MLSP*;

An activity initiated by the FSP in Gabrovo and gaining increasing popularity is the purpose-developed closed Facebook group for children, parents and pedagogical advisers from a large proportion of the education establishments based in the town, where the psychologists from the social service publish posts with specialist materials on topics such as “Children’s fear”, “Anger and aggressive behaviour in children”, “How to balance the time spent by our child on an electronic device”, etc. In 2021 a new three-

year contract was signed between the Municipality of Gabrovo and SOS Children’s Villages Bulgaria Association to provide and run this social service.

The FSP in Tryavna continued its sustainable development by expanding the coverage of the services delivered to include the town of Plachkovtsi too. The active partnership with child protection and foster care structures located within the municipality, as well as with the education establishments, and the positive feedback from FSP Tryavna users go to prove that the Service is developing in the right direction. Many volunteers also took part in the initiatives and group activities for children organised by the Tryavna professionals.

The Gabrovo Mother and Baby Unit is a community-based social service providing shelter and care to mothers and babies but also specialised support to improve the social skills of pregnant women and new mothers facing a crisis. The Service is focused on the mother’s needs, on building skills and acquiring knowledge on how to raise your child and on the adaptation to the new social environment upon leaving the Unit. In 2021, 4 young women and their babies got support via the Gabrovo Mother and Baby Unit.

Challenges

During the reporting year amendments were made in pursuance of the SSA requirements. Updating



the documentation used in the FSPs was the main challenge over the past year.

The Covid-19 restrictions still have an impact on the operation of our services. Some of our professionals had to hold telephone or online individual counselling sessions, which hindered the personal contact with users. Restrictions on indoor and group gatherings was yet another factor that made it impossible to implement some of the planned activities.

Changes to the teams of some of our social services were in place. In addition, the target group of the FSPs continued to change and expand.

The challenges before the Mother and Baby Unit consisted mainly in the fact that the eligible stay in the service of pregnant women and mothers at risk of abandoning their children is up to 6 months. In order to achieve objectives such as promotion of parental attachment, assistance to young mothers through social, psychological counselling and legal advice and support, requires much more time. We worked actively with the local child protection bodies in order to overcome these difficulties.



Youth care and employability

Achievements

The social workers of the Semi-Independent Living Programme (SILP) in both programmes continue to work actively with young SOS-care leavers. A total of 46 young males and females got support under the SILP in 2021. During 2021 a total of 21 young people left the Programme successfully, living a fully independent life. The social workers started working with 9 new young entrants to the Programme. At the

end of 2021 a total of 34 young people were receiving support, with 11 of them being university students.

An important part of our work in youth care and employment in 2021 again was the Project "Pathways to Freedom: Empowering Young People in Alternative Care to Start an Independent and Meaningful Life". We expanded its coverage to include not only our traditional regions of operation Sofia City, Pernik, Veliko Turnovo and Gabrovo but also Rousse, Plovdiv and Stara Zagora. As of the end of 2021 we were helping a total of 103 young people on their way to independent living.

The Project contributed to the variety of opportunities for the young people to develop and improve their job-seeking and job-finding skills, their self-presentation skills during interviews, and their communication skills. A career development consultant delivered a training in soft skills to the young people; explained to them what effective communication is, provided examples of good communication skills and gave them some practical tips. At the end of the trainings several pairs of young people did a role play of a job interview acting both as interviewers and interviewees.

Nine young people participated in a Mentoring Programme with Janssen staff. Thematic online sessions were conducted covering areas such as job search, writing a CV, behaviour during interviews. Some of these young people were supported by additional tutorials in various disciplines to help them to apply to the universities of their choice and do well at their final-year exams.

During the final months of 2021, a large group of young people took part in a series of online trainings prepared by staff from DSK Bank. The topics included managing one's own budget, debit and credit cards, overdrafts and quick loans, online banking, drafting one's CV and presentation at a job interview, security in an online environment, social security and health insurance, employment under civil and employment contracts.

Challenges

A positive challenge for those working with young people was the organisational change to the Service „Semi-Independent Living Programme“ which we transformed into an independent social service in both our SOS Children's Village Programmes.

The difficulties in this type of support consist in the increasing lack of readiness for independent living of young alternative-care leavers and the growing

need for highly specialised therapeutic support related to trauma experienced in the past, drug use or communication difficulties. Unfortunately, the short stay of the majority of young people in our alternative care does not allow us to counter effectively the already accumulated problems and these get transferred into their new independent lives. Often enough, such young males and females do not accept the support from the SILP and experience enormous difficulties initially when they leave care.

Some of the young people find it difficult to commit themselves as regards projects or activities of the Association. Another tendency is also in place for a group of young people to become users of quick loans which they are in serious difficulty to pay back.

Advocacy

Achievements

On all three major priorities within our advocacy objectives, we worked very actively during 2021.

Our social services in both our SOS Children's Village Programmes were actively advocating for the rights of the target groups in the four regions where we provide services – Sofia City, Pernik, Veliko Turnovo and Gabrovo. Through piloting of the social service "Support for Independent Living", in the course of the year we were particularly active also in another three large Bulgarian regions – Rousse, Stara Zagora and Plovdiv. The range of our local advocacy approaches span from solving individual problems of children and their families to active community outreach work on prevention.

The most efforts and resources were directed at our key advocacy priority of the year – achieving a commitment by the Government and local authorities to support the Semi-Independent Living Programme. The tool for our work on this was the project "Pathways to Freedom: Empowering Young People in Alternative Care to Start an Independent and Meaningful Life". We expanded the coverage of the Service to a total of seven regions in Bulgaria, conducted a number of meetings with representatives of local authorities, local partners and the business, social services, and young female and male alternative-care leavers. We conducted 3 webinars, which as a whole provided final insights on the model of this social service and gave us confidence in the chosen method of work. Numerous publications, two issues of our newly

developed e-newsletter and the appearances in the media of the project team and young people supported by the service paved, the way for the serious discussions with experts from the central executive and legislative powers.

The most difficult part was to work on establishing the SOS Foster Care Centre model as a practice to be accepted by the local and national partners when approving the funding of the Service as a delegated state activity. We limited our efforts mainly to the preparation of our own programme facilities, assistance to the foster parents and the children placed with them, and meetings and discussions with key stakeholders – experts from the MLSP, the AQSS, UNICEF, the partners in the Sofia Regional Foster Care Team and the municipalities which were our counterparts under the Project "Accept Me 2015".

We were extremely active in the changes to the legal framework in which the social services and their providers operate. Having participated in the drafting of the SSA in previous years, in 2021 we continued our work on the related secondary legislation. We participated in the Working Group which was drafting the Ordinance on the Quality of Social Services and the quality standards for the individual services contained therein. There are still remaining concerns about the Map of Social Services and the way of financing the social services as state delegated activities but we hope that via our involvement in the process we will secure better opportunities for the operation of the services and a better life for the users – the children and their families.

Challenges

The main difficulties for our advocacy work resulted from the Covid-19 restrictive measures. Even though in 2020 we managed to attune ourselves to online work in all spheres of our work, in 2021 too, the fact that it was not possible to communicate face to face and enjoy direct contact at meetings was a hinderance for us.

Difficulties arose from the fact that it was impossible to organise meetings of larger groups of co-workers, like-minded people and partners. A proportion of the young people, who formed a key group for whose rights we advocated, refused to acknowledge the facts about the virus and, respectively, to take measures to test or vaccinate themselves, which restricted their, as well as our, mobility. For this reason, we missed some planned and funded

international trips and meetings under some of the projects.

As with the general public in Bulgaria, our concerns arise from the inertia of the two years of restrictive measures, which will make our return to normal work and activity routines more difficult.



Training centre

Achievements

The SOS Training Centre reached the objectives, as set out in the Annual Plan, for building and achieving an enhanced capacity of the Association's staff to deliver high-quality social services, in the best interests of the child and with safeguarding their rights. A total of 85 staff members of the Association participated in the trainings conducted in 2021.

The planned training events under the two major international projects were successfully integrated in the Association's 2021 National Training Programme. Ten three-day trainings "Embedding Trauma-Informed Practices into Alternative Care Settings" were conducted as part of the Project "Safe Places, Thriving Children" funded by the European Commission and 11 trainings under the Project "Strong and Healthy" – with international donor Johnson&Johnson.

The Training Centre continued to deliver on the commitments agreed with Sofia City Municipality in partnership with For Our Children Foundation and the Social Activities and Practice Institute (SAPI), delivering a three-day training to foster parents from the capital city on the topic of "Defensive Behaviour"

and 6 individual supervisions of the Head of the Regional Foster Care Team and the SOS Foster Care Centre and two social workers.

The process of building the Association's team of trainers was launched – 6 trainers already conduct trainings and it is our ambition that the Training Centre is joined by more professionals who can offer trainings in the local communities.

The training platform trainings.sosbg.org offers 4 training courses, a resource library for professionals and a functional space for interactive online trainings.

Challenges

The pandemic definitely affected greatly the planning and delivery of trainings in 2021. The training schedule was changed many times due to lack of opportunity to deliver certain training as a result of the measures introduced by the Government. We were not able to conduct 2 planned trainings on Conflict Management for the YH and SFH teams and the "Counselling in Parental Conflicts" training for the CSC teams.

It is necessary to involve more professionals as trainers, and the resource is available among the CSC, FCC and HY teams. The training of trainers (ToT) we planned for 2022 would involve those who wish to attend it and would resolve their doubts.

Further efforts and resources are required to maintain the training platform <https://trainings.sosbg.org/> and to have the teams of the two SOS Children's Village Programmes and the structural facilities use it more intensively.



OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMMES SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES

PROGRAM CHILDREN'S VILLAGES VELIKO TARNOVO - GABROVO - TRJAVNA



Achievements

2021 was the year when the Covid pandemic ruled over the world completely. We were not surprised but prepared for work in the new circumstances, with all its challenges. Being prepared for the situation is one of our **achievements** during the year:

- ✓ In the face of constant social distancing measures, the implementation of all activities was secured under safety measures compliance programmes: work mode, disinfection, protective equipment, information provision, advice and counselling, etc. It was very important for the Programme that all social services were delivered in-person.
- ✓ Not a single structural facility interrupted the delivery of their social service, finding instead opportunities for innovation in terms of the way to provide support: the work on educational needs, professional and career development of children

and young people, while achieving a variety of in-person and online participation is to be pointed out. As a result of this approach and the work with the children, we have again students admitted to Sofia University, the Medical University in Varna, the Veliko Turnovo University and the Thracian University in Stara Zagora.

- ✓ In times of difficulty, the Programme preserved its organisational and structural stability. Moreover, the good foundations of the integrated approach to work allowed us in situations of children and colleagues falling sick with Covid to reallocate responsibilities and help each other, not allowing a 'no solution' situation. The examples are in Foster Care, the Small Family Homes, the Youth Homes, the Family Strengthening Programmes, the technical provisions and transport.
- ✓ Although primarily online during the period, all co-workers and the children took part in numerous trainings, conferences. This kind of



training delivery does not ensure high quality; however, we covered a broad range of topics instead.

The achievements of our main social activities demonstrated again stability and quality, commitment and devotion to the Association's cause. On the World Social Work Day, 16th March, Nedezhda Popova and Zornitsa Sheremetska, social workers from CSC Veliko Turnovo, received *Social Worker of the Year, Children Category* certificates of honour by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP).

We also consider a success our participation in the competitive procedures for outsourcing the running of the social services "Community Support Centre", "Mother and Baby Unit", "Chardafon FTFC" in Gabrovo, as well as that we continued the supervisions for foster parents in the municipalities of Gabrovo and Tryavna under the Project "Accept me 2015".

As part of the Semi-Independent Living Programme (SILP) we strongly supported the development of this social service for young people by contributing to its



development in regions new to the Organisation, in addition to Veliko Turnovo and Gabrovo → Rousse and Stara Zagora, via the Project. "Pathways to Freedom".

The Foster Parents Club in Veliko Turnovo continues to be the only one in the country and its uniqueness as a format and innovation activities for training and

support of foster parents were the topic of a live broadcast on the BNT in September.

Despite the periods of blocked operations due to the Covid pandemic, the incomes of the Rehabilitation Centre in SOS CV Tryavna amounted to BGN 20,000. Together with the development of activities in SOS CV Dren, this tendency gives us reason to carry on in 2022 with the registration and establishing a social enterprise in the Association.

Our partnership with NGOs was developed. For months young volunteers from Spain worked in the Children's Village; under the Erasmus + Project the Training Centre and the accommodation facility were visited by young people from 10 countries who worked there. In 2022 our cooperation with "The Change in You" will continue. Together with the NGO Ecoflora, we organised joint days of children's creativity and arts.

The story of the children in care, their feelings, dreams, vision about life became the basis for a documentary made by the C Vision production company and the film director Simeon Simov. The first screening will run in March 2022 in the Cinema House, Sofia.

Challenges

The pandemic situation had its contribution too. A factor to confirm this are the needs of our clients, as analysed by us. The percentage of children at risk has dropped significantly at the expense of the need for specialised support – speech therapy, psychological, therapeutic, pedagogical, etc. Often parents' anxiety is related to the gaps, and the inability to keep abreast with the learning content that parents notice in their children, but this is not due to problems in the physical development of the child.

A significant challenge is the growing percentage of referred beneficiaries with more and more education and social deficits, this being the case in all social services.

Another challenge to the Programme is joint work with and reporting to the various institutions. Each of the municipalities in the area covered by the Programme, including the Directorate for Social Assistance, have their own specific requirements. Such requirements have also the AQSS, the SACP. The question of how to standardise the frameworks of these reports in order to reduce the administrative burden at the expense of direct work with users is still an issue.

It should be noted that the provision for a fixed period and the competitive process for outsourcing the delivery and running of social services by the municipalities obliges us to maintain high quality and good partnership over time because we will be

operating in an increasingly competitive environment. This is one of the blatant challenges we are facing.

A major challenge in 2021 to continue into 2022 is the synchronisation of case-management documents, forms, procedures according to the SSA and the SSA Implementing Regulations. There is still no unified understanding about measuring the quality of the social services we provide. The need for approved primary and secondary legislation – quality and financial standards for social services, the compliance with them and their relevance to our new social-service licenses, will have a key role in 2022.

In this overall situation the need of methodological support by the Programme Development Department at the Association level increased. The internal monitoring included in the Association's Annual Plan has not been still implemented. These objectives are set again in 2022 and together with the Quality Ordinance and the internal quality indicators of the Federation, they need to support the social services provided.

Good practices

The Programme good practices relate to the successes. We stress on the good partnerships with municipalities, NGOs, companies, the Directorates for Social Assistance, in our work with foster parents, children and young people, in the SILP. We are successful wherever our colleague's professionalism manages to win our partners over for the Organisation's causes.

Activities leading to stability

In order to achieve **sustainability**, we put a stress on:

- ✓ High quality in the social services and the care we provide;
- ✓ Maintaining our good image in society both through significant causes and broad communication;
- ✓ Financial stability achieved through successful fundraising with wide internal support, as well as running of social services with state delegated funds.





PROGRAM CHILDREN'S VILLAGES SOFIA - PERNIK

In 2021 the Sofia-Pernik Programme provided a total of 4 social services in 6 facilities in the city of Sofia and the town of Pernik. The objectives set in our Annual Plan are fully or partially achieved. Again, and to a large extent we were dependent on the unstable political situation, the new and incomplete legislation. We finished successfully the planned restructuring of the two Small Family Homes and since April 2021 both centres have been working to a reduced capacity of 6 places each. Our two Community Support Centres in Sofia and Pernik work to their full capacity, and we managed to support a total of 173 children, 143 parents from 188 families throughout the year. We have been implementing a number of initiatives and prevention programmes in the communities we work in. The Semi-Independent Living Programme (SILP) successfully supported 14 young people over the year.

The Programme “SOS CV Sofia-Pernik” continued to be a leader in the training of students from Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”. Last year we renewed our cooperation agreement and continued to train students from the “Social Activities” programme. Nine students from the “Social Activities” programme at SU Kliment Ohridski completed practical training led by two reference specialists from the CSC “Chance” team to develop professional skills for case management. The students had the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the methods of work in CSC “Chance”. The training format was mixed –

distance and in-person learning. The drafting of a Practical Training Manual for students was launched.

Achievements

In 2021 we brought back to life the SOS CV Dren. Despite the lack of support by local authorities, we registered positive proactiveness on the part of the local community. By virtue of a decision of the Association’s Management Board, work on the preparation of the Service Children’s Centre for Early Childhood Learning and Development “Drencheta” was launched, the effective start of operation being planned for the beginning of 2022. Its main purpose is to cover the pre-school children from the village and the neighbouring settlements in full-time day care and learning.

We developed and won a project to implement cultural activities together with DrenArt Association. The Project will be implemented throughout 2022 with regular events such as film screenings and ateliers, in which people from the local community and beneficiaries from CV Programme Sofia – Pernik will be included.

In the area of foster care we developed a foster family who offer solely respite care as a service.

In response to the growing needs for specialised knowledge in various areas, last year two co-workers in the Programme completed specialised training. The SILP social worker completed a professional qualification course under the Training Programme

for Career Counsellors under the GCDF certification programme. One of the psychologists in CSC “Chance”, Sofia completed a qualification course for a court mediator, while in June 2022 is expected to complete a specialised module on mediation in families in conflict and with child custody dispute.

Challenges

Human Resources

The main challenge in alternative care over the past 2021 was the retention and motivation of the teams in the two SFHs. The lack of a full-time manager had its negative impact on the overall work of the teams and the structuring of the care. Supervisors, the Alternative Care adviser, the Programme Director and the National Executive Director joined to support the teams.

Lack of services addressing the problems of young people with deviant behaviour using drugs

Another serious challenge, is the lack of a clear and, most importantly, effective mechanism for working with children with issues of drug use and abuse. The cooperation with the child protection bodies (the Child Protection Department (CPD) at the Directorate for Social Assistance – Krasno Selo (DSA), Precinct Police Station No. 6 of the Ministry of the Interior is ineffective, which results in exacerbating the behavioural issues of these young people. In this regard, several internal meetings were held, where a decision was taken for advocacy initiatives at the local level, for throwing light on the issue and looking for a long-term solution to the problem.

Covid-19

In the second year of the pandemic, a challenge to the team was to cope with the frequently changing provisions regarding the work mode and safety. In early 2021 counselling sessions with users and home visits were carried out online in order to comply with the health provisions aimed at curbing the spread of Covid-19. The situation heightened the levels of stress and anxiety in the users we work with. The risk of violence, alcohol- and drug-abuse increased significantly, just as depression and emotional instability were observed more frequently. This has to do with the changed usual routines of people, that had to stay closed at home, the job loss or financial difficulties they were facing.

New primary legislation and missing secondary legislation

The entering into force of the new Social Services Act (SSA) and its Implementing Regulations also had repercussions on the work of FSP – Pernik. During the January–April 2021 period there was a technical problem with the issuance of referrals and with referring users on the part of CPD Pernik

since Community Support Centre – Pernik was not on the ASA Register of operational social services. Since May 2021 the Service was entered into the ASA Register as a service which is not funded by the state budget and there is again regular referring of user with referrals or Initial Needs Assessment (INA) from the CPD (DSA) – Pernik.

Foster care

As far as foster care is concerned, the lead challenge is the recruitment of new foster families and their integration into the Association’s network of foster families. As a result of the former, another challenge in foster care appeared to be the recruitment of foster families to care for children with disabilities, as well as families for crisis placement. This tendency is observed not only in our network but in the other partners’ networks too. The general belief is that we need a strong, positive campaign to be held through multiple media channels, including the Labour Office Directorates and the staff recruitment platforms. Another challenge is the use of the full capacity of the approved foster parent providing solely respite care. This service is not recognised and it is not popular among the DSAs due to the heavy administrative work associated with the placement of children in it.

Good practices

Both our CSCs in Sofia and Pernik carry out preventive activities accessible to the general public under the Defensive Behaviour Programme. The Programme worked with over 170 children and adults – professionals working with children and foster families.

A large percentage of the cases on which we work in CSC Pernik are from Breznik Municipality i.e. mobile social work. This enables the children from the community and the foster families to have access to social services – psycho-social, speech-therapy, pedagogical and psychological support. Home visits, material support, as well as covering the costs for medical check-ups and medication of the adult caregivers continue to be a powerful tool for support of the families in the Covid-19 pandemic situation.

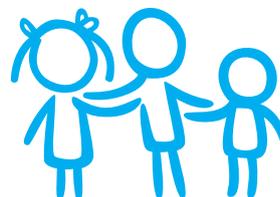
Under the Semi-Independent Living Programme (SILP) for another year the partnership with NGOs enabled joint project work, as well as placement in our services of young people who have to leave the YHs but still do not have the required independence to start their new life.

Activities leading to stability

Meetings were conducted with representatives of the local government and the Director of the Programme “SOS CV Sofia – Pernik” with the aim to get recognition for the need to develop the Service as a state-funded activity and to provide municipal premises to locate the Service. A Cooperation Agreement was drafted between Pernik Municipality and SOS Children’s Villages Bulgaria Association.

By way of cooperation the Pernik Municipality offered premises where to locate and develop the Service; however, the facilities offered did not meet the hygienic requirements for work. The work of CSC Pernik is recognised as a necessary service, which is evident from the referrals of the CPD and the good partnership with them, as well as with the schools our beneficiaries go to. The service is also recognised in the town of Batanovtsi and Breznik Municipality; there is cooperation on the part of local authorities – facilities (offices) were offered free of charge for the provision of the social services by the FSP specialists. In that respect, we enjoy a good partnership also with the school in the village of

Noevtsi, Breznik Municipality and the kindergarten “Brezitsa” and the school in the town of Breznik, as well as the one in the town of Bratanovtsi.



ACTIVITIES OF THE ASSOCIATION IN FUND DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

SOS Children’s Villages Bulgaria has been working for more than 30 years both with corporate partners and individual givers. The ratio of incomes from corporate partners to incomes from individual givers in 2021 was 53:47%. For comparisons, in 2020 the ratio was 55:45%, in favour of corporate partners. The incomes from the two major target groups for fundraising are coming closer as absolute value by the year.

The trend of increasing the share of individual donors corresponds to the medium-term plan of the Organization and the objective by the end of 2022 the income from individual donors will be reached 50% of the total local income.

INDIVIDUAL DONORS

The year 2021 was highly successful for the FR Individual Givers Department.

The incomes generated from individual givers in 2021 amounted to **BGN 1,486,627**, which represents an increase of 6% compared to 2020.

The raised funds were **47%** of the total local revenue. *For comparison, in 2018 they were 25%, in 2019 – 33%, in 2020 – 44%.* The upward trend corresponds

to the mid-term target set, i.e. by the end of 2022 the Organisation’s incomes from individual givers to reach up to 50% of the total local revenue.

The number of active committed givers at the end of 2021 was **6,182**, which constitutes an increase of 11% compared to 2020 (**5,562**). The number of newly attracted single givers, as a result of various

campaigns, was 278, while the funds raised from them amounted to **BGN 33,185**.

In 2021 the focus of attracting new committed individual givers was on the Face-to-Face (F2F) channel, digital channels, and telemarketing. We also carried out two integrated DRTV campaigns with the participation of Svilen Noev from Ostava band and Kotseto Kalki.

On an on-going basis we also worked on reactivation of inactive previous givers.



A. The Face-to-Face Channel (F2F) – 1,472 new givers attracted

Attracting givers through the F2F channel is undertaken by an In-House Team comprising 5 people.

The team's work took place primarily in business locations and shopping centres, as well as in the streets and parks of Sofia. The shopping malls and supermarket chains – partners of the Association, allow for long stay of recruiters – up to 2-3 weeks. The constant people flow is a prerequisite for attracting numerous visitors as givers.

Due to the Covid crisis and the closure of shopping and business centres, in the beginning of the year the F2F Team transformed their traditional activity into telemarketing, which allowed us to use the opportunity to attract new givers by phone calls applying the “cold calling” communication tool, taking into account and in absolute compliance with the GDPR requirements.

B. DRTV Campaigns with the participation of Svilen Noev from Ostava

Band and Kotseto Kalki - 701 new committed givers with monthly contributions by SMS attracted

In February we run the campaign “Stani Velikan” (“Become a Giant”) named after the song of the same name written by Svilen Noev from Ostava band and dedicated to SOS Children's Villages.

The purpose of the campaign was to strike a note of alarm with the public about the large number of children abandoned annually, as well as appeal for support.

In December we organised the **Pak Ste Bude Koleda** (“It Will Be Christmas Again”) campaign named after the song of the same name written by Kotseto Kalki and dedicated to us. The campaign involved his wife, the virtuoso piano-player Martina Tabakova, and their son Teodor, as well as children from the Lyubomir Pipkov School of Music.

The purpose of the campaign was to raise public awareness of foster care and foster parents, as well as raise funds to support them.

C. Digital channels and Facebook – 279 new committed givers with monthly contributions attracted.

Attracting committed givers through digital channels happened primarily through advertisements in Facebook and Google Ads, with this line of activity this year again being undertaken by an in-house team.

D. Reactivation of inactive previous givers – 249 committed givers reactivated

We continued with the approach of 2019 for daily reactivation, unlike some previous years when reactivation used to be done through campaigns only. This led to significantly better results in the communication with givers during the Covid-19 crisis.

Other Campaigns:

During the year different fund-raising campaigns were organised from influencer campaigns, Christmas and Easter campaigns, to hot and cold calls via the email, etc.

In 2021 an exceptionally beneficial partnership was launched with rebenefit.bg, the platform for administration of fringe benefits to staff. In this way staff from various companies decided to support the Association's causes by donating their fringe benefits or part of them as regular monthly contributions.

Challenges

Unfortunately, due to the Covid crisis and the restrictions for holding large-scale events, we were not able to implement the planned music events. The

idea behind them was to both promote the work of the Association among the younger generations and raise funds from ticket sales.

For the same reasons we did not manage to take steps towards the planned expansion of the F2F team, which is forthcoming in 2022.

The introduction of the 3D card-security service by leading banks in Bulgaria, created difficulties with the transactions of committed givers, but this challenge wanes away with time since an increasing number of users are getting used to the new identification requirements.

In 2022 we have set ourselves a higher target for fundraising from individual givers, which corresponds

to the enhanced quality of the social services by way of which we deliver on our mission, as well as to expanding of the activities of the Association.



CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS



The corporate partnerships incomes for 2021 amounted to **BGN 1,699,645**. Compared to the 2021 target of BGN 1,750,000, the rate of delivery was **97%**. Corporate partnership incomes in 2020 amounted to BGN 1 695 035 i.e. there is **an increase**, albeit a small one, **of 0.3%** compared to the previous year.

2021 was yet another difficult year for corporate fundraising. The pandemic situation, which brought many fears, concerns and much uncertainty for a second year in a row, rearranged the priorities of a large number of companies, and Corporate Social Responsibility was pushed to the back. The uncertainty arising from the country's political situation, the interim government in place and the lack of regular elected government through most of 2021 had a negative impact on corporate fund-raising too.

The 2021 corporate partnerships picture was varied. Despite the above-listed challenges, we won many new corporate partners and friends: Albena AD,



Servier Medical, Bultermostroy EOOD, Cargill Bulgaria, Bulgargas EAD, Sport Depot, Active Media, JCDecaux, CSMS, CCAPM, Trelleborg Bulgaria, Orenda Foundation, TILTit, Reckitt Benckiser, Integrity Audit, Festo Production, Herz Bulgaria, Telus International, Kika Group, ozon.bg, Ipsos, Herti AD, Apex Group, Tranchev OOD, Lamasped OOD, Trans World Europe, among others.

A large proportion of our long-term corporate partners supported us in 2021 too – DSK Bank, Raiffeisenbank, Progress Software, 2625 Capital, Yanssen Bulgaria, Ingram Micro GBS, Borica AD, DM Bulgaria, Billa Bulgaria, Grabo Media AD, Runners EOOD, BTC – Vivacom, Tiva Plus, TED Bed OOD, Gerada OOD, L'Oréal, Uniqa Life Insurance Company, the Air Traffic Service, among others.

Despite the serious pandemic situation, some of our corporate partners, who have been supporting the SOS Organisation for years, delighted us with making increased donations – UniCredit Consumer

Financing, Pepco Bulgaria, Purmerul OOD, the Debt Collection Agency, the Bulgarian Development Bank, Remix Global EAD, Remeko E&I OOD, among others.

Breakdown by incomes segments

For yet another year in a row the most successful fund-raising mechanism in the work with corporate partners has been **Cause-related marketing (CRM)** which generated **BGN 765,575** or **45%** of the overall incomes from corporate fund-raising. Under pandemic conditions the businesses suitable for CRM and targeting end clients suffered most seriously. Over a large proportion of the year a number of retail chains stayed closed, a large proportion of their staff being either quarantined, or down with Covid; later came the introduction of the Green Certificate, which reduced the number of shoppers. Due to the large-scale introduction of home-office working arrangements, a series of categories of goods remained outside clients' interest. Logically enough, some of the companies with which we have had preliminary talks about CRM campaigns postponed their implementation till the following year in the hope that the pandemic emergency situation will be cancelled.

Donations through DSK Bank cash machines (ATMs) in 2021 amounted to BGN 605 000. This amount represented a slight drop compared to 2020. Apparently, this outcome is also affected by Covid-19 and the tendency for clients to prefer digital payment methods. We still have the task for further cooperation with DSK Bank towards including a donation option in the DSK Smart mobile application.

Under the CRM mechanism fall the campaigns with the clients UniCredit Consumer Financing, Servier Medical EOOD, Suico (Krina Rice), DM Bulgaria, Purmerul OOD, Remix Global Ad, Grabo Media, Kika Group, ozon.bg, Tranchev OOD, GEO Nutrition, Sport Depot, among others.

The CRM mechanism is preferred by our corporate partners because of the visibility and the opportunities to communicate the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) commitment of the respective company. In 2022 too we will do targeted work to negotiate and organise such campaigns.

Donations from major long-term corporate partners with whom we work under specific **CSR Projects** amounted to **BGN 498,901** or **29%** of the total incomes from corporate fundraising. Unlike the CRM revenue segment, here we witness an increase of close to BGN 100,000 compared to 2020. In the major corporate partners we have companies such as Johnson&Johnson, Janssen, Albena AD, Ingram Micro GBS, Progress Software, Runners EOOD, the Debt Collection Agency, Pepco Bulgaria, Borica

AD, TED Bed OOD, Tiva Plus, Uniqa Life Insurance Company, Cargill Bulgaria, Bultermostroy, Bulgargas, Raiffeisenbank Bulgaria, the Bulgarian Development Bank, CSMS, CCAPM, Sofiyska Voda, L'Oréal Bulgaria, Geotrading AD, Dunapack Rodina AD, Ellatzite Med AD, the Bulgarian Air Traffic Services Authority (BULATSA), Remeko Group, Central Cooperative Union, etc. All of these companies have been supporting the SOS-Children's-Villages cause for years.

Via **direct mailing** to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in 2021 we raised **BGN 177,688** or **10%** of the total incomes from corporate fundraising. Traditionally we do mailing four times a year – at Easter, 1 June, the beginning of the school year and at Christmas. The revenue generated exceeded 18% of the target values, which is due to both the precise database to use for the mailing and the emotional storytelling-based content.

Donations in kind registered a significant rise in 2021 – **BGN 211,864** or **13%** of the total incomes from corporate fundraising. A rise in incomes from donations in kind was reported as early as 2020. In 2021 the increase compared to the previous year was 19%. During the year the prevalent donations had to do with the epidemiological situation – masks, disinfectants, cleaning and hygienic detergents and sanitary preparations, food. As a whole, companies tended far more to provide in-kind donations than financial support.

The last revenue segment, which generated **BGN 45,616** or **3%** of the total incomes, is selling **Christmas cards**. Irrespective of the fact that we continued to offer cards under extremely difficult circumstances driven by the pandemic situation, in 2021 there was a 48% rise compared to the incomes from sold Christmas cards in 2020. In 2021 new designs were developed but no printing took place in advance, since a large part of the 2020 collection was still there to sell. Clients were able to choose between pre-printed designs and the opportunity to order designs from the new collection. The individual approach in the work with corporate clients was highly appreciated and, naturally, the incomes grew. Following the careful analysis of the Christmas cards sale campaign, appeared many new ideas on which we will work in 2022 with a view to meeting the needs of the individual clients and achieving a rise in incomes.

The good results in the field of corporate partnerships are achieved by means of a combination of retaining and building on existing partnerships and attracting new corporate partners. In this sense, our colleagues from the Corporate Partnerships Department focus their efforts on organising and conducting the traditional awards ceremony for most prominent partners of the Organisation, an event to which also

potential corporate clients get invited. In 2021 the event was in-person for the fifth time and it took place on 23rd June – the international day of SOS Children’s Villages. In view of the pandemic situation, in 2022 it seems likely that the sixth edition of the event will be organised in the spring – May-June 2022 in the hope that it will again take place as an in-person get-together of the Association’s long-term, new and future corporate partners.

Achievements

In 2021 we focused on attracting new corporate partners with donor contributions between BGN 3,000 and 15,000 with a view of minimising the risk of having only one large corporate partner.

We registered an expansion of the corporate partners’ network, the rise in the number of corporate partners donating in kind being particularly noticeable. This revenue segment delivered at the level of 141% of the target incomes. Since the tendency of increased number of companies providing targeted funding in the form of donations is getting stronger, in 2021 we included an activity for developing specific causes to be presented to our corporate partners. The teamwork between the Programme Development Department, the two SOS Children’s Village Programmes and the Corporate Fundraising Department resulted in the development of targeted projects which brought to the Organisation almost BGN 500,000.

In late 2021 the document “Loyalty Programme – Corporate Partners” was finalised; it will serve as the basis for the structured management of the process of attracting new donor partners, their retention and

building on the partnerships with a view to optimising the incomes from corporate fundraising.

In December 2021 a Framework Cooperation Agreement was signed between the Bulgarian Industrial Capital Association (BICA) and SOS Children’s Villages Bulgaria. The expectations are that this cooperation will open the door to a large number of new corporate partnerships.

Challenges

Irrespective of the above-mentioned successes in fundraising through the DSK Bank ATMs channel, we cannot but point out the changed behaviour of clients, who prefer card instead of cash payments in pandemic circumstances, and also the increased number of online transactions. This tendency prompted our desire to start negotiations with the Management of DSK Bank to add a donation option to the functionality of their DSK Smart mobile application.

Even if they are likely to support an activity or project of SOS Children’s Villages Bulgaria, companies remain cautious as to the size of their donation. This fact focuses our efforts not only on increased intensity of seeking new partnerships but also on further diversification of revenue sources.

In 2022 we will expand the search for new partnerships by developing proposals for partnership to the benefit of the employer branding, including in the negotiations not only marketing and CSP experts but also HR managers. We will pilot fundraising through merchandising too – offering branded and co-branded cause-related items in an attempt to reach the 2022 revenue targets for corporate fundraising as set in our 2022 Business Plan.

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATION

2021 was perhaps the most musical year in the history of our Organisation. Two musicians (Svilen Noev from Ostava and Kotseto Kalki from Medicus) with totally different audiences dedicated songs they wrote to the SOS Organisation. The songs’ messages became the bedrock of the integrated campaigns we

started and finished the year with. This is how we set the frame in which all social services provided and projects implemented by our Organisation fit, together with the birth of the idea and pursuit of the Policy of Small Steps for resuming our work in SOS CV Dren. Of course, all of this was consistent with

the Organisation's own funding, and the Covid-19 pandemic and the ensuing economic uncertainty.

Our communication both with the external and internal audiences was adequate, transparent and

dictated by the above-mentioned factors. Wide public and the professional groups working in the social field were kept informed throughout the year about events, campaigns and projects via a series of communication activities, mainly online ones.

COMMUNICATION RELATED TO THE OVERALL IMAGE OF THE ORGANISATION AND WITH FUNDRAISING



Integrated campaign “Stani Velikan” (“Become a Giant”) featuring Svilen Noev

At the start of February 2021 we launched the integrated campaign “Stani Velikan” (“Become a Giant”) which had two main objectives: first, to focus the public attention on a very alarming piece of statistics – every year over 2,000 children in Bulgaria are abandoned by their parents, most of

them already in the maternity wards; second, to attract givers and donor partners in support of these children – the children deprived of parental care or the ones who are at risk of losing it.

The face of the campaign was Svilen from Ostava Band who gave his song Velikan „Великан” (“Giant”). as a gift to SOS Children's Villages Bulgaria. Ostava Band musicians also took part in the recording. Anyone who supported the campaign became also its ambassador by adding a frame to their profile picture in Facebook. This is how in the social media it became visible what a great number of people are sympathetic to the SOS cause!

The campaign was an integrated one and relied on a mix of channels – TV, radio, online, the press and billboards. It received huge media support by: bTV Media Group, Bulgaria On Air, the Bulgarian National Television (BNT), FM+, Z Rock, the Bulgarian National Radio (BNR), bTV Radio, Classic FM, Jazz FM, N Joy and Rebrand.

Integrated campaign “Pak Ste Bude Koleda” (“It Will Be Christmas Again”) featuring Kotseto Kalki

In the beginning of December, we launched the second integrated campaign “Pak Ste Bude Koleda” (“It Will Be Christmas Again”), which too had two main objectives: first, in the run-up to Christmas, the holiday with the most familial of spirits, to focus the public's attention on foster care and foster parents in Bulgaria. Second, to attract givers and donor partners in support of these children and families - the children who are deprived of parental care but now enjoy a new family environment.

The face of the campaign is Kotseto Kalki who gave his song “Pak Ste Bude Koleda” (“It Will Be Christmas Again”) to SOS Children's Villages Bulgaria as a gift. Kalki's family – his wife Martina Tabakova (awarded “Musician of the Year”), his son Teodor Georgiev – the protagonist in the video clip, as well as children from Lyubomir Pipkov National School of Music took part in the recording.

The campaign was an integrated one and relied on a mix of channels – TV, radio, online, the press. It was implemented with media support by: the Bulgarian National Television (BNT), Bulgaria On Air, Net Info, FM+, Z Rock and the Bulgarian National Radio (BNR).





The “One Family” Annual Awards

On 23rd June 2021 (the International day of SOS Children’s Villages) the official annual awards ceremony of SOS Children’s Villages Bulgaria “One Family” took place. It was an exceptionally emotional evening, because it managed to bring together all our partners, following an extremely difficult year scarred by the Covid 19 pandemic.

The event was opened by Svilen Noev, who greeted all people present with the song he dedicated to us – “Velikan” (“Giant”). Our guests included corporate and media partners, as well as a group of young people who grew up in SOS care and are already university students. The host of the event was the charming Mariana Vekilska, host of “Bulgaria in 60 Minutes” TV show.

Awards were granted in several categories – rising and reliable corporate partners, long-term and loyal corporate partners, and, last but not least – top media partner for 2021.



The corporate event was also widely broadcasted in the media. 100 % Awake of Bulgarian National TV was awarded as a media partner.

Communication on the occasion of our 10-year partnership with DSK Bank

2021 was the year when we celebrated our 10-year partnership with DSK Bank. A lot of events and initiatives took place during the year and all of these were communicated with the hashtag “#10godinizaedno” (#10yearstogether).

During the year were covered **corporate partnerships** with DM Bulgaria, Sport Depot, Billa Bulgaria, Servier, Krina, Cocosolis, OMB, CBA-Kome, Borica Bank Services, Raiffeisenbank, UniCredit Consumer Financing, Bulgarian Development Bank, Ingram Micro, Devin EAD, Runners, Natural Factors, Tesy, etc.





Broad coverage primarily among professional circles received the projects on which our Programme Development Department worked:

The Project “Pathways to Freedom: Empowering Young People in Alternative Care to Start an Independent and Meaningful Life”

2021 is the second year in which we have been implementing the Project “Pathways to Freedom: Empowering Young People in Alternative Care to Start an Independent and Meaningful Life”. The purpose of the Project is to empower 210 young people leaving different forms of alternative care to start successfully their independent living with the help of the innovative social service “Support for Independent Living”.

This year we again relied for the coverage of the Project on both our own channels, and the national media (BNT, Bulgaria On Air, Radio Sofia, BNR Programmes Hristo Botev and Horizont, Darik Radio), and also on the regional media in Rousse, Stara Zagora and Plovdiv.

The support benefitting the young people is effected via individualised packages of support activities and services. To illustrate this, we developed a series of publications about young people who got supported through the Project.

„Safe Places, Thriving Children“ Project

In 2022 we also continued with the implementation of the Project „Safe Places, Thriving Children: Embedding Trauma-Informed Practices into Alternative Care Settings”. The purpose of the Project is to present and

introduce a trauma-informed approach to care in the services for children so that children and young people can be better supported and the opportunities for them to develop to their fullest potential increased.

The Project was communicated to both the wide public and the professionals – with a focus on the SOS Training Centre which delivered the larger proportion of trainings.

The Project was covered by BNR, the National Network for Children, NGO.BG, etc.

Communication during the pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic continued into 2021 too and therefore it was exceptionally important to generate constantly information about our operations. On a daily basis the work of our SOS Community Support Centres, SOS Foster Care, SOS Youth Homes, the Start to Independent Living Programme, as well as the Mother and Baby Unit in Gabrovo was explained and promoted.

It was of primary importance to make the general public aware that despite the difficulties, we have not closed a single programme or any social support, we have not stopped any project – on the contrary, we are working towards their expansion. This is precisely why we run a campaign for recruiting new foster parents for SOS CV Tryavna, while in order to resume the work in SOS CV Dren, we launched the Policy of Small Steps.

Our strategic communication objectives were related to both promoting the programme activities and reinforcing the Association’s positive image, and to supporting the FR activities aimed at achieving financial autonomy.

ACTIVITIES IN ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE



For SOS Children's Villages Bulgaria Association, the year 2021 was full of challenges, of expected and unexpected cataclysms, twists and turns.

The trends in the development of the labour market, the specific working conditions in the social sector, combined with the complications due to the pandemic, were the key factor for the scope of our HR strategic activities.

Organisational Structure and Staffing

Human Resources and Organisational Development strand has an important mission to ensure the normal operation of all SOS social services, maintain a flexible and supporting **organisational structure** informed by current needs and create preconditions for future expansion and development – an objective, which in today's difficult and unusual circumstances, can turn into a serious challenge.

As of the end of 2021 the overall work of the Association is carried in 15 structural and programme facilities located on the territory of 6 municipalities and clustered in two SOS Children's Village Programmes.

The number of staff of the Association as of the end of December was 140 co-workers clustered in 6 professional groups in proportions guaranteeing optimal performance of activities:

- co-workers working directly with the clients of social services;
- co-workers providing methodological support and development of programmes and social services (at national and international levels);
- technical provision/ maintenance;
- co-workers employed in the field of fundraising (FR);
- administration and finance;
- management team.

To performance this structural snapshot of the professional groups we should add the specific group of foster parents in our networks across the country. As of the end of 2021 we worked with 66 families operating in 6 municipalities.

They are not part of the pay-roll staff of the Association; however, they receive professional support in HR aspects in which significant efforts and human resources are invested (professional development trainings, supervisions and professional advice, material and financial support, etc.). The foster

families from our network were also included in the Employer Branding Survey conducted this year.

Key HR indicators:

- The overall **staff turnover** for 2021 is 12,4%. This is slightly higher compared to the previous year when it was 11%. This tendency of slight increase as such is not frightening; however, the Management noticed disproportions in the distribution of percentage rates and significantly higher staff turnover of co-workers in facilities working directly with beneficiaries – 18,4%. Special attention was devoted to Youth Home Sofia (FTPC Sofia) where the staff turnover rate is alarming. In order to minimise the problem, over the past year measures were planned and joint activities undertaken between the HR Department and both Programmes.
- The indicator **long-term commitment of co-workers** continues to rank us in top positions among the countries in the International SOS Organisation. 63% of the co-workers have worked for over 5 years in the Organisation, while the average length of service in the SOS Association for pay-roll co-workers is 10 years and 5 months.
- For 86% of the co-workers the process of **goal setting and individual** development planning took the form of *an annual performance appraisal discussion*. 54% of co-workers received an induction or a refreshment course on Child Protection in accordance with the Training Centre programme. Four online trainings for improving the digital skills of staff were conducted as well

In response to the dynamics of the activities, over the year **restructuring** processes happened in the following programme facilities:

- The hierarchical subordination of the **social worker position in the Semi-Independent Living Programme (SILP)** was changed and it was transferred from the structures of the SOS Youth Homes to the SOS Children's Village Programme (directly reporting to the Programme Director). The SILP Service started two decades ago as part of the Youth Care, while recently it has enjoyed increasing significance:

- ✓ The SILP philosophy was recognised and integrated in the project implemented by the Association with public funding "Pathways to Freedom", thus multiplying its benefits and

reaching out to a significantly higher number of young people.

- ✓ The experimental positions of 'SILP social worker' added 3 years ago to the staffing plan have gained substance and are characterised with workload going even beyond the initial idea.

The structural change mentioned is a reflection of the increased responsibilities of the job position "SILP social worker" in the context of the strategic goal for the Service to be recognised as a standard in the social work with young people, at national level.

- The **reorganisation of the Finance and Accounting & Administration** Departments planned in late 2020 was gradually being implemented throughout the entire 2021. The ultimate goal of this initiative is to increase the effectiveness, consolidation and alignment of administrative activities. The HR steps taken were linked to the preparation for changes to the organisational and functional structure of the Finance and Accounting Departments in the Children's Village Programme Sofia-Pernik and the National Office (NO).

- In early 2021 our Organisation took the challenge to start working on a project seeking to resume our work in SOS Children's Village Dren (SOS CV Dren). Transforming SOS CV Dren back into an independent SOS structural facility is of social relevance to the local community and in line with the SOS Children's Villages' philosophy and mission.

The development of this new unit in the Association's structure points to its ambition to develop and grow, as well as its aspiration to respond to the current up-to-date needs of the community.

- ✓ In February 2021 a staff member was hired who undertook to do the preparatory work for this important project for a period of a year and a half.

- ✓ In December, following a successful recruitment procedure, co-workers were engaged (a director and a teacher) for the first initiative under this Project – SOS Children's Centre for Early Childhood Learning and Development "Drencheta", which is planned to launch operation in early 2022.

- ✓ Since February 2021 the preparation of the maintenance team (technical team) has been

launched so that they can be included in the new initiatives. During the slack period with no activity in the Children's Village, the Association put targeted efforts to preserve all co-workers – on the one hand, due to their proven capacity as professionals, on the other hand, in pursuance of its own humane principles and approach to treating staff.

At the end of 2021 specific actions were undertaken to restructure and amend the responsibilities of each individual staff member to meet the new requirements and in compliance with their individual capacity and professional development prospects.

Employer Branding Survey

In response to the labour market challenges, as well as the in-house analyses of our Organisation, the topic of Employer Branding entered the agenda in the beginning of 2021. In cooperation with our partners from the HR company CATRO Bulgaria, in March we launched the "Employer Branding Survey" project and this was the start of a more systematic and analytical approach to the issue of how to improve the work environment in the Association and how to position and have SOS Children's Villages Bulgaria recognised as an employer of choice on the Bulgarian labour market.

Focus group discussions were the main method of project implementation. A total of 47 co-workers representatives of different organisational units, foster parents from our network and students (representatives of potential future job-applicants) took part in 7 focus groups.

During the discussions they made their contribution to the insights of what makes the Association stand out as an employer. Quantity and quality information was gathered in the following areas: 1) *Mission, vision and values*; 2) *Public image*; 3) *Recruitment and induction practices*; 4) *Training and development practices*; 5) *Remuneration and recognition practices*; 6) *Leadership approach*.

In June, during the annual meeting, the summarised findings were shared with the heads of structural facilities. Their analysis showed convincingly what the advantages serving as the bedrock in the work of our Organisation are, which we need to treasure and

develop, as well as the areas that need improvement and hard work.

Under each of these areas, measures were developed and activities planned and these were included in the Association's 2022 Work Plan.

Recruitment and retention. Remuneration and recognition.

The findings of the Employer Branding Survey brought to the fore yet again one of the serious challenges faced by employers – staff recruitment, retention, satisfaction and remuneration.

On the one hand, the quantitative and qualitative indicators in the research show that SOS staff have recognised the *mission, vision and values* and regard these as a retention factor and motivator in their work. Their sense of contributing to a cause is part of “the reward and motivation” in their daily work.

On the other hand, the scores in the area of ‘*Remuneration and recognition practices*’ are the lowest.

The management is fully aware of this rating confirmed also through other sources exploring satisfaction. There are reasons for this and they are related to:

- ✓ the objective lagging behind of the pay levels in comparison to the labour market levels;
- ✓ the low unemployment rate and the strong labour demand (especially in Sofia);
- ✓ raising the salaries in the public social and education sectors;
- ✓ the consequences of the pandemic for the employers;
- ✓ the rising inflation and energy and fuel prices, etc.

Taking into consideration the listed above factors, as well as the conditions of work under full financial autonomy, the Management formulated its long-term ambition to strike a balance between: the positive attitudes and commitment of co-workers to the SOS cause, on the one hand, and on the other

hand, guarantees for adequate, befitting and flexible remuneration.

In order to achieve such balance, key points were specified for the future efforts to develop innovative and competitive employer HR policies and working conditions.

In 2021 work along the following lines was launched:

- ✓ Paid leave as a token of recognition and optimised mode of work for the various categories of co-workers;
- ✓ Flexible forms of work and reporting (depending on the specifics of the positions);
- ✓ In general, improving the remuneration levels compared to the average for the sector;
- ✓ Fringe benefits – seeking and offering variety;
- ✓ Additional annual performance-related pay depending on the specifics of the professional group;
- ✓ Alternative non-financial forms of motivation in good balance with the financial incentives our Organisation can afford.

The Covid-19 Pandemic and its repercussions on HR

The impact of the pandemic and the related restrictive measures on the work environment have been widely discussed and analysed in society. SOS makes no exception and we have been experiencing all the difficulties the health-related crisis imposes on the labour market. Due to the specifics of the social activities of SOS Children's Villages Bulgaria Association, some of these exert stronger influence:

- ✓ The State's focus and financial measures favouring the education and social sectors in pandemic times brought about further difficulties as regards the staff recruitment and retention processes in the Association. This tendency is reinforced also by the heightened levels of inflation at the end of 2021.
- ✓ The changed working conditions put another demarcation line across the professional groups within the Association – such where home-based work is entirely or largely possible and such where it is possible only in a limited range or totally impossible. Bearing in mind the HR experts' finding that staff perceive the ‘home-based work’



opportunity as a fringe benefit, this new reality grows into a new challenge.

- ✓ The restrictive measures hampered and/or made impossible the implementation of planned activities involving volunteers.

Over the year the Association took measures for work under Covid-pandemic conditions:

- ✓ A document laying down additional rules of work, mode of work and safety measures under Covid-19 pandemic (an Annex to the Internal Rules);
- ✓ Creating condition for online training and work-related meetings;
- ✓ Securing protective equipment and ensuring maximum protection of the health of staff;
- ✓ Developing compensation mechanisms for the quarantined in residential services.

In conclusion, although the objective circumstances in the work environment in the second year of the Covid pandemic were not easier, they were largely predictable and channelled, hence more bearable and manageable.

2021 Tendencies for development of the professional groups

In 2021 an analysis of current state of the professional groups in SOS from the point of view of key HR indicators was carried out in order to provide the Association's Management with a clear and up-to-date picture of their status and tendencies. Some of the more significant developments for the groups were:

Educators in Youth Homes (YHs) are the largest professional group, and the most critical, from the point of view of recruitment, retention and satisfaction.

The tendency of growing dissatisfaction among this professional group is in the focus of the Management's attention. Particularly high attention is focused on the team in YH Sofia where last year the overall dissatisfaction was combined with critically high staff turnover levels.

The analysis of the situation leads to reasons along three lines:

- Labour market
 - On the one hand, the traditionally low profile and pay levels in the social professions discourage job applicants; on the other hand – the Covid crisis attracted the attention of those in power to

acknowledge the public relevance of social work and remuneration in the social sector was increased.

- Competition in the sector is significant; there are quite a number of attractive alternatives, making it difficult for us to recruit and retain staff;

- Work opportunities (especially in Sofia), in and outside the social sector, are numerous, varied and offering an increasingly more competitive remuneration and fringe-benefits package;

- Difficulties in the work at YHs

- Work is getting more complicated – young people with increasingly problematic behaviour, dependencies and health status are placed;

- Lack of support on the part of state and municipal institutions (police, school, health authorities and centres, etc.) for the work with the target group of young people; lack of sensitivity and understanding on the part of society (neighbours) of the problems the young people have;

- Risk to the physical and mental health of the co-workers. This risk is even higher in the Covid situation and the constant contact with the young people.

- Working on shifts has its advantages but in the long-term it is exhausting and this is pointed out as one of the reasons for educators to leave – especially working on holidays and during the weekends.

- Internal organisational reasons

- There was a leadership crisis in the YHs in Sofia in the past year;

- Setting up a good team and the teamwork are hampered significantly due to intensive turnover;

- Demotivation, negative attitudes and behavioural models are in place within the team which are not in line with the principles and values of the SOS Organisation.

Considering these factors, as well as the recommendations from the Employer Branding Survey conducted, the Management came up with some measures and since mid-2021 has been implementing them according to the approved plan. They seek to change the working conditions, the financial and non-financial incentives, and find new, non-standard approaches to the recruitment of co-workers in this group.



Foster Care – foster parents and respite care

The work of the Association in the area of *foster care* continues to be a challenge. This has to do with 2 factors:

1) With the expected regulations after the completion of the *Accept Me* Project, which our Association has the ambition to face with the necessary proactive preparation as regards HR (Foster Care Teams, running the Service, etc.)

2) our efforts to strike the balance in our work with two categories: a) network of community-based foster parents in 6 municipalities who are not on our staffing plan but SOS offers them various forms of professional support and b) a small group of foster parents with long years of service in our Organisation who take care of a larger number of children and do so in residential premises owned by the Association.

The Association's strategic objective related to the two categories of foster parents is, on the one hand, to bring closer and make equal the forms of its support to them and, on the other hand, to preserve the second category (in SOS CV Tryavna) which to a large extent bears the characteristics of the traditional SOS model and with its positive experience could be a valuable addition to the foster care forms in the country. In 2021 the Association held a recruitment campaign for foster parents in Tryavna which failed to produce the expected result.

The logic behind the *family assistant* position is linked to the former SOS care model and it is the



Association's strategic goal to preserve it, linking up its development to the development of the state standards for foster care, more specifically the respite foster care standard. Unfortunately, in 2021, due to a number of objective difficulties, no progress was made towards achieving this goal.

Specialists in the field of child development and the family – psychologists, pedagogues, social workers, advisers

Previous years' research, as well as the Employer Branding Survey conducted this year, indicate that with this group a strong motivator (alongside financial incentives) is the opportunity for professional development and establishing oneself in the profession, in-house and external forms of training and qualifications, supervisions, professional exchange.

Bearing in mind this fact, in 2021 the Association worked actively to create conditions for reinforcing the work of the SOS Training Centre, focusing predominantly on the more active inclusion of co-workers as trainers. The aim is, on the one hand, to use fully the competencies and knowledge of the Association experts and, on the other, to develop additional financial and non-financial motivators.

The Fundraising Team (FR)

The Fundraising Team (FR Team) is a guarantee for providing for the operational work in the social services and the related supporting activities of the Association.

Contrary to our misgivings and fears for a serious drop in the funds doubts raised because of Covid restrictions, in 2021 our fundraising (FR) team exceeded the expectations. This success is largely due to the exceptional creativity, quick and out-of-the-box decisions in our main line of operation, as well as thanks to the effective and flexible structure in place quickly adaptable to the dynamic business environment, donation attitudes and the hard-to-predict restrictive measures in the last two years.

From the point of view the HR structure and specifics of contractual relations, in 2021 the FR team developed in the following directions:

- ✓ Taking into consideration the potential of the small and effective Face-to-Face (F2F) team, the FR Management developed and proposed a model for expansion and replication of its work, which started its pilot implementation in late 2021.
- ✓ The group of FR external co-workers introduced (a year ago) as an experiment, continues to prove itself and at the end of the year we worked with 3 co-workers using this model. Even though the incomes in financial terms from the work of this category of co-workers was smaller than desired over the last year, working with them had unplanned benefits as regards recruitment and induction of co-workers, since last year saw two smooth and successful transitions of co-workers from being on the staffing plan to being part-time and vice versa. As of today, we find that the efforts on the integration of the part-time co-workers into the Association's team and making them part to the Organisation's values has serious added value and should be continued by mobilising and applying in relation to them all relevant and available non-financial HR incentives and tools.

Management

Despite the considerable number of internal and external challenges to the management team on the way to achieving the objectives and targets, the results at the end of 2021 may classify the year as 'successful'.

The factors related to the work of the Association's management that have contributed to the positive annual outcomes in most general terms are:

- ✓ A policy of open and constant liaison with our co-workers and their involvement in various decision-making formats. Online meetings of operational and strategic relevance were regularly organised. The opportunity to hold a face-to-face meeting of all managers of structural facilities (MSFs) in June in Tryavna was highly appreciated – a meeting where the hottest issues in each line of the business were tabled and discussed.
- ✓ Valuable and unconditional support on the part of members of the Management Board, their commitment to the Association's strategic mission and decisions, as well as their timely involvement in decision-making when it comes to complex operational and/or critical cases.



ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2021

BALANCE SHEET

Financial Report
for the year ended on 31st December 2021

BALANCE SHEET AS OF 31.12.2020							
ASSETS				LIABILITIES			
Section, groups, articles	Attach	Amount in thousand BGN		Section, groups, articles	Attach	Amount in thousand BGN	
		current year	previous year			current year	previous year
a							
A. Subscribed but not fully paid-up capital				A. Equity capital			
B. Non-current (fixed) assets				A. Equity capital			
<i>I. Intangible assets</i>				<i>IV. Reserves</i>			
Concessions, patents, licences, trademarks, software products and other similar		66	47	4. Other reserves		621	668
Total for group I	4	66	47	Total for group IV	10	621	668
<i>II. Fixed material assets</i>				VI. Current profit (loss)		69	(47)
1. Lands and buildings, incl.:		3,347	2,010	Total for section A		690	621
Lands		7	4	B. Provisions and similar liabilities			
Buildings		3,340	2,006	1. Retirement provisions and other similar liabilities	11	92	144
2. Plant and machinery and manufacturing equipment		47	55	Total for section B		92	144
3. Facilities and others		84	82	C. Payables			
Total for group II	5	3,478	2,147	4. Payables to suppliers	12	49	31
<i>III. Fixed financial assets</i>				Up to 1 year		49	31
Long-term investments	6	-	1,612	8. Other payables, incl.:	12	436	394
Total for group III		-	1,612	Up to 1 year		150	114
Total for section B		3,544	3,806	Over 1 year		286	280
C. Current (short-term) assets				- to staff, incl.:		144	75
<i>I. Material inventory</i>				Up to 1 year		144	75
1. Raw materials		146	202	- Social security payments, incl.:		1	28
2. Production and finished goods		6	9	Up to 1 year		1	28
Finished goods		6	9	- Tax obligations, incl.:		5	11
Total for group I	7	152	211	Up to 1 year		5	11
<i>II. Receivables</i>				Total for section C, incl.:		485	425
1. Receivables from customers and suppliers		80	57	Up to 1 year		199	145
2. Other receivables		12	13	Over 1 year		286	280
Total for group II	8	92	70	D. Funding and deferred revenue	13	7,394	7,049
<i>IV. Cash</i>				Funding		7,394	7,049
- cash amounts		15	9				
- unlimited accounts (deposits)		4,839	4,124				

<i>Total for group IV:</i>	9	4,854	4,133				
Total for section C		5,098	4,414				
D. Deferred expenses	14	19	19				
Amount of asset (A+B+C+D)		8,661	8,239	Amount of liabilities (A+B+C+D)		8,661	8,239

This financial report was approved for publication by the Management of SOS Children's Villages Bulgaria on 04.05.2022.

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Veselin Komitov
Chairman of the Management Board
[Seal of Children's Villages
Association Bulgaria]

Prepared by:
[sgd. illegibly]
Milena Nentcheva-Ivanova

In accordance with the Report by the Independent Auditor Moor Bulgaria Audit OOD

Ivan Simov

PROFIT AND LOSS REPORT

STATEMENT of revenue and expenditure for the year ending 31 December 2021							
Expense name	Attach	Amount in thousand BGN		Revenue name	Attach	Amount in thousand BGN	
		Current year	Previous year			Current year	Previous Year
I. OPERATING EXPENSES				I. OPERATIONAL REVENUE			
A. Expenses on regulated activity				A. Revenue from regulated activity			
Other expenses	15	4,386	4,236	Membership		1	-
B. Administrative expenses	15	614	637	Other revenue	16	4,989	4,862
Total I:		5,000	4,873	Total I:		4,990	4,862
II. FINANCIAL EXPENSES				II. FINANCIAL REVENUE			
Negative differences from exchange rate fluctuations		80	144	Positive differences from exchange rate fluctuations		123	90
Other expenses for financial operations		3	4				
Total II:		83	148	III. PROFIT FROM BUSINESS OPERATIONS		39	22
TOTAL EXPENSE		5,083	5,021	TOTAL REVENUE		5,152	4,974
V. RESULT		69	-	IV. RESULT		-	47
TOTAL		5,152	5,021	TOTAL		5,152	5,021

The Financial Report was approved for publication by the Management of SOS Children's Village Bulgaria on 04.05.2022.

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Veselin Komitov
Chairman of the Management Board
[Seal of Children's Villages
Association Bulgaria]

Prepared by:
[sgd. illegibly]
Milena Nentcheva-Ivanova

In accordance with the Report by the Independent Auditor Moor Bulgaria Audit OOD

Ivan Simov

PROFIT AND LOSS REPORT

RESULTS FROM ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

PROFIT AND LOSS REPORT (for the results from the economic activity) for the year ended on 31 st December 2021							
TYPE OF EXPENSE	Attach	Amount (in thousand BGN)		TYPE OF REVENUE	Attach	Amount (in thousand BGN)	
		Current year	Previous year			Current year	Previous year
A. Expenses				B. Revenue			
1. Cost of raw materials and hired services, incl.:		15	10	1. Net revenue from sales, incl.:		73	39
a) Raw materials		6	3	a) Goods		45	31
b) Hired services		9	7	b) Services		28	8
2. Staff expenses, incl.:		5	1				
a) Salaries and wages		5	1	Total revenue from operating activities	17	73	39
4. Other expenses, incl.:		10	4				
a) Book value of assets sold		9	4				
Total expenses for operating activity	17	30	15				
6. Accounting profit (total revenue – total expenses)		43	24				
7. Expenses for tax on profit	18	(4)	(2)				
8. Profit		39	22				
Total		73	39	Total		73	39

The Financial Report was approved for publication by the Management SOS Children's Villages Bulgaria on 04.05.2022.

[sgd. illegibly]
 Veselin Komitov
 Chairman of the Management Board
 [Seal of Children's Villages
 Association Bulgaria]

Prepared by:
 [sgd. illegibly]
 Milena Nentcheva-Ivanova

In accordance with the Report by the Independent Auditor Moor Bulgaria Audit OOD

Ivan Simov

OWN EQUITY REPORT

OWN EQUITY REPORT for the year ended on 31st December 2021

	Attach.	Equity of NGO	Other Reserves	Financial Result	Total Equity
Balance as of the beginning of the reporting period	-	-	668	(47)	621
Financial result for current period	-	-	-	69	69
Distribution of profit, incl.:	-	-	(47)	47	-
Balance at the end of the reporting period	-	-	621	69	690

The Financial Report was approved for publication by the Management SOS Children's Villages Bulgaria on 04.05.2022.

[sgd. illegibly]
Veselin Komitov
Chairman of the Management Board
[Seal of Children's Villages
Association Bulgaria]

Prepared by:
[sgd. illegibly]
Milena Nentcheva-Ivanova

In accordance with the Report by the Independent Auditor Moor Bulgaria Audit OOD

Ivan Simov

CASH FLOW REPORT

CASH FLOW REPORT for the year ended on 31st December 2021

Type of cash flow	Current year	Previous year reconciliation	-
I. Cash available at the beginning of the period	4,133	3,548	
II. CASH FLOWS FROM NON-PROFIT ACTIVITIES			
A. Proceeds from non-profit activities			
1. Proceeds from membership fees	1	-	
2. Insurance compensations received	-	4	
3. Proceeds from banking and foreign exchange transactions	110	47	
4. Other proceeds	4,972	4,929	
Total proceeds from non-profit activities	5,083	4,980	
B. Payments for non-profit activities			
1. Salaries paid	1,965	1,885	
2. Social security contributions paid	847	759	
3. Payments for banking and foreign exchange transactions	44	128	
4. Payments for services	638	601	
5. Other payments	932	1,049	
Total payments for non-profit activities	4,426	4,422	
C. Net cash flow from non-profit activities	657	558	
III. CASH FLOWS FROM ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES			
A. Proceeds from economic activities			
1. Proceeds from customers	73	39	
Total proceeds from economic activities	73	39	
B. Payments for economic activities			
1. Payments for services and acquisition of assets	3	1	
2. Payments to suppliers	3	7	
3. Tax paid	3	4	
4. Other payments	-	-	
Total payments for economic activities	9	12	
C. Net cash flow from economic activities	64	27	
IV. Cash available at the end of the period	4,854	4,133	
V. CHANGE IN CASH FOR THE PERIOD	721	585	

The Financial Report was approved for publication by the Management SOS Children's Villages Bulgaria on 04.05.2022.

[sgd. illegibly]
Veselin Komitov
Chairman of the Management Board
[Seal of Children's Villages
Association Bulgaria]

Prepared by:
[sgd. illegibly]
Milena Nentcheva-Ivanova

In accordance with the Report by the Independent Auditor Moor Bulgaria Audit OOD

Ivan Simov

REGISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

SOS Children's Villages Bulgaria is a non-profit organization, organized under the laws of Bulgaria, with its legal seat and principal place of business in Sofia, 8A Paskal Todorov Str., UIC 000647906, Sofia city's Court lawsuit № 8027/1990.

The registered office and address of the Association is the Republic of Bulgaria, 1618 Sofia, Ovcha Kupel Municipality, 1618 Ovcha Kupel Str. Pascal Todorov 8A.

The Association is based on a private initiative. As a charitable organization it was established with the purpose of support, ideological dissemination and the practical realization of the idea of SOS children's villages in Bulgaria with direct care for children in risk, services in training and other activities, related to the subject of the main activity for which it is registered.

The Association carries out activities in public benefit by providing protection and care for the children in the programs managed by SOS Children's villages for the upbringing and education of children in Bulgaria left without parental support, children from separated families, regardless of their religious, ethnic and racial affiliation. These commitments continue until the moment of growth and achievement of economic independence and social adaptation for each child in SOS care.

Other aspects of the Association's activities are support for children and young people accommodated in youth homes, support for families at risk through specially established centers for public support, as well as support for foster families, support for caregivers through a specially created program for starting an independent life.

The association is a member of the international organization SOS Children's Villages.

National executive director

Valeria Georgieva:

Date: April 29, 2022

Sofia

LIST OF BOARD MEMBERS 2021

The management body of the Association is the Management Board, which consists of a Chairman, a Vice-Chairperson and five members in the chamber:

1. Vesselin Komitov - Chairman
2. Anelia Dimitrova - Vice-Chairperson
3. Teodor Karayonchev - Member
4. Prof. Georgi Petrov - Member
5. Eleonora Sarbova - Member
6. Alo Tammsalu - Representative of SOSKDI International
7. Ela Janczur - Representative of SOSKDI International

The Association is represented by the Chairman of the Management Board Veselin Nikolov Komitov. Pursuant to Art. 10 of the Statute of the Association and the Rules for Organization of the Activities of the Management Board, the operational activity of the Association SOS Children's Villages Bulgaria is managed by a National Management Team and a National Executive Director.

