

SOCIAL SERVICES AS A SOCIAL INVESTMENT ON THE EXAMPLE OF A NEW INSTITUTION OF SOCIAL CENTERS IN POLAND, FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE SOCIAL WORKERS

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Abstract. *The aim of the article is to present the empirical research conducted among Polish social workers in November of 2020 on the newly created institution named in Polish - - Centrum Usług Społecznych, CUS (Social Service Centers). The article also presents the theoretical framework, but mostly the authors focus on presenting empirical research of 79 social welfare centers in Poland. The main research problem proposed within the article was how social workers perceive the creation of a new institution in municipalities - social service centers and what deficits and strengths they see in the field of creating new social services, that meet new challenges such as aging of society, transformations of labor markets and changes within the family, ecological threats and new pandemics.*

Keywords: *social policy, economy, social work, labor market.*

Introduction

Social services and social investments are currently an important paradigm of reorganization and reforms in modern welfare states in most European countries. Social services from an analytical perspective related to the so-called a new approach towards the welfare state is not sufficiently described and researched from the scientific point of view, hence the article brings the added value in this regard. Until recently, most of the analyzes concerned traditional systems of social security, which secured social risks and did not create a framework for pro-development activities. The article shows the theoretical framework, but the authors focus on presenting empirical research of 79 social welfare centers in Poland. The main research problem proposed within the article was how social workers perceive the creation of a new institution in municipalities - social service centers and what deficits and strengths they see in the field of creating new social services, that meet new challenges such as aging

of society, transformations of labor markets and changes within the family, ecological threats and new pandemics. The survey was conducted using the direct questionnaire with open and closed questions. Additionally, an expert focus was conducted with employees of social welfare institutions. The respondents belonged mainly to social workers.

Theoretical Framework

The axis of the theoretical discourse on welfare state, highlighted in this article, is the issue of transferring social welfare and redistributing income and opportunities. The traditional, post-war welfare state was conceived in such a way as to primarily cover social risks and redistribute income through direct social benefits - insurance and budget (supply).

In order to redistribute cash benefits, welfare states have usually established large central public entities to dealing with social security, which are controlled and supervised directly by governments. It should be emphasized, however, that a modern, current, investing welfare state, as a part of social benefits, also redistributes services and in-kind benefits that relate to such areas as education, health care, social assistance, rehabilitation, etc., while the organization and supervision over the implementation of these benefits consisting of services as well as products is mostly decentralized (Golinowska, 2019).

Local governments and their subordinate social policy institutions and / or non-governmental organizations are responsible for the provision and creating of services. The state finances or co-finances public services to a greater or lesser extent, however, there are local entities of social policy that organize social services. In the traditional welfare state model, designed after World War II, money transfers policy has always dominated over service provision. Recently, however, for the first time in Scandinavian countries, since the end of the 1970s, started to pay more and more attention to the redistribution of services as a public investment aimed at increasing the opportunities, equality and opportunities for various social groups to improve the quality of life, in also the greater independence and inclusion of groups at risk of exclusion. In current Europe there is an increasingly popular model in which states, including local governments, begin to allocate more and more resources to investments in social services and infrastructure. Emphasis is placed on enhancing the sphere of services within the redistribution policy. Social services are treated as an increasingly important element of social investment and as an important component of modern welfare states. As J. Alber claims in one of his texts, social policy is moving towards the provision of services. Social services must inevitably take a leading role in social policy. Social services are becoming an increasingly important component of the

welfare structure and there is an urgent need to reorient research in this direction (Alber, 2001).

Many contemporary experts emphasize that social services are becoming a priority factor in contemporary discussions on social policy due to their relatively greater, than money transfers, because of its effectiveness and efficiency and an investing attribute (although critics question the alleged greater effectiveness). Therefore, many discussions between scholars and practitioners closely link the service approach with the investment perspective, both in terms of context and content (Grewiński, 2020).

The development of social services essentially results from the "post-Fordist" social reality. Solutions based on social (more broadly public) services fit better to the post-industrial reality of the new social order than traditional money transfers. The consequences of this approach were, among theoreticians, attempts to replace the term welfare state with the term "social services state", which more closely reflects the specificity of the organization of the social policy system, focused on services (Grewiński 2014, 2017). A wider interest in social services and other perceptions of social policy dates back to the end of the 1970s, when the traditional welfare state was subjected to severe neoliberal criticism, connected with the low effectiveness and weak efficiency of social activities including increasing costs. The reforms of that period mainly consisted in introducing financial restrictions on social assistance programs, but interestingly, the changes in the welfare states did not cover all strategies or programs uniformly.

Those reforms mainly concerned social security systems and state aids, including pension systems, due to disincentive benefits and financial burdens. In contrast, social services were not subject to restrictions at that time, despite the reform process, and in some cases, expenditure was even increased on services to compensate for reductions in money (Castles, 2008; Nikolai, 2012).

For this reason, expenditure on social transfers in GDP between the 1970s and 1990s in many countries did not decrease at all, because the introduced restrictions in financing social security systems did not have to mean a reduction in expenditure on social services, but on the contrary even meant an increase outlays on social services, which were to compensate for other passive activities, aimed at reducing the existing social problems (Clarke, 2004).

As a result of scientific discussions, but also the exchange of experiences among decision-makers and practitioners on how to deal with new social risks emerging in the process of globalization, welfare states began to assume new social obligations in the form of social services, due to the transformation of the structure of the economy and the weakened role of the family (due to the processes of cultural and civilization changes, in particular the role of women in their family functions and on the labor market (Bonoli, 2007; Taylor-Gooby, 2004). Particular

welfare states began to respond to new social threats because of these changes, both through reforms of social security systems, but also, by strengthening the social service system. For example, the aging of the population and the deterioration of family functioning have led to the necessity to provide public services for the care of children, disabled and elderly people. The crisis on the labor markets required a large investment in human capital through the creation of new social services related to active labor market policies and professional reintegration services within the framework of employment policy and social economy (Grewiński, Rymśa 2011).

Some authors, conducting the latest research on new types of welfare states, introduce very clearly classifications of states based on social services (Ahn, 2007). Taken into account the relative structural contribution of social services and direct benefits transfers, S. H. Ahn classified welfare states as a organization form of state with a high level of both social services and money transfers as a type of "social services focused" type, while on the other hand there is a type of state with low level of public aid in both areas and is called as "public social support focused" state. Countries with a relatively low level of social services but a high level of money transfer have been classified as a type of "money transfer focused" state (Ahn, 2007). The perspective of social investment, as emerging a new paradigm of welfare state, indicates a tendency in which the main point of welfare state reorganization is the transition from passive income compensation through money transfers to an active model of social policy, including improving the availability and provision of social services and their production. At the same time, the prospect of social investment is seen as the social strategy of states to counter new threats, increase employment rates and contribute to economic development as well (Esping - Andersen 1998; Evers, Heinze, 2010).

Social Service Centers in Poland as a New Institution of Local Social Policy

From the perspective of the development of social services in Poland, reference should be made to the adoption in 2019 of the Act on the provision of social services by Social Service Centers (CUS). This act, as a legislative initiative of the President of the Republic of Poland, was prepared by a team of experts working as part of the National Development Council - in the Family and Social Policy Section. The act and its content undoubtedly refer directly to the concept of social investments in social services through the creation of a new coordinating entity, which is to be the Social Services Center (CUS) at the local level. The main objective of the adopted Act is to enable the establishment of social service centers at the local level, thus ensuring the development opportunities at the municipal and county level of an integrated system of coordination and management of social services. The legislator rightly assumed that the creation of a more

integrated model of social services for citizens is certainly very necessary in Poland, due to the fact that the solutions adopted at the beginning of the 1990s in Poland were too individual, inconsistent and disintegrated services, characteristic of the countries Central and Eastern Europe, which reformed their aid systems after the period of real socialism. The institutional system of social welfare created in Poland at the beginning of the 90s of the last century offered mainly passive benefits in cash and products assistance, and to a lesser extent offering integrated and personalized social services. Successive reforms of social welfare and other social policy systems in fact consolidated this state of affairs - hence the thesis that Polish support systems were largely based in the last 30 years primarily on cash benefits, with poorly developed social services, which had the features of separatist benefits, not integrated services. At the same time, many European countries significantly transformed and reorganized their systems aid towards social services and many reforms were related to the attempt to integrate and individualize them so that they better respond to the diverse and multi-problem needs of citizens aid towards social services and many reforms were related to the attempt to integrate and individualize them so that they better respond to the diverse and multi-problem needs of citizens (Grewinski, 2017).

The Act on the provision of social services by Social Service Centers, adopted in Poland in July 2019, assumes that social services mean activities in the field of many specific social policies. In art. 2.1 the following scopes of social services are listed: pro-family policy, supporting family, foster care system, social assistance, promotion and health protection, supporting disabled people, public education, counteracting unemployment, culture, physical culture and tourism, stimulating civic activity, housing, protection environment, professional and social reintegration.

This means that social services are treated very broadly in the Act, without limiting them to a particular specific detailed policy. Such an approach has significant repercussions - it essentially means the transformation of the current, common way of thinking about local social policy through the prism of the social assistance system. Pursuant to the Act, social services become an element that binds the wider context of local institutions and networks of various social policy stakeholders, where, due to the variety of services offered, not only the current beneficiaries of social assistance which comes from the Centers of Social Service, but also other social groups that have not used social assistance benefits. The Act, through the use of such broad provisions, in fact changes the perception of goals and priorities of local social policy from a protective and passive function to investment and development functions. For this reason alone, the Act is an interesting piece of legislation that may be of great importance for the change. For this reason alone, the Act is an interesting legal act, which may be of great

importance for changing the mentality of local decision-makers and for a different perception of social functions of local government, including municipalities.

Research

Opinions of social workers on the newly created institution of Social Service Centers (CUS) and the challenges related to the development of social services and the social welfare system in Poland.

There was conducted a survey on perception of renewed Act on Social Service Centers among 79 employees of main Polish institutions which deal in regions (ROPS) and cities (OPS) in the field of social service and direct helping people in need. Respondents were asked how they pertain a new institution of social service centers in Poland. Therefore, respondents in the 79-person group consisted of 91.1%, employed in OPS, 3.8% in ROPS, and 5.1% in NGOs. However, in terms of the positions held: 94% of the respondents were social workers, and the remaining 6% were administrative workers. The first question was on the Act on Social Service Centers:

Table 1 Results of the Multiple Choice Questions on Perception of Renewed Act on Social Service Centers (from the chosen 79 employees of main Polish institutions which deal in regions (ROPS) and cities (OPS), in the field of social service and direct helping people in need)

Questions	Answers
1. Are You familiar with The Act on Social Service Centers	There were collected 79 questionnaires with answers from the surveyed group, in which among the respondents, 46.79% admitted that the Act is little known to them, and only in general way. A similar number of respondents (40.51%) indicated that they had heard about it. On the other hand only 7.6% of the respondents answered that the law was not known to them, they had not heard about it at all. We can assume that only 5.1% declared that they knew the Act very well.
2. Are You familiar with idea of a social services as an important direction of the development of the assistance social system in Poland ?	More than half of the respondents (54.40%) say that they know the idea, but with no details. Successively, 33% of respondents admitted that they know this idea very poorly. An equal number of respondents (6.3%) chose the extreme answers: "Yes, I know it very well" and "I have not heard anything about the idea of developing social services in Poland.
3. If you know the CUS (The Centers of Social Service) Act and/or the idea of service development, where did you get information on this subject?	The vast majority of respondents (51.9%) replied that they themselves found information about it on the Internet and in publications. 24.1% of the respondents admitted that they did not know the Act / idea mentioned in the question. 10.1% of the respondents participated in a conference/seminar in which the topic was announced. At the university, this information was obtained by 6.3% of the respondents. 5.1% of respondents received this information from the Ministry of Family, Labour, and Social Policy (MRRiPS) institution, and 2.5% from Regional Centers of Social Policy. (ROPS).

<p>4. Do you think that the development of social services is necessary in the social assistance system?</p>	<p>As many as 48.1% of the respondents answered the above question positively ("Yes, we absolutely have large deficits here"). Exactly the same number of respondents marked the answer: "It is possible to develop some services, such as care or specialist". Only 2.55% of the respondents believe that social services should not be developed, but rather be in form of offer of cash benefits. Only 1.25% believe that there is no need to develop social services.</p>
<p>5. Do you think that the benefit "The 500+ Children Benefits Program" contributes indirectly for the development of the social services market due to growing demand families in this area?</p>	<p>Most of the respondents (50.6%) chose the answer: "Yes, but to a limited extent". 24.1% of the respondents answered the question in the negative: ("No, it does not contribute"). As many as 17.7% of people participating in the survey do not have their own opinion in this regard. The answer: "Yes, absolutely, families mainly allocate these funds to the purchase of educational, sports, recreational and other services for their children" was chosen by only 7.6% of the respondents.</p>
<p>6. Do you think that the social welfare scheme is missing social services?</p>	<p>Almost half of the respondents (43%) believe that it is missing, but to a small extent. 38% of the respondents chose a decisively affirmative answer to the above question: ("Yes, there is a lot to do"). 14% of the respondents chose the negative answer: "There is no shortage, after all, the offer includes care and specialist services". Only 4% of the respondents believe that the social assistance system should not offer very extensive services.</p>
<p>7. Do you think that a reform and reconstruction are necessary for the social welfare towards strengthening the role of services in the social welfare system?</p>	<p>45.6% of respondents believe that there is no need for such a deep reform, rather minor corrections are needed. The absolute necessity of a thorough reform and reconstruction of social assistance institutions was indicated by 44.3% of the respondents. 6.3% of respondents believe that the social assistance system should be included in health protection. The rest of the respondents (3.8%) believe that there is no need to reform the social welfare system at all because the created system works well.</p>
<p>8. Would you be for a change of the name of a Social Welfare Center into a Social Service Center?</p>	<p>33% of the respondents believe that the current (old) name should remain, but in every social welfare institution there should be a social services department. 29.1% of the respondents believe that there is no such need. 20.3% of the respondents did not have an opinion on the above question. An affirmative answer ("I would be with it") was given by 17.6% of the respondents.</p>
<p>9. Who or which entity should be responsible for the management and coordination of social services?</p>	<p>When asked about who should be responsible for the management and coordination of social services, the respondents answered as follows, indicating individual professional groups: 60.7% - social service coordinators, 20.3% - managers of social services 14% - social workers 5.1% - other professions. None of the respondents decided on the answer - "family assistants".</p>
<p>10. Is your social assistance institution, where you work, is prepared competitively and as an organization for the development of social services?</p>	<p>35.4% of respondents believe that their institution is moderately prepared for this ("It is prepared on average - there is willingness, but lack of competence and money"). 34.2% of respondents admitted that their institution is not prepared at all. 17.7% of the respondents know nothing about it. Only 12.7% of the respondents answered this question affirmatively ("Yes, it is prepared very well - we have been investing in this approach for years").</p>

11. Do you consider that the social work/assistant should be treated as a social service?	The vast majority of respondents (64.5%) chose the answer: "Yes, of course". 25.4% of the respondents do not have an opinion. 7.6% of the respondents believe that social work should not be treated as a social service. Only 2.5% of the respondents decided to answer "It could, but under certain conditions".
12. Who, according to you, should be learning for new competences in the field of social services?	Most of the respondents (31.7%) pointed to universities, and 20.2% to training institutions. 11.4% see ROPS in this role. And only 3.7% of respondents see no need for education in this area. Most, however, as many as 33% expressed the opinion that all the above-mentioned entities should be involved in the education process.
13. If it depends on you, please point at, which other system should be integrated with social assistance too?	10.1% indicated that they were definitely for the labor market policy system, and 8.9% - that with the health system. Only 6.3% see such integration with the social economy or with the social rehabilitation and re-adaptation system. However, most - as many as 59.5% indicated the answer: "with everyone", and only 8.9% did not see any entity with which social assistance should be integrated.
14. Do you think there is a need for a new law on professions of support?	As many as 65.8% of the respondents see absolutely such a need, because various professions of support require valuation and regulation. In turn, 19% indicate that "not necessarily, as appropriate corrections to the Act on social assistance will be sufficient". 8.9% saw a need to evaluate only the profession of a social worker, and 6.3% had no opinion at all. However, no one indicated the answer: "there is no need to regulate this sphere that is well regulated."
15. Do you think that your institution is professionally managed ?	29.1% assessed rather average the management of their facilities, as the superiors' lack knowledge and competences. On the other hand, 25.3% point out that the superiors know about social welfare, but they do not have managerial and leadership competences. Only 12.6% say they are poorly managed and there is lack of total responsibility for leadership. But 33% say they have excellent leadership and a very competent management team.

To sum up the results of the presented research we should indicate also that respondents in the 79-person group who answered the questions consisted of mostly - 43% were employees with 6 to 10 years of service; 31.6%, however, worked for one to five years; and the next group - 22.8% of the respondents had the longest work experience (from 10 to 20 years). Only 2.5% worked less than 1 year. The vast majority, 91.1%, of the respondents were employed in OPS, 3.8% in ROPS, and 5.1% in NGOs. However, in terms of the positions held: 94% of the respondents were social workers, and the remaining 6% were administrative workers. During the questionnaire survey as well as during the focus meeting, the respondents answered open-ended questions that were synthetically presented in the table below.

Table 2 Answers to Open Questions of Social Workers on Social Services and the Necessary Changes in Social Assistance in the Context of CUS (Centers of Social Service) in November 2020

Open questions to social workers	Typical answers
<p>Which social services, according to you, are missing from the social welfare system in Poland?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Small Centers of Social Support (OPS) lack specialist services and focus only on the payment of cash benefits. 2. Increasing the safety of social workers and equipping them with appropriate tools. 3. Significant investments in the development of care and specialist services due to the aging society. 4. There is a lack of 24/7 care service for the elderly and people with disabilities. 5. There is a deficit of services for children, adolescents and addicts. 6. There is no universal family mediation service. 7. Development of the service of an assistant for the people with disabilities . 8. Dissemination and development of respite care services. 9. Development of family support services, including in the care and educational functions. 10. Development of services for seniors, including active spending leisure time. 11. Development of job placement services and career counseling for social welfare clients (low efficiency of Polish labor offices). 12. In small provincial towns and social welfare centers, there is a lack of many services - psychological and therapeutic support, and rehabilitation services. 13. There is a shortage of people willing to work in social services (i.e. seniors' assistants, people with disabilities, especially in Warsaw). 14. The emphasis should be increased on social activation but not on the payment of benefits only. 15. It is necessary to develop the services for organizing a local community. 16. Development of psychological and psychiatric services and a community nurse. 17. Development of coaching and supervision services for social workers. 18. Linking the payment of cash benefits with activation and participation in services that strengthen clients' potential. 19. Development of cleaning and disinfection services for the apartments of social welfare clients. 20. Developing services for future challenges, but not only current problems. 21. Development of alternative services, i.e. music therapy, dog therapy, hydrotherapy. 22. Development of volunteering in social welfare centers

<p>If it was up to you, what would you change in the social welfare system in Poland?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increasing of the prestige of social professions and an increase in wages and employment in social services (deficit of employees). 2. Reassignment of social workers (higher professional group) and increasing the rank of the profession. 3. Counteracting to a professional burnout. 4. Introducing an annual health holidays for social workers. 5. Provision of psychological support by the employer for employees of the social welfare system and legal support. 6. Defining the rules of inter-institutional cooperation. 7. Increasing activities in the field of prevention, not just intervention. 8. Systemic separation of social work from administrative and paper work. 9. Reducing formal reporting requirements in favor of practical field work. 10. Greater integration of social assistance services with the health system, the labor market and the social economy. 11. Persons managing social welfare entities should first go through a whole consistent professional path in social work and then apply for CEO positions. 12. You need more flexibility in working with different categories of clients and less formal restrictions. 13. Reducing bureaucracy and improving the management of social assistance institutions. 14. Excluding family benefits from the OPS (local Centers of Social Support) institutional structure. 15. There is a need to develop new competences among social workers. 16. Reducing the distribution of cash benefits and turning into the development of social service vouchers. 17. The payment for staying in a nursing home by residents should be reduced. 18. Creation of a solid system of professional promotions. 19. It is necessary to adapt the social legislation to the realities of small towns. 20. It is necessary to improve the awareness of local decision-makers about the functions and role of social assistance. 21. It is necessary to reduce the number of families served by a social worker. 22. Development of a training and qualification improvement system as well as a consulting system. 23. Greater cooperation of social welfare centers with the county labor offices. 24. Promoting professions and social roles as part of social campaigns. 25. De-politicization of local social policy. 26. Greater cooperation with local universities and employment places.
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Source: Own study based on research in November 2020.

Conclusion

Summing up the research on the possibility of recently establishing Social Service Centers in Polish municipalities, on the basis of questionnaire and focus research with social workers, it is possible to give a certain, first opinion on this matter:

1. There is certainly a need in Poland to create a local, institutional system for coordinating social services and integrating a bundle of social services within one local institution. The Act on Social Insurance Institution (CUS) goes towards the direction, which should be considered as right one and which is open for changes in the social welfare system (more broadly in local social policy). Implementing of CUS may undoubtedly contribute to the popularization of the category of social services as an important value and an important element of the implementation of local social policy.

2. Establishing a new institution and structure in the institutional order of municipality is always risky and causes concern among the staff of Social Assistance Centers, and especially among local government decision makers. It seems that a more expected solution would be transforming all Social Welfare Centers into Social Service Centers while maintaining their existing tasks and functions and developing those relating to social services. At the moment, such transformation is optional, but not obligatory.

3. The optional, and not obligatory, implementation of CUS in municipalities is at risk, as it may lead to unequal access of citizens to the possibility of exercising their social and civic rights - in this case to social and social services. While it is possible to understand the intentions and justification of the authors of the CUS Act to such a solution that is gradually introduced by CUS in Polish local authorities, the consequences for recipients may lead to deepening differences in access to social services.

4. The respondents pointed out that the lack of sufficient funds for the implementation of the Act may be a serious problem for local authorities that would like to develop CUS centers. It could be difficult to predict the possibilities of supporting local governments which wish to design CUSs in their area and they do not know how it will look like after the corona virus pandemic in times of limited public funds and problems related to the economic recession. There is an uncertainty to the future of the funds from the EU funding for such causes.

5. It seems that without prior preparation of social services for the implementation of CUS centers and without raising the prestige and salaries of employees of the social assistance system and other services, no one should expect a will of the system employees to implement the CUS Act, which may be a serious problem in the context of convincing the community of social workers to the new idea.

6. An important link programming social services on the regional level in CUS should be the Regional Centers of Social Policy (ROPS), which should be earlier equipped with appropriate training and advisory instruments and tools. Failure to use this regional institution would be a serious strategic mistake, moreover, the ROPS centers should provide regional analyzes of various social services and their coordination of planning and organization on the regional level.

7. Regardless of how many the CUS centers will be created and maintained in Poland, the issue of developing a coordinated, integrated system of social services will be forward-looking in Poland, but perhaps in a different institutional formula. For this reason, the Ministry of Family and Social Policy, in cooperation with ROPS centers, should prepare an offer of training and counseling for social service employees on topics related to - planning and coordination of social services, service management, multi-sector cooperation in the implementation of social services, leadership and social innovation in the field of social services, individualization and personalization of their production process, financing mixed services and the use of scientific knowledge in the organization of social services at the local level.

8. Due to the above, the issue of the competence of people who are to work at CUS becomes absolutely crucial. Therefore, it would be advisable to prepare the appropriate human resources in terms of qualifications and competences in order to ensure the appropriate organizational quality of the new institution. At the moment, there is no coordination of the social services education system in Poland.

9. The introduction of the CUS Act should go at the same time with the preparation of the Act on social services, which would organize issues related to social professions, and which would increase the prestige of welfare professions and contribute to the professionalization of services. At the moment, such works are not carried out, although there are signals from the Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland that this type of law on the welfare professions could be processed as a presidential initiative.

10. There should be taken into consideration the idea whether a Strategy (Program) for the Development of Social Services should be prepared at the national level, which would refer to the investment perspective as a new welfare state paradigm. Such strategy should be accompanied by managed action plans and adequate funding should be allocated. Relevant strategies and documents could be reflected at the regional and / or local level. Such strategies could integrate solutions adopted in the framework of various social policy systems in a horizontal way, which would concern better coordination of production and delivery of social services.

11. In the context of the CUS Act, a comprehensive review of systemic solutions for social assistance and other social policies that require a thorough

reconstruction 30 years after the political transformation should be carried out. This would mainly mean such policies as: social welfare, labor market policy, social economy, rehabilitation and re-adaptation, long-term care, policy for the people with disability and dependent, social activation and integration, lifelong education.

12. For CUSs to have a chance for development, EU funds after 2020 should be programmed for the development of social services and the CUSs themselves at the local level, with simultaneous investments by the state and local governments in this area. Without additional funds, many local governments (especially those smaller and weaker) will not be able to bear the costs associated with establishing and maintaining another institution.

In conclusion, there are many arguments supporting the establishment and implementation of CSO centers in the Polish institutional space and local social policy. It is obvious, that, there are also many unknowns and even risks associated with it. The nearest future will show whether CUS centers will catch on in our model of social policy.

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