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ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PEDAGOGICAL SUPPORT IN THE LIFE OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

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Abstract. The paper presents the essence and needs of support in the lives of people with disabilities. It shows that in order to adapt support to the individual needs of people with disabilities it is necessary to introduce elements improving the aid system. It indicates the tasks and importance of factors of the system supporting people with disabilities individually and in the social and professional environment. Legislative solutions in force were presented, which are aimed at stimulating professional activity and integrating disabled people and their families into the environment. The paper offers solutions to improve the system of equalization of opportunities in social and professional life of people with special needs. The importance of supporting professional activity and employment in the labour market was discussed. An attempt was made to assess the factors determining the effectiveness of the system, taking into account the implemented aid programs, grants, benefits and tasks of organizations and institutions supporting people with disabilities in social and professional life. The importance of integration, family support, support of the environment as well as adaptation of the system to the needs of people with disabilities was presented. Among the listed factors relating to people with disabilities, the importance of preparation, professional development and adaptation to the open labour market was presented. The social perception of disability is also of particular importance, which, if properly shaped, can reduce the problem of functioning of people with disabilities in social and professional life. People with disabilities show differing levels of need for safety, independence or accessibility to social infrastructure. This diversity depends on the support of families of people with disabilities, their caregivers and aid institutions and organizations, including those providing education, rehabilitation and vocational activity services. The paper presents activities, which are the starting point for looking for new solutions and improving current solutions for adapting support to the individual needs of people with disabilities.

Keywords: professional training, education, professional activity, labor market, vocational training, persons with disabilities, psychological and pedagogical support of people with disabilities.

1. INTRODUCTION

Need is a driving force behind acting. It stems from a sense of insecurity, lack of group belonging, social contacts, recognition and other important necessities in our lives. In economic theory, it is the state of feeling unsatisfied [14, p. 7], which is an important factor that makes dynamic human behaviour [25, p. 40]. In pedagogical fields, the need is defined in a similar way, as a desire to satisfy a

lack accompanied by a strong motivation [23, p. 29]. The need directed towards different objects is satisfied in a way that depends on the psychophysical and intellectual properties of each person [6, p. 86]. K. M. Czarnecki states that satisfying the intellectual needs of the society concerns, among others, its professional development in various fields, conditions and situations [5, p. 17]. The needs seen in the context of professional development can be perceived as an encouragement to act in a certain direction, and the profession or its choice is a pillar of the decision in meeting them [25, p. 55]. Therefore, the process of professional development, which is a sequence of changes occurring in the consciousness and behaviour of the individual [4, p. 166], requires support at every stage of the decision. The support provided can be a factor in the likelihood of meeting needs as well as in identifying them properly, which in the case of people with disabilities is of great importance. According to the literature on the subject, the needs of people with disabilities are most often related to:

- sense of self-esteem, which in consequence, after satisfying this need, stimulates to activity in social and professional life [18, p. 56];
- acceptance, or the right attitude towards disability, of oneself and other people [9, p. 106];
- social support, which leads to proper perception of people with disabilities and their families [31, p. 157];
- health issues related to care, treatment and access to rehabilitation [33, p. 223];
- emotional support, especially to be listened to, understood and helped in the process of reducing anxiety [16, p. 267];
- the functioning of systemic solutions concerning accessibility to individual programmes preparing people with disabilities for vocational education and coping in the labour market [39, p. 353];
- independent functioning, especially social and professional integration, rehabilitation, education and work [1, p. 86].

2. ESSENCE AND NEEDS OF SUPPORT

The needs of social and professional life may differ depending on the type of disability, category of intensity, and in particular from the support received, which is defined as assistance in difficult situations or material and moral assistance provided to a person in need [29, p. 680]. For people with disabilities, support is often the main element in meeting the needs of affiliation, which can vary in intensity and difficulty. The need for affiliation may be limited in scope and capacity, therefore the ways to satisfy it are often complementary and substitutive [14, p. 11]. The various ways in which people with disabilities meet their needs independently are supported or replaced by social or professional impact and cooperation defined as activities carried out together or in agreement, as well as assistance and participation in joint work [4, p. 205]. Assistance to people with disabilities involves cooperation with them through various forms of support, such as emotional, informational, material, spiritual and social support, understood as meeting social needs through interaction with significant people, which strengthens the sense of belonging, security and approval [31, p. 145].

It can therefore be assumed that support aimed at achieving and maintaining the highest possible quality of life is of particular importance in meeting the needs of people with disabilities [23, p. 31]. Support, commonly referred to as aid, is an integral part of life [13, p. 16]. People with disabilities generally expect informational, material and financial support; in the personal field, they require moral and spiritual aid. This social support is often a motivator for changes in attitude, behaviour, decisions or overcoming important professional and life difficulties. They receive social support because of their social bonds. Often it is support from reference groups appropriate to their respective roles. The most expected is the support from family, people from close surroundings and the local environment. The family is the foundation of life and shapes personality traits that affect the professional development and attitudes and behaviours of its members [25, p. 217]. It affects vocational education, preparation for professional work, one's own activity, interest in the profession, as well as integration with the environment [25, p. 336]. The value of the family in the life of people with disabilities is emphasized by the literature on the subject, which additionally indicates the importance of assistance and support for

the family in the following areas: financial and material assistance, assistance in removing architectural barriers, purchasing equipment, assistance in undertaking treatment and rehabilitation, undertaking education and psychological assistance in the education and work system [12, p. 7]. It follows from legislative documents that families of disabled people can receive the above-mentioned aid or support in the form of:

- co-financing of the costs of the stay of disabled people in Occupational Therapy Workshops [38];
- care services for parents of disabled children and care services for the disabled. Financial benefits in families raising a disabled child under the 500+ programme [38];
- co-financing of rehabilitation holidays [27];
- benefit or pre-retirement benefit entitlement for former carers of disabled people who have lost the right to a nursing allowance,
- special carer's allowance or a guardian's allowance due to the death of the disabled person they were caring for. Subsidies for rehabilitation equipment [28];
- elimination of architectural barriers and communication barriers [26];
- using tax deductions as part of rehabilitation relief [36].

Forms of assistance and support in achieving independence of people with disabilities include:

- elimination of barriers to the professional and social activity of people with disabilities,
- preparation of educational programmes and projects, as well as projects increasing the economic activity of people with disabilities in the labour market [30, p. 310] and the frequency of their employment,
- adjusting the education system of these people by facilitating their access to vocational and continuing education [20, p. 87–94].

Existing legislative solutions aim to integrate people with disabilities and their families into the environment and to equalise their opportunities in social and professional life. In addition, the Act of 27 August 1997 on Vocational and Social Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled People [37], provides support for the disabled in their professional activity and employment in the labour market. In these activities, people with disabilities are supported by Occupational Therapy Workshops, in Occupational Activation Centres, Protected Employment Centres and also in County Labour Offices, inter alia, through the possibility of obtaining employment or restoring skills necessary to take up employment [37].

A detailed approach to the proposed support is presented in Figure 1, which shows that a solution important for people with disabilities are tasks in the field of employment promotion, mitigating the effects of unemployment and professional activation implemented by labour market institutions [35]. In addition, the activities shown in the figure can be a starting point for finding further solutions for adapting support to the individual needs of people with disabilities. The consequence of the proposed tasks should be to meet needs that vary greatly depending on the type of disability. People with disabilities show differing levels of need for safety, independence or accessibility to social infrastructure. This diversity depends on the support of families of people with disabilities, their caregivers and aid institutions and organisations, including those providing education, rehabilitation and vocational activity services. The social perception of disability is also of particular importance, which, if properly shaped, can reduce the problem of functioning of people with disabilities in social and professional life. It can also make a strong contribution to meeting the basic needs of people with disabilities and their families.

According to the Act of 20 April 2004 on Employment Promotion and Market Institutions, special programmes are also created, the aim of which is to help people with disabilities to adapt their qualifications or acquire new ones, as well as financial support or elimination of barriers hindering active life [35]. Particularly noteworthy are the programs subsidised under the tasks of the State Fund for the Rehabilitation of People with Disabilities (Pol. PFRON), which are looking for new systemic solutions in their own tasks. The State Fund for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled co-finances programmes to support people with disabilities in vocational and social rehabilitation and programmes

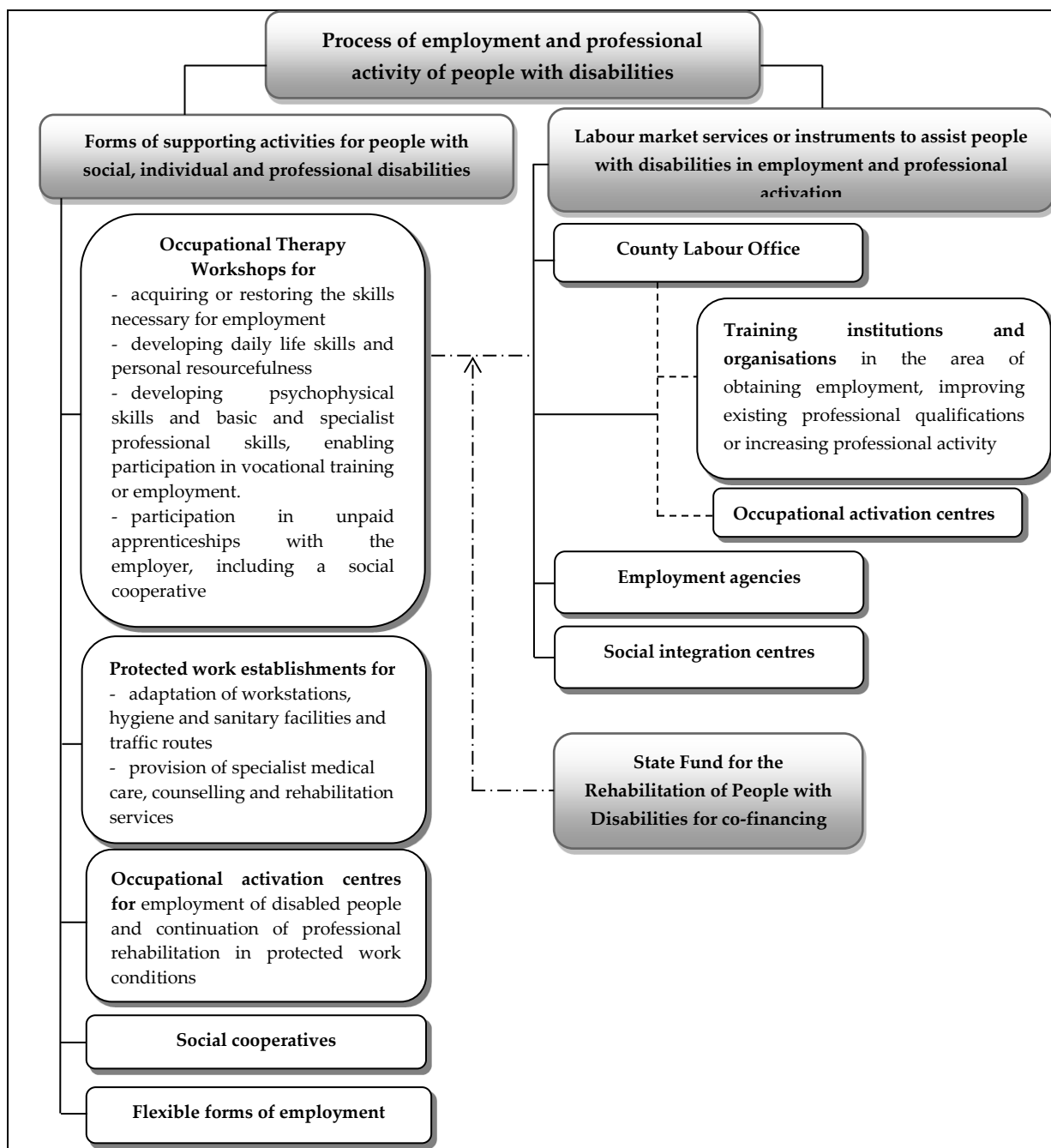


Fig. 1. Selected forms of activity supporting people with social, individual and professional disabilities.

Source: own study based on legislation [36; 39; 40]

to solve problems of people with disabilities, specified by non-governmental organisations and local government units. The areas of key co-financing concern: support for disabled people in maintaining their independence and social and professional life, elimination or reduction of barriers concerning people with disabilities in social and professional life and in access to education, increasing the employment rate of people with disabilities and integration and activation [11]. Funding for the indicated tasks as well as other tasks resulting from the problems of the disabled are also co-financed by the European Social Funds (ESF). The Minister of Infrastructure and Development has developed a programme for financing or co-financing from ESF funds of projects in the field of equal opportunities and non-discrimination, including accessibility for people with disabilities [17]. In the programme entitled "Guidelines for the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and non-discrimination, including accessibility for people with disabilities within the framework of EU funds

for 2014-2020" it indicated the possibility of funding tasks for people with disabilities, increasing the integration of employment, education and training [17].

The co-financing of the tasks indicated stimulates activity and fosters integration and employment of people with disabilities in the labour market. It requires improvement especially in the areas of individual and social problems of disabled people, with respect to:

- financial support for the education system, thus increasing access to education and vocational training [8, p. 69];
- financial support for disabled graduates of secondary schools in order to become independent after completing their education [15, p. 182];
- increasing the professional activity of people with disabilities in various forms of personal development, including the flexibility of the disabled person to adapt to the labour market environment [15, p. 182];
- teleworking market as a form of activity of people with disabilities in the open labour market [32, p. 239] and dissemination of other flexible forms of employment adapted to people with disabilities [19, p. 239];
- implementation of programmes supporting professional activity and employment of people with disabilities, due to the perception, communication, adaptation of workstations to people with disabilities by employers of the open labour market [24, p. 116]
- educational process, and in particular the options of e.g. distance learning and improving the guidance system for increasing interpersonal and market skills [19, p. 239];
- adaptation and improvement of the system of vocational guidance on employment of disabled people on the domestic and foreign markets [19, p. 239];
- capacity of information channels of local government units in terms of the implementation of tasks, solving problems of the disabled, functioning of vocational and social rehabilitation system, employment and professional activity [2, p. 294; 3, p. 317];
- interpersonal barriers of people with disabilities, which are characterized by withdrawal, passiveness, avoidance, and learned motivation to be less active, less efficient and integrated in the local environment [21, p. 365]
- modification and arrangement of the legal form of the system of disability identification [10, p. 24] and regulations on identification of disability in the countries of the European Union with respect to the status of a disabled person in the European Union [7, p. 181]
- system solutions concerning the assistant of a disabled person and job trainer in the field of social support and professional activation and employment of people with disabilities [22, p. 41].

3. CONCLUSIONS

In solving the above-mentioned problems presented in the literature, it is necessary to indicate the need to create a local support system, which, in the form of mutually dependent tasks, will affect the integration of people with disabilities and activity and employment in the labour market. The present solutions support people with disabilities by providing assistance in the area of statutory tasks. Undoubtedly, they are a proposal for tasks activating people with disabilities in the education and labour market, but they require adaptation of the tasks to the problems of everyday life of people with disabilities and problems of the local environment. People with disabilities are often unable to benefit from support due to the existence of difficulties in solving problems with reporting the degree and type of disability. Awareness of the existence of difficulties in solving problems reported in institutions or aid organisations results in a withdrawal attitude. This indicates the need for coordinated actions to support people with disabilities individually and socially and to define tasks to support families of people with disabilities and the local environment, which provides social and professional assistance. An important determinant influencing professional activity and employment of disabled people is to increase the number of aid activities in the area of solving local problems of disability and local promotion of disabled people in the context of social and professional expectations.

Taking into consideration the realisation of the presented supporting tasks to satisfy individual, social and professional needs of people with disabilities, it is necessary to introduce improving elements concerning: creation of local aid processes for people with disabilities, which in the realization of support tasks will conduct an initial local diagnosis and determine supporting forms with indication of aid organisations, institutions and centres. It is also important to make the forms of support more flexible by taking decisions from the point of view of meeting local needs and expectations of people with disabilities and their families, and to extend the statutory aid tasks in the field of supporting professional activity and employment of people with disabilities on the international market. Developing and introducing new tasks and improving current directions of support will strengthen an integral part of social and professional life of people with disabilities and stakeholders. On the one hand, it will meet the needs and expectations of people with disabilities; on the other hand, it will change the image of people with disabilities and the social perception of disability in the local environment. Introduction of coordinated aid measures will equalise opportunities for people with disabilities in the area of social life, employment and activity in the labour market.

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У статті представлено актуальність та сутність проблеми психолого-педагогічного супроводу в житті людей з обмеженими можливостями. Вказано, що для адаптації підтримки індивідуальних потреб людей з інвалідністю необхідно запровадити елементи, що покращують систему психолого-педагогічної та соціальної допомоги. Обґрунтовано завдання та значення окремих факторів системи підтримки людей з обмеженими можливостями як на індивідуальному рівні, так і в соціально-професійному середовищі. Представлено чинні законодавчі рішення, які спрямовані на стимулювання професійної діяльності та інтегрування осіб з інвалідністю та їхніх сімей у соціальне та освітнє середовище. У роботі висвітлено авторські ідеї щодо вдосконалення системи “вирівнювання” можливостей для реалізації осіб з особливими потребами у соціальному та професійному житті. Наголошено також особливостях створення належних умов для залучення таких осіб до професійної діяльності, забезпечення їх зайнятості на ринку праці. Здійснено спробу оцінити чинники, що визначають ефективність системи психолого-педагогічного й соціального супроводу, з урахуванням реалізованих програм допомоги, дотацій, пільг та завдань організацій та установ, що підтримують людей з обмеженими можливостями у соціально-професійному аспекті. Автором акцентовано на потребі підготовки, підвищення кваліфікації та адаптації до відкритого ринку праці осіб з інвалідністю. Особливе значення має також соціальне сприйняття інвалідності. Люди з обмеженими можливостями мають підвищені потреби до безпеки, незалежності чи доступності до соціальної інфраструктури. Це значною мірою залежить від підтримки людей з обмеженими можливостями у родині, їх опікунів та установ чи організацій, які надають відповідну допомогу, в т.ч. закладів освіти, реабілітації чи працевлаштування. У статті представлені заходи, які є домінуючими для пошуку нових рішень задля поліпшення адаптаційних можливостей людей з особливими потребами до існуючої реальності.

Ключові слова: професійна підготовка, освіта, професійна діяльність, ринок праці, професійне навчання, особи з інвалідністю, психолого-педагогічний супровід людей з інвалідністю.