

1. Dates of exchanges

Poland April 7 - 10, 2008

Spain April 9 - 11, 2008

2. Number of participants in visiting country delegation

Poland 4

Spain 3

3. Number of local participants in hosting country

POLAND

Men 4

Women 45 grassroots women

Children c. 30

Local auth. 2 deputy majors, director of Regional Charity Organization, representative of Children's Home

SPAIN

Men 1

Women 20 grassroots women

Children c. 20

Local auth. 2 coordinators of the family policy of municipal council, deputy major, town council member

Allowance organization Regional museum in Jílové

4. Program

7th April, POLAND

Visit to MC “Jablíčko” in Jablonec nad Nisou:

- History of the MC Jablíčko, the beginnings
- History of the Network of MCs, the birth of MCs in Bohemia
- Report for a local TV station
- Visit to the office of deputy mayor Petr Voboří in Jablonec nad Nisou
Why and how the town supports the MC?

Pilot project of Mother Centers in the Liberec region – mapping places for children (discounts, places with rediaper counters, paths for mothers with strollers) – a map showing these places is going to be published



Rut Kolínská presents the Network of MCs to Poles, birth of MCs here



Anna Groth from baby institute in Poznań



Mothers from the MC presenting the beginnings of Jablíčko



Deputy mayor of Jablonec n.Nisou talks about cooperation and support of the MC so far

Visit to MC “Mateřidouška” in Hejnice:

We celebrated the 5th birthday of the MC “Mateřidouška” in new rooms with great gifts for volunteers, members of the association, and guests among whom we could see towns and villages representatives, representatives of the Liberec region, foundations, institutions and organizations with which the MC cooperates. Local cooperation with the Children’s Home in town Frýdlant in Bohemia captivated all present.



Polish women talking to the MC coordinator Pavlína Bartošová



Participants observe the presentation the MC, successful projects and past events



Answering questions, viewing the chronicle of the MC



Thanks for warm welcome, handing over gifts

8th April, POLAND

Visit to MC “Rodinka” in Jilemnice:

- Introduction and history of MC
- Demonstration of exercises of mothers and children
- Introduction of MC programs
- Rooms – the MC received a notice to leave the present rooms by the end of January, extended the stay till June, then it will be moved to the Culture House.
- The auspices of church
- Finances - Charity – the Magi Day collection, events entrance money, grant from MPSV
- Cooperation
- Tour of other premises
- Lunch with director of Regional Charity Organization Jilemnice, which is shielded by the MC Rodinka



Discussion with the coordinator of the MC at a nicely set table



Entering new information on the operation of the MC in the submontane town of Jilemnice

Visit to family center “Náruč” in Turnov:

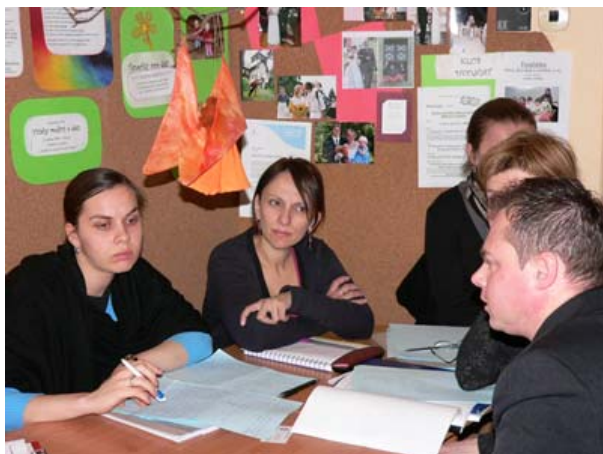
- Information on the campaign Town for Children – Survey of the MC on contentment
- Appointment with deputy mayor of Turnov
How did the cooperation of the MC with the town begin? How did the town react?
Mothers invited town representatives to their first concrete event of the MC and this was not the end and they continued inviting them to more and more events but they already knew about each other. The town has various committees, the social committee deals with problems and CPR or anyone else can join the committee. Now we are jointly working on a community plan. The MC in Turnov has become a kind of natural part of infrastructure. If the MCs all over the country enjoyed at least the same situation as here in Turnov it would be

quite good. The town tries to raise the level of education, improve the systems of retraining so that even mothers on maternity leave can train and work on themselves, can further educate themselves and then they can be a good partner for the town. Náruč knows what it wants, where it leads and it therefore is a good partner.

- Historically first seminar „How to start“ in the Liberec region
 Joint seminar for 9 mothers from various places of the Liberec region interested in establishing a Mother Center and for a group of polish women. The seminar was led by Rut Kolínská who used the exaple of a “living tree” to illuminate the basic philosophy and principle of the Mother Center to women as well as gradual steps leading to the establishment and the follow-up administration of a Mother Center.



Coordinator of mother centers in the Liberec region Petra Houšková together with deputy mayor of Turnov presents successful events and projects of the Center for Family “Náruč” in Turnov and talks about a greatly launched cooperation



Polish women’s questions were firstly aimed at the interpreter

Mothers in a seminar “How to start” in Center for Family “Náruč”

9th April, POLAND+SPAIN

Workshop “How to start with MC” in the office of Czech Network of Mother Centers:

The joint seminar for Polish and Spanish visitors. Besides oral presentation all participants were given printed materials with the know-how of the Network of Mother Centers “How to start” (Polish women got the materials in Polish, Spanish women in English), so that they could take a compact information package back home.



Polish women with an interpreter from Polish-Czech center in a seminar How to start



Satisfied mother-interpreter into Spanish



Seminar participants had lots of questions



Joint seminar How to start in the office of the Czech Network of MCs = many questions, many explanations

Visit to MC “Kampa” in Prague:

After a good refreshment and a tour of the rooms of the center there was a debate and talks in the garden of the MC on the establishment of the MC, programs, rooms and cooperation with the town.



Coordinator of the MC “Kampa” Markéta Nová talks about life in the mother center that has the rooms in the very center of Prague

10th April, POLAND+SPAIN

POLAND

Evaluation, Send-off

Visit of Czech-Polish center “Krecik” in Prague:

The visit passed off in a very friendly atmosphere. What had a great influence on it was the fact that the communication barrier had disappeared. During the stay in Krecik the children returned from a walk = the Polish group had a chance to meet Polish and Czech kindergarten children. Asia had prepared some refreshment for us and talked about where the situation of kindergartens in the Czech Republic and those in Poland differ. She described what problems she had, what she had to deal with, how she was accepted by Polish and Czech mothers. Between the Polish group and Asia there was experience exchange concerning work with children going on. Matters like what it means to look after the youngest, how to do it and what led the Polish women to it were mentioned. The women gave their addresses to each other and promised to help each other in future. The meeting was very enriching for everybody.

SPAIN

Meeting with representatives of municipal council of the capital of Prague

- Presentation of function and work of the municipal council of the capital of Prague and the social department
- Discussion with the coordinator of the family policy Mrs. Marie Zápecová about the concept of the family policy of Prague on the shape of which the Network of Mother Centers cooperates with the municipal council
- Law on social services of the Czech Republic
- Exchange of opinions of the family policy in the Czech Republic and Spain, views of both countries of the family issue



Visit to MC “Permonicek” in Jílové

- Home made lunch by active mothers from Jílové
- Visit to municipal authorities in Jílové, appointment with deputy mayor and a town council member
- Visit to Regional museum in Jílové town (cooperation with the MC)
- Open discussion with mothers in the MC, tour of the rooms, having a look in the chronicle of the MC



Gustation of “mother-center” cuisine



In the playroom with children



Talk with deputy mayor and town council member on advantages of MC in the town of Jílové and on support of MC from town



Entry in the chronicle of the MA



Coordinator of MC "Permoniček" Simona Vlasáková with MireiaDaniel

11th April, SPAIN

Visit to the 1st established MC "Na Poříčí" in the Czech Republic

- How it started...
- Rooms
- MC program, what is going on here, activities of clubs and groups, regular and contingent events
- The club of families – family trips to the mountains and seaside
- Voluntary work in the MC versus paid work
- Finances, cooperation with the town
- Attendance in the MC Na pořičí, viewing the chronicle



Opening round



Mother to be Mireia with baby in her lap and inspiration card from coordinator of MC Na Poříčí Jana Jalovcová



Debate over the chronicle of the 1st MC

Answering questions, evaluation, conclusion in the office of Czech Network of MCs

5. Lessons learned

All participants were enthusiastic about the atmosphere in Mother Centers, contentment and ease the places radiated. They also understood that in order to establish a mother center there have to be charismatic masterminds open to cooperation with the others. To find such women in Spain or Poland is said to be difficult. It is a pity that neither of the delegations had mothers in it that might try to start. The women from Poznań were representing an organization working with families and their children, but on a basis of professional assistance of a professional to client. The women from Barcelona, on the other hand, represented the Catalan provincial board that founds "Homes for Women", which also provide professional services to women. On the other hand all participants named lots of examples of incentives and inspiration that appealed to them in the centers and which they would like to use in their work.

I recalled our first educational excursion in Munich when we also were stunned to see what we saw. I myself feel surprised to realize how much of the German model of mother center we have succeeded in anchoring in our country. It certainly played a major role that our hands were not bound and that we did not have to stick to every detail. I suppose that also to our party, meaning all participating centers, the visit has been beneficial. At any rate, all representatives of the centers that were visited showed how great work they did and they can legitimately be proud as most centers saw town representatives coming with words of thanks for their work or they heard the words of praise directly in their town hall offices. Well, it was just the cooperation of the centers with towns that really captured both delegations and they admired the will and interest of Czech mothers or parents in cooperation on changing life in the community. Those of us who participate in work of the office of the Network of MCs have really been encouraged by the journey and by the fact that the work of the Network of MCs is fruitful and it is worth overcoming the obstacles that sometimes cross our paths.

Rut Kolínská

The most frequently asked questions were:

- What is the purpose of the MC – is it most important for mother or child or both?
- Is there any model or pattern that should be followed in MC programs?
- Are husbands of mothers from MCs also active in MCs?
- How do you deal with problem situations – when, for instance, you do not know how to deal with something. Who do you turn to?
- What other issues besides finances and rooms do MCs deal with?
- Does the Network of Mother Centers do any surveys concerning benefits of MCs to children, families?
- What would an ideal MC be like?
- What do the children that come to your center gain?
- What was impossible for you to bring from Germany to Czech as part of the idea of transfer of the thought of the MC movement? What was different compared to CZ?

- Besides the MC is there any other place like it in the community where mothers with children are welcome and where nobody minds that the children, for instance, cry, yell, play?
- How to admit to the center a new mother who comes for the first time?
- Is there any study describing how families function, how women and men and children cooperate at home?
- What, do you think, attracts mothers to the center most?
- Do mothers that resume their jobs after maternity leave come back to the center?

Discussions mainly revolved around:

what led (incited) women and mothers to establishing mother centers, where they drew inspiration, to whom they turn to with questions when times are tough etc.

6. Documentation and Evaluation

For the documentation of learning we used the records from visits to MCs, at authorities and in the office of the Network of MCs and evaluation questionnaires that were filled out by all coordinators of participating MCs and participants in exchange visits.

Evaluation of the visit as seen by Czech MCs:

MCs were nicely surprised that our small Czech Republic had such extensive experience with MCs that can be passed on to others all over the world. They did not have an idea of how advanced they were in matters of MCs compared to some other European countries. It further encouraged them and fortified the sense to do this work in which even foreign countries are interested. The Czech MCs enjoyed detailed interest of foreign visitors in their work and MC's programs and they have a feeling that even though the time spent together was not too long, they managed to pass on as much as they could and answer questions asked. At the same time they could see that the program for the participants of the visits was quite tight and next time it could be good to include items that differ from learning itself.

Evaluation of the visit as seen by Polish visitors:

What attracted the most was the variety of activities that the Czech MCs offer to mothers and with which mothers themselves deal with and also the developed cooperation of MCs with various organizations such as cooperation with a children's home, charity organization, etc. There still are lots of questions, however, concerning professionalization of mothers, support of mothers from the Polish organization and whether it will ever be possible to develop a movement of MCs in Poland that would be based on the principle "from below".

Evaluation of the visit as seen by Spanish visitors:

The friendly and peaceful atmosphere of mother centers was highly appreciated and a great surprise was the fact how small financial means were necessary for people to create so many MCs in the country and in Prague. The situation in the Czech Republic is quite different from that in Spain where all services are provided by the state (state institutions) and where people are not used to uniting and therefore the use of experience from the MCs in the Czech Republic is not going to be easy. Nevertheless, even though the services of the Spanish organization for women are paid and organized by the state it is necessary to encourage in women their personal involvement and inspire mothers to be active themselves. It will be necessary to figure out how to put these two approaches together, to try to implant new experience and incentives gathered during the study visit.

7. Media and PR

Two press releases of Czech Network of Mother Centers are attached to this report:

- 1) Mother Centers of the Liberec region export their know-how
- 2) The Czech Network of Mother Centers exports its know-how

In Prague, May 30, 2008

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