

From the work in Romania 1990-94

Many of the founders behind the European House was already started work with inclusion of people with disability – and then therefore it is such a large challenge to work with the horrifying institutions for children in Romania. Not least the so-called incurable mental and multi-handicapped people.



Emil is also from Poiana Mare and later moved to an institution in Craiova. He had never gotten treatment of his physical disability (CP)



Alexandru had laid his entire life in a bed together with his brother. We met them in a dark room in the remote special children institution in Corlate.



This is Alexandru's brother Nicolae (oldest). They were respectively 13 and 15 years old, when we began. Now they live in an apartment in Craiova. And Corlate is closed.



We worked very specifically with the children by just showing the staff that they had value as people. Also by sending a lot of equipment and emergency aid together with the offer of education,



The children section in the psychiatric hospital in Poiana Mare had more than 100 children in the age group 3-18. They lived under the most miserable conditions among 800 adults with mental disorders. The children department was shut down.



Nicoletta and Costel. All the children in Poiana Mare had their own way to handle the physical assault. Nicoletta died in an accident but was able to move out from Poiana M. Costel, who was diagnosed as incurably mentally retarded, later took the student exam and is now leader of the occupational therapy in an institution – and is very active in politics.



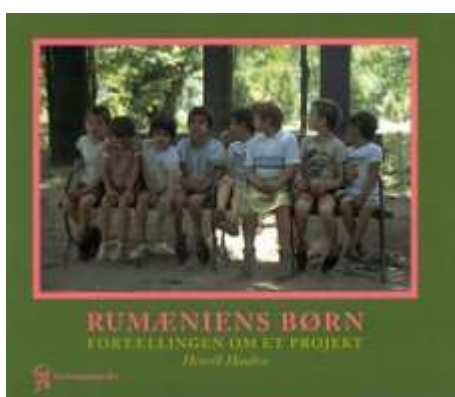
One of the first relocations happened in a small property, where we got space for 12 children. It came to be known as the LEGO house, because it was bought as a donation from LEGO. The house was later given to the regional social service and is now demolished, because there had to be built a freeway. In total more than 300 children



Already in the first relocation to the LEGO house we had focus on the sustainability, and it was the opinion that the children should be included to cultivate their own food and create a fellow network. (It is probably one of those things, which is not finished even though we have worked with it in the last 20 years...)

 <p>Success in a few years to create almost self-sufficiency of food in the first houses. Here a Christmas slaughter of one of the pigs.</p>	 <p>Another thing we worked a lot with was to involve their young people directly in their own life. It was sometimes hard – especially for the adults, who should help them.</p>	<p>and youths moved out into small housing.</p>  <p>Additionally, we did a lot to create joy of life around the children and the young people. It is not just about surviving, but also about living. Visit from many other countries was a worthy cause for celebration.</p>	 <p>Like in a car the informal frames at a party can be a good occasion for a speech to create togetherness at eye level.</p>
 <p>Another unconventional activity we chose to put in the work was through some years to create summer vacation in Denmark – with parents in summer houses... both that they show the Romanian children and adults that there are different worlds. But to also make the children visible as valuable individuals.</p>	 <p>We had especially a focus on doing something for the most disabled children. Here the two spastic brothers who moved out into a normal apartment, where they still live. We also worked with showing how one could</p>	 <p>Naturally there was also a lot of personal training – of high and low in the system. Here is previous general secretary at the Save the Children and temporary chairman of TEH: Kristian Sørensen</p>	 <p>As a part of the effort we also tried to build cooperation between the Romanian parties and the contacts we had/have in other countries. Here it's Bulgaria together with the Child Development Centre in Craiova, we were involved in establishing.</p>
 <p>Overall the work in many years was about doing something with and for the children so they are seen as people and not</p>			

just useless creatures, who were actually undesirable and untouchable in physical sense, for example because they as the lad here had gotten AIDS from micro-blood transfusions and died – like almost everyone. Also him.			
--	--	--	--



If you want to read more about the first 8 year work in Romania we have created the book children of Romania. Here you can read about the reflections and the results of the 7

counties work.