

Contribution to the Focus chapter of the Fundamental Rights Report 2022: Social rights and equality in light of the recovery from the COVID- 19 pandemic.

**Country: Bulgaria
January 2022**

**Contractor: Project One / Center for the Study of
Democracy**

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1 Measures implemented to foster social rights and equal treatment in the recovery from the pandemic

Name of the measure in English	Continuing support for the deinstitutionalisation of the care for elderly people and people with disabilities
Name of the measure in the national language(s)	Продължаваща подкрепа за деинституционализация на грижата за възрастните хора и хората с увреждания
Reference document for the measure <i>Include an url, where available</i>	Bulgaria, Council of Ministers (2021), National Recovery and Resilience Plan of the Republic of Bulgaria, Version 1.4 (Национален план за възстановяване и устойчивост на Република България, Версия 1.4), 15 October 2021
Social rights covered by the measure <i>Delete as appropriate</i> <i>Multiple answers possible, but preference should be given to measures that apply to one discrete right</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the rights of the elderly (Article 25) - integration of persons with disabilities (Article 26) - right to social security and social assistance (Article 34)
Population group(s) covered by the measure <i>Delete as appropriate</i> <i>Multiple answers possible, but preference should be given to measures that apply to discrete population groups</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Older people - People in need of care (homecare or in residential settings) - Persons with disabilities <p>The measure targets several categories of beneficiaries of social services, mostly centering on older people, people in need of care and people with disabilities. The only mention of intersections with other demographic characteristics and factors of vulnerability pertains to the affirmation that social services must be offered without any discrimination on protected</p>

	grounds, and that the project intends to collect data for the beneficiaries of its activities disaggregated by gender, age, disability, race and ethnicity.
Summary description of how the measure applies to the population group(s)	The measure aims to further develop and improve the system of social services, including long-term care, by (1) building and equipping new social services and integrated health-and-social services for resident care for persons with disabilities, and (2) carrying out construction activities and delivering equipment and furniture for reforming the existing homes for older people. The development of new social services, which are flexible and oriented to the needs of the target groups, will contribute to the social inclusion of persons with disabilities and older persons, who are dependent on specialised care. The measure is expected to support the development of 174 new social services for resident care (with a capacity for 5,220 persons) and 174 accompanying specialised and consultative services (also with a capacity for 5,220 persons), the construction and furnishing of 82 existing social services for older people (with a capacity for 5,598 persons) and the improvement of the energy efficiency of another 1,200 social services (for about 25,000 users).
Summary description of how the measure will impact (positively or negatively) social rights and equal treatment in the recovery	The description of the project states that the development, construction and equipping of new, flexible and oriented to the needs of the specific target groups and meeting modern requirements social and integrated health and social services will contribute directly to supporting and promoting the social inclusion of persons with disabilities and elderly people dependent on care. In addition to the direct effects related to the improvement of the built environment, the new equipment and furnishings are also linked to the improvement of the quality of the services and their effectiveness in terms of the results achieved for the persons who use them in response to their needs. The project will also narrow the gap between the capacity of existing services and the much bigger number of eligible applicants. As of June 2021, the waiting lists for accommodation in social services included a total of 3,882 persons (1,232 older persons and 2,650 persons with disabilities). According to preliminary estimates, the measure is expected to provide resident care to about 90 % of those persons.
Summary description of the extent to which the measure foresees the provision of enabling social services	One of the objectives of the measure is the development of new integrated health-and-social services. Integrated health-and-social services are services for specialised support through activities in the field of health care and social services, which are provided within a common organisational and managerial framework.

Entity or organisation responsible to implement the measure	The measure will be implemented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP) (<i>Министерство на труда и социалната политика, МТСП</i>) through a temporary project implementation unit to be created specifically for the purpose of the project. Beneficiaries of the project will be the municipalities of the Republic of Bulgaria (municipalities, on the territory of which there are operating social services, and municipalities, in which new social services will be built).
Duration of the measure	54 months (indicative start date: 1 January 2022)
Budget allocated to implement the measure	BGN 753 million (approximately €376.5 million), including BGN 643.2 million (approximately €321.6 million) from the Recovery and Resilience Facility and BGN 109.8 million (approximately €55 million) national co-financing.
Summary description of how any foreseen impact assessment of the measure will be carried out	There is no specific impact assessment procedure envisaged for this measure. The only impact assessment indicator, explicitly included in the project, is the achievement of the pre-defined number of supported social services as laid down in the project description: 1,630 supported service (174 new services for resident care, 174 accompanying specialised and consultative services, 82 existing social services for older people and 1,200 social services with improved energy efficiency).

Name of the measure in English	Personal mobility and accessibility for people with permanent disabilities
Name of the measure in the national language(s)	Лична мобилност и достъпност за хората с трайни увреждания
Reference document for the measure <i>Include an url, where available</i>	Bulgaria, Council of Ministers (2021), National Recovery and Resilience Plan of the Republic of Bulgaria, Version 1.4 (Национален план за възстановяване и устойчивост на Република България, Версия 1.4), 15 October 2021
Social rights covered by the measure <i>Delete as appropriate</i>	- integration of persons with disabilities (Article 26)

<p><i>Multiple answers possible, but preference should be given to measures that apply to one discrete right</i></p>	
<p>Population group(s) covered by the measure</p> <p><i>Delete as appropriate</i></p> <p><i>Multiple answers possible, but preference should be given to measures that apply to discrete population groups</i></p>	<p>- Persons with disabilities</p> <p>The measure targets persons with permanent disabilities, who have not received financial support to meet their specific needs from another public institution. The measure does not take into account intersectionalities between different population groups.</p>
<p>Summary description of how the measure applies to the population group(s)</p>	<p>The objective of the measure is to support the activities for securing personal mobility and accessibility for people with permanent disability for their social inclusion taking account their specific needs. The project focuses on providing technical aids, specialised software programmes, electronic technical tools for compensation of sensory deficit, adapted motor vehicles, technical and medical devices and other similar means and devices according to the persons' specific needs, as well as training of users how to use the technical aids and/or specialised programmes. The measure is expected to support a total of 3,300 persons with permanent disabilities.</p>
<p>Summary description of how the measure will impact (positively or negatively) social rights and equal treatment in the recovery</p>	<p>The implementation of the measure is expected to create opportunities for increasing personal development and independent living of people with disabilities, for improving their chances for inclusion in the education system, and for facilitating their professional realisation in the labour market.</p>
<p>Summary description of the extent to which the measure foresees the provision of enabling social services</p>	<p>The measure aims to provide persons with permanent disabilities with the necessary technical means to enable them to live independently, including by participating in education and/or employment. The measure does not foresee the provision of any integrated public or private services.</p>

Entity or organisation responsible to implement the measure	The measure will be implemented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP) (<i>Министерство на труда и социалната политика, МТСП</i>) in cooperation with the Social Protection Fund (<i>Фонд „Социална закрила“</i>), the Social Assistance Agency (SAA) (<i>Агенция за социално подпомагане, АСП</i>) and the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) (<i>Агенция за хората с увреждания, АХУ</i>)
Duration of the measure	30 months (indicative start date: 1 January 2022)
Budget allocated to implement the measure	BGN 24 million (approximately €12 million), including BGN 20 million (approximately €10 million) from the Recovery and Resilience Facility and BGN 4 million (approximately €2 million) national co-financing.
Summary description of how any foreseen impact assessment of the measure will be carried out	There is no specific impact assessment procedure envisaged for this measure. The only impact assessment indicator, explicitly included in the project, is the number of persons with permanent disabilities provided with technical aids and/or specialised software programmes, and trained how to use them.

Name of the measure in English	Modernisation of educational institutions for a more attractive and quality environment for learning and innovation
Name of the measure in the national language(s)	Модернизиране на образователните институции за по-привлекателна и качествена среда за учене и иновации
Reference document for the measure <i>Include an url, where available</i>	Bulgaria, Council of Ministers (2021), National Recovery and Resilience Plan of the Republic of Bulgaria, Version 1.4 (Национален план за възстановяване и устойчивост на Република България, Версия 1.4), 15 October 2021
Social rights covered by the measure <i>Delete as appropriate</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - right to education (Article 14) - the rights of the child (Article 24)

<p><i>Multiple answers possible, but preference should be given to measures that apply to one discrete right</i></p>	
<p>Population group(s) covered by the measure</p> <p><i>Delete as appropriate</i></p> <p><i>Multiple answers possible, but preference should be given to measures that apply to discrete population groups</i></p>	<p>- Children and youth;</p> <p>According to the justification of the project, the ultimate objective of the measure is to create conditions for equal access to education by building a favourable, inclusive, innovative, supportive and motivating educational environment. In particular, the project is aimed to address the unequal development of school and pre-school institutions across the country and the differences between regions in terms of training support infrastructure, which affect the quality of education.</p>
<p>Summary description of how the measure applies to the population group(s)</p>	<p>The measure is aimed at improving the educational infrastructure in Bulgaria by repairing and/or renovating the existing facilities and by building new ones. The project is expected to support the complete renovation of a minimum of 73 kindergartens and 94 schools, construction of a minimum of 10 new kindergartens and 10 new schools, construction of outdoor facilities (playgrounds, sports grounds, open air green classrooms) in a minimum of 200 educational institutions, complete renovation of a minimum 30 student dormitories, and construction of a minimum of five student campuses.</p>
<p>Summary description of how the measure will impact (positively or negatively) social rights and equal treatment in the recovery</p>	<p>The measure is expected to make the education environment more attractive to children, increase enrolment rates (by including more children in the education process), and improve the development of children's wealth, social and emotional intelligence, and key competences for lifelong learning. In terms of equal treatment, the project's justification specifically states that the measure is aimed to provide all children with equal access to quality education by ensuring that every child has physical access to an educational institution in the locality where they live or within reasonable travelling distance. In addition, the project's description notes that during the implementation of the measure special activities will be envisaged for vulnerable groups of children, in particular Roma children.</p>

Summary description of the extent to which the measure foresees the provision of enabling social services	According to the description of the project, the measure will contribute to the creation of appropriate conditions for integrated education of children with disabilities and children specific educational needs. In addition, the project will contribute to improving the architectural accessibility of schools and kindergartens for children with disabilities.
Entity or organisation responsible to implement the measure	The measure will be implemented by the Ministry of Education and Science (MES) (<i>Министерство на образованието и науката, МОН</i>). Beneficiaries of the project will be the national and local public authorities responsible for the management of the educational institutions covered by the measure: Ministry of Education and Science (MES) (<i>Министерство на образованието и науката, МОН</i>), Ministry of Culture (MC) (<i>Министерство на културата, МК</i>), Ministry of Sports (MS) (<i>Министерство на спорта, МС</i>) and the municipalities of the Republic of Bulgaria.
Duration of the measure	60 months (indicative start date: immediately after the approval of the measure)
Budget allocated to implement the measure	BGN 680 million (approximately €340 million), including BGN 569.4 million (approximately €284.7 million) from the Recovery and Resilience Facility and BGN 110.6 million (approximately €55.3 million) national co-financing.
Summary description of how any foreseen impact assessment of the measure will be carried out	There is no specific impact assessment procedure envisaged for this measure. There are several impact assessment indicators, explicitly included in the project, without predefined baseline and target values: increased coverage of children in state and municipal kindergartens, higher proportion of students enrolled in vocational schools and classes, number of schools converted to single-shift education, increased student performance, etc.

2 Tools or mechanisms to monitor the effectiveness of national schemes to foster social rights and equal treatment in the recovery from the pandemic

Name of the monitoring tool or mechanism in English	Coordination, control and audit of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan
Name of the monitoring tool or mechanism in the national language(s)	Координация, контрол и одит на Националния плана за възстановяване и устойчивост
Reference document for the monitoring tool or mechanism <i>Include an url, where available</i>	<p>Bulgaria, Council of Ministers (2021), National Recovery and Resilience Plan of the Republic of Bulgaria, Version 1.4 (Национален план за възстановяване и устойчивост на Република България, Версия 1.4), 15 October 2021</p> <p>Bulgaria, Council of Ministers (2021), Decision No 568 on the organisation and coordination of the participation of the Republic of Bulgaria in the Recovery and Resilience Facility of the European Union (<i>Решение № 568 за организацията и координацията на участието на Република България в Механизма за възстановяване и устойчивост на Европейския съюз</i>), 2 August 2021</p>
Organisation(s) involved in the monitoring tool or mechanism <i>Delete as appropriate</i> <i>Multiple answers possible</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National authority/authorities (e.g., National Roma Contact Point, etc.): Central Coordination Unit Directorate, Council of Ministers (CoM) (<i>Министерски съвет, МС</i>), Ministry of Finance (MF) (<i>Министерство на финансите, МФ</i>), Executive Agency "Audit of European Union Funds" (EAAEUF) (<i>Изпълнителна агенция „Одит на средствата от ЕС“</i>, ИАОСЕС)
Summary description of how these organisation(s) are involved in the monitoring tool or mechanism	<p>The Ministry of Finance (MF) (<i>Министерство на финансите, МФ</i>), through its National Fund Directorate (NFD) (<i>Дирекция „Национален фонд“, ДНФ</i>), will be responsible for carrying out checks and inspections of the implementation of the measures envisaged in the National Recovery and Resilience Plan. Through its Economic and Financial Policy Directorate (EFPD) (<i>Дирекция „Икономическа и финансова политика“, ДИФП</i>), the Ministry of Finance (MF)</p>

	<p>(Министерство на финансите, МФ) will also monitor the impact of the plan in terms of the predefined economic indicators and the fulfilment of the milestones and targets defined in accordance with Article 24 of Regulation (EU) 2021/241. The Executive Agency "Audit of European Union Funds" (ЕААЕУФ) (Изпълнителна агенция „Одит на средствата от ЕС“, ИАОСЕС) will perform audit activities to verify the data collected in relation to the implementation indicators. It will also be responsible for exercising control for avoiding double financing, fraud, corruption and conflict of interests and for guaranteeing the observance of the sound financial management principle. The government through its Central Coordination Unit Directorate (CCUD) (Дирекция „Централно координационно звено“, ДЦКЗ) will administer, maintain and upgrade the information system for the implementation of the plan.</p>
<p>Summary description of the functioning of the tool or mechanism used to monitor the effectiveness of schemes adopted to foster social rights and equal treatment in the recovery</p>	<p>The monitoring and control will be done on the basis of a Management and Control System (MCS) (Система за управление и контрол, СУК), which will be developed by the Ministry of Finance (MF) (Министерство на финансите, МФ) after the approval of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan.</p>
<p>Summary description of the obligations, standards and benchmarks against which the effectiveness will be evaluated</p>	<p>The mechanism itself does not reference any of the relevant EU instruments (e.g. European Pillar of Social Rights, Social Scoreboard, Child Guarantee, Youth Guarantee, EU Roma Strategic Framework, etc.) or the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. These instruments are referenced in the respective sections of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan defining the specific projects and measures. There are no common indicators or benchmarks, which will be used to monitor the implementation of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan in its entirety. Specific indicators are attached to each individual measure included in the plan.</p>

Summary description of what the tool or mechanism foresees when non-compliance with obligations and standards is identified, with a particular emphasis on enforcement and remedial action	<p>The mechanism does not foresee any specific consequences when non-compliance with obligations and standards is identified.</p>
Name of the monitoring tool or mechanism in English	<p>Audit activity</p>
Name of the monitoring tool or mechanism in the national language(s)	<p>Одитна дейност</p>
Reference document for the monitoring tool or mechanism <i>Include an url, where available</i>	<p>Bulgaria, Council of Ministers (2021), National Recovery and Resilience Plan of the Republic of Bulgaria, Version 1.4 (Национален план за възстановяване и устойчивост на Република България, Версия 1.4), 15 October 2021</p>
Organisation(s) involved in the monitoring tool or mechanism <i>Delete as appropriate</i> <i>Multiple answers possible</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National authority/authorities (e.g., National Roma Contact Point, etc.): Executive Agency "Audit of European Union Funds" (EAAEUF) (<i>Изпълнителна агенция „Одит на средствата от ЕС“</i>, ИАОСЕС)
Summary description of how these organisation(s) are involved in the monitoring tool or mechanism	<p>The Executive Agency "Audit of European Union Funds" (EAAEUF) (<i>Изпълнителна агенция „Одит на средствата от ЕС“</i>, ИАОСЕС) will audit the implementation of the measures in terms of planning, verification of the performance framework with milestones, targets and indicators, verification of compliance with applicable rules, including compliance with the principle of sound financial management, reporting and tracking of results.</p>

<p>Summary description of the functioning of the tool or mechanism used to monitor the effectiveness of schemes adopted to foster social rights and equal treatment in the recovery</p>	<p>The audit activity will be carried out according to an audit strategy, adopted by the Executive Agency "Audit of European Union Funds" (EAAEUF) (<i>Изпълнителна агенция „Одит на средствата от ЕС“</i>, ИАОСЕС) after the approval of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan. The audit strategy will define the type and regularity of the audits and will be developed on the basis of a preliminary risk assessment. According to the National Recovery and Resilience Plan, the audit activity is divided into six-month periods and for each period it is expected to cover at least 15% of the objectives and results reported as achieved during this period. The audit activity will include two pillars: monitoring of the implementation of the principle of sound financial management and verification of the achieved objectives and results.</p>
<p>Summary description of the obligations, standards and benchmarks against which the effectiveness will be evaluated</p>	<p>The mechanism itself does not reference any of the relevant EU instruments (e.g. European Pillar of Social Rights, Social Scoreboard, Child Guarantee, Youth Guarantee, EU Roma Strategic Framework, etc.) or the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. These instruments are referenced in the respective sections of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan defining the specific projects and measures. There are no common indicators or benchmarks, which will be used to monitor the implementation of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan in its entirety. Specific indicators are attached to each individual measure included in the plan.</p>
<p>Summary description of what the tool or mechanism foresees when non-compliance with obligations and standards is identified, with a particular emphasis on enforcement and remedial action</p>	<p>In case of identified non-compliance with obligations and standards, the Executive Agency "Audit of European Union Funds" (EAAEUF) (<i>Изпълнителна агенция „Одит на средствата от ЕС“</i>, ИАОСЕС) will send recommendations to the audited institutions and organisations and will control and report on their implementation.</p>