

Agapedia's Projects in Chisinau



A group of children in whose care Agapedia is also involved at the state-owned children's home in Chisinau]

The Republic of Moldova is the poorest country in Europe. Many young people emigrate, and children, mothers and the elderly, all of whom are in need of help, are left behind. Due to the very low wages public facilities like health care and education are unaffordable without private subsidies, and hence many children are abandoned and dropped off at the state-owned children's homes, or they are neglected in the countryside.

In 1999 a Moldovan delegation visited our private Children's Home in Romania. Its members were enthusiastic about the project and invited us to a visit to the Republic

of Moldova, where we then went for the first time. The conditions were shocking, though on the other hand it was fascinating to visit this small country in which time seemed to have stopped.

After various journeys and having made many contacts we met a former member of the Moldovan parliament and together with her we founded the Moldovan Agapedia Foundation in 2001. We employed the first two social workers and sent them to Romania for training. In co-operation with the Baden-Württemberg Office for Co-ordination for Eastern Europe we bought and renovated a house to use as a private

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Agapedia Children's Home in Chisinau

children's home for abandoned infants and toddlers up to the age of three. Our aim is to re-integrate these abandoned children or to find foster or adoptive parents for them within the Republic of Moldova.

At the same time we set up an office for social workers in the municipal children's home in Chisinau to have them draw up social reports conforming with European standards for the roughly 100 children. The social work delivered in earlier times had been almost non-existent so that the children had to stay in the state-owned children's homes although they sometimes could have been living with their grandparents or close relatives. However, as nobody tried to find a solution for these children and as there was no money, the only path that remained for them was from one children's home to another until they turned 18. Today our social workers write up a social report for every



A group of children in the Agapedia Children's Home

single child and try first to place the children within the original or the extended family. If this attempt remains unsuccessful the children are adopted by a family within the country.

During our work with the social orphans the terrible health care conditions of people living in the countryside came to our attention, especially for women and children.

One of our adoptive Moldovian families with their adopted child Nastasia



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Agapedia's Social-Medical Centre in Chisinau which includes a gynaecological practice, and headquarters of Mobimed. – A mother who receives support from Agapedia with her undernourished infant.



Our impressions were confirmed in several talks held in the Ministry of Health. We were told that there were not enough money nor doctors who would be prepared to move to the often difficult to access villages and settle there. In more than 200 villages there were no health care services at all.

Jürgen Klinsmann then travelled to Moldova with various representatives of the RTL Children's Foundation who wanted to see about the state of affairs for themselves. With a generous donation from the RTL



Foundation we were then able to initiate "Mobimed", which is a mobile medical service bringing an Agapedia team of doctors to various remote areas of the Republic.

The villages are situated roughly 90km from the capital and comprise about 15 000 inhabitants. As a first measure the small medical bases in the individual districts had to be renovated and furnished before commencing work. On previously scheduled days two doctors, usually a pediatrician or gynaecologist and an internist, drive to the centres for consultations. Apart from offering free-of-charge treatments we have set up a database containing all the patients and illnesses to be able to evaluate properly what is locally needed.

Furthermore we renovated and newly set up the ward for undernourished children in the children's hospital of Chisinau. Before that

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Agapedia's summer party with some of the adoptive families and former children.

there had not even been hot water or adequate heating. There, we hand out milk powder to mothers in need who come from the villages with their undernourished infants.

Another project is the construction of a social-medical centre like our model in Romania. Besides our involvement with the children's hospital, we managed to purchase, with a part of the RTL donation, a house in Chisinau in which the social-medical centre, the base for "Mobimed" and a gynaecolo-

gical practice for the free treatment of women in need is being established.

Jürgen Klinsmann on one of his visits of the Agapedia Children's Home.



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Ecaterina Mardarovici (below right), head of Agapedia Moldova, with some of her colleagues, which in total consist of 20 staff.