



United Nations
MOLDOVA

PRESS RELEASE

Children with disabilities promote inclusion through photographs

A photo exhibition of children with disabilities was launched on the occasion of the International day of Persons with Disabilities

Chisinau, December 3, 2014—A photo exhibition “My Life Seen in Pictures” taken by children with disabilities of their families lives and environment was launched today on the occasion of International Day of Persons with Disabilities, which is marked annually on December 3.

Supported by the UN Human Rights Office (OHCHR), the exhibition displays the results of a competition among children from a newly created network of parents and children with disabilities, which promote their social and educational inclusion.

The photo competition launched in October was an aspiration to reflect inclusion through the inner world of children with disabilities, showing their perception and emotions on what is happening around them. Working with disposable cameras provided with support from the European Union, children from the network have been documenting their spaces, their lives, their families and their world.

“I never liked staying alone – I am happy to be surrounded by my classmates, it is so good when you have friends who accept you!”, said Marcel Lupan, 8 -year-old member of the group, who participated in the competition. With the support of the UN family and local authorities, Marcel started school in a mainstream class in Peresecina, Orhei Raion, at the beginning of the 2014-2015 school year.

UN supports inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream education by promoting actions and socialization activities for parents and children with disabilities, training of teachers and support services as well as coaching and awareness activities to achieve better access of children with special educational needs to education and all support services.

The 20 photos of the exhibition can be seen [here](#) and will be displayed publicly at the UN Human Rights Gala of Awards on December 10 which will recognize the remarkable achievements in the field of human rights in the Republic of Moldova in 2014. The photo exhibition will also tour various regions and communities in Moldova and internationally with a view to profiling the abilities of these children, and their visions for a future of genuine inclusion.

“Through this photo competition we see children with disabilities as the authors of the visions of their own lives and environment,” said UN Resident Coordinator in the Republic of Moldova Nicola

Harrington-Buhay. “Empowering the voice of otherwise vulnerable or stigmatized groups is part of core UN work to support Moldova in meeting its human rights obligations.”

In the Republic of Moldova, there are 180,000 persons with disabilities out of a total population of 3.5 million. The Republic of Moldova ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2010. The UN agencies in Moldova support Moldova in fulfilling the requirements of the Convention through strengthening the rights of persons with disabilities in areas such as adult and child deinstitutionalization, guardianship reform, inclusive education, and access to justice.

Major achievements to date include the adoption of a Law on the Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities, transposing key aspects of CRPD law into the domestic legal order (2012), as well as a national programme of inclusive education targeting at educating all children together in general schools eliminating discrimination on grounds of disability. The Republican Centre for Psycho-pedagogical Assistance Service and its local structures were created in all districts of the country in 2013 with the mission of multifunctional evaluation of children and providing recommendations for inclusion in mainstream education system with the necessary support services.

At the same time, a new anti-discrimination law structure and equality body has engaged to challenge discrimination against children with disabilities, including in the field of education. In September 2014, the Government formally established an oversight mechanism to monitor the human rights in psychiatric institutions. As a result of common efforts for inclusion, the number of children with special educational needs in mainstream schools doubled in the last years, while their number in special and auxiliary schools continued to decrease.

Around the world, over one billion persons with disabilities face physical, social, economic and attitudinal barriers that exclude them from participating fully and effectively as equal members of society. They are disproportionately represented among the world’s poorest, and lack equal access to basic resources, such as education, employment, healthcare and social and legal support systems. With a view to secure the rights of all persons with intellectual, mental, motor, physical or sensory disabilities, in 2007, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) was adopted. There are already over 150 ratifications of the CRPD Convention, making it one of the most endorsed of the core nine human rights treaties.

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