Prague - Involving users in planning of social services

The community planning of social services in the Czech Republic was introduced starting in 2000, initially through a Czech-British cooperation. Since the social service reform in 2007, the community planning of social services is obligatory for Regions and voluntary for municipalities. Since then, through involving representatives of municipalities/regions, providers (individual organizations) and users local needs and resources are identified and on this basis social services are planned to cater to local specificities and individual needs. The process of community planning consists of the analysis of the current offer of social services and the needs of their clients. The result of the research becomes the background for setting up the priorities in the area of social services. The process of community planning is thus based on mapping the needs from the points of view of the contracting authority (Regions or municipalities), providers and clients (the public).

In the case of the City of Prague, which has been developing a Medium-Term Plan for Social Service Development (including the area of monitoring and evaluation of the social services, priorities for the forthcoming periods and funding requirements), uses the following procedure: The Social Services Department of the Prague City Hall is charged with the preparation of a proposed plan. Afterwards, the providers and users are called on to make comments and observations on the plan. The comments are then incorporated at a common meeting of the contracting authority, providers and the public. The amended version of the Medium-Term Plan of Social Service Development is then presented to the Council and Local Authority of the City of Prague for approval.