



ONLINE EU FGC Network Meeting – CZECH REPORT 2020

RK centrum (FGC centre) is the biggest organiser of FGC in the Czech Republic (active in 4 out of the 14 regions). The Centre for Realisation and Development of Family Group Conferences (FGC) was established in January 2017 as part of a joint project of **Amalthea** (organisation providing social services for families and children) and **energeia** (generates eco-friendly electricity from small water plant to raise funds for social and educational activities and implements the projects at the same time). **RK centrum** follows up on the work of the FGC team (formerly under Amalthea), which started promoting the idea of introducing FGC in April 2013.

The mission of RK centrum is to enable families, by means of FGC, to resolve difficult situations of their children by themselves. We advance and disseminate the idea of this approach among the general public (by means of discussion sessions, lectures, educational seminars, expert conferences, methodological meetings for all FGC fans).

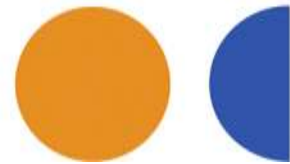
Our target group are families with children up to 18 years of age (including unborn children, as well as dependant children up to 26 who are not gainfully employed). We offer our metodological support to other organisation working with different target groups (seniors, people with Intellectual Disability).

Corona crisis have stopped several FGC although we are trying to encourage families to use contactless form. We have not realised online FGC yet, the reason is the preference of families for personal contact and technical limitations. Several preparations are currently underway. FGC are mostly requested by OSPODs (governmental institution: Social and Legal Child Protection Authority). OSPODs register families that deal with endangered children, not pursuing prevention so much. Demand for FGC frequently arises the moment a child is seized from its biological family, located in temporary foster care or in institutional care. The most common issue handled by FGC is how to ensure care of the child in the extended family or how to safeguard its safety and stable environment, or at least how to assure children's contact with the biological family.

Our effort is to spread FGC as a preventive tool because we have registered increased demand for FGC mostly requested by Social and Legal Child Protection Authority as a solution to long-term crisis situations (right of first choice X right of last choice).

Our current objective is to raise awareness of FGC among School personnel and the Courts and implement FGC within the **Cochem model** (interdisciplinary cooperation on family conflicts).

Our team: 2 employees at the Centre and 25 independent coordinators who



completed a two-day training, they have an employment agreement for 1 year, our vision is that each of them will organise 2 - 4 FGC's a year.

Support for our coordinators: consultations with the administrator, 4 meetings annually for all the trained coordinators (the meeting agenda includes sharing family stories, methodological support and informal sharing), participation in an external supervision for coordinators preparing FGC, irregular offers for various training courses, most frequently on topics of respecting communication.

Evaluation: We established a collaboration with Palacký University in Olomouc in April 2019. We were involved in the production of the evaluation questionnaires.

The University is continuously evaluating FGC benefits. It makes use of questionnaires collected from FGC and then, 3-4 months later, conduct interviews with family members who have experienced FGC.

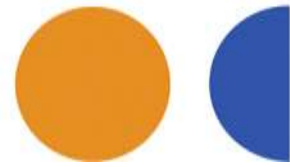
Conclusions of the Research Report are very encouraging: Most family participants rate FGC as successful, they are satisfied with their plan and almost 80% would recommend it to their friends! According to social workers are family plans created at the FGC feasible and solve the identified problem. Changing the approach from the expert to participatory, in which the family is supported and empowered, is the necessary challenge for the social workers, however complicated!

FGC and Service Learning (September 2020): by this form of experiential education are students of Social Work at Palacký University engaged in project activities related to FGC, our RK centre is a project partner.

There is not a functional **organisation covering FGC providers** in the Czech Republic. We cooperate with other organisations that attempt to organise FGC in other regions (organization Lata – realising FGC in Prague). Most of them face low demand and financial obstacles.

In spite of the fact that **FGC practise is consistent with a new conception of Family policy** respecting the autonomy and ability of families to make their own decisions, we are aware that FGC advancement will require a change of mindset not only in the social care sphere but across the society.

The best **FGC promotion** is sharing our Family Stories! Follow our [website!](#)



CZECH REPORT 2021

Some facts: started in 2013

over 120 FGC

active in 4 regions (out of 14 in the Czech Republic)

supporting other organizations

2 employees at our FGC Centre

41 trained coordinators (20 of them active in our FGC Centre)

3 organizations realising FGC in the Czech Republic

1 research realised by Palacký Univerzity

Our Team:



Teambuilding 2021:



News:

FGC in cases of parental separation (demand from OSPOD instead of assisted contact between children and parents)

5/2021 international online meeting on the occasion of the 100th FGC realization

6/2021 new video with English subtitles introducing FGC to children

6, 11/2021 Methodological meetings for all FGC fans

7/2021 interview as part of a series of podcasts on the topic of the child at risk

9/2021 follow-up Service learning project with FGC as theme at Palacký Univerzity

10/2021 training of new coordinators

10/2021 application for accreditation of FGC programme submitted to the Ministry of Education

11/2021 cooperation with the Ombudsman, Department for the Supervision of Restrictions on Personal Liberty

11/2021 finalizing of a monograph and case study on FGC in the Czech Republic by Palacký University

Challenges:

implementation FGC to the school system

FGC for all children in kinship foster care (it concerns 50 children a year)

new training for University students

establishing cooperation with Universities and secondary schools focusing on helping professions

continued cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs