

In the context of the 73th session of the General Assembly of UN of October, 2018, Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing has required from the People's Advocate (Ombudsman) information on informal shelters. In this context We inform the following.

During the last years for reducing and fighting against the phenomenon „persons without house” in the Republic of Moldova there were operated changes in the public politics of housing. Thus, there were adopted several decisions by the Government which refer to the construction of houses for vulnerable peoples from the social point of view; the procedure and conditions for leasing the houses designated for foreign persons who are the beneficiaries of the integration programs and to the beneficiaries of international protection; the record, the manner the social houses are attributed and used; organization and operation of night shelter service for persons without house and the Minimum Standards on Quality.

National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova has informed the Ombudsman that it has no data on the living conditions of population in informal shelters.

When performing the Population and Housing Census of 2014 it was not register any person in living units who under the used methodology does not fit the definition of usual housing. Either it is mobile, provisory or improvised, or because of the fact that it was conceived as a house, but still it is used as an usual residence by one or several persons when the census was performed (trailers, tents, constructions of time non-resistant materials: straw, wood, logs etc.), spaces lived by the need which were situated in house constructions, accessory constructions which are isolated from the house (barn, granary, storage, cellar etc.).

We also communicate the fact that currently in the Republic of Moldova from the category of persons who have their shelter in informal houses make the **children who are „street children”**. The phenomenon of street children has appeared in the Republic of Moldova practically simultaneously with the declaration of the state independency and it has manifested as a perpetual phenomenon which together with the time achieved bigger amplitude. Although, the Republic of Moldova has ratified the UN Convention on children's rights and on December 15, 1994 has adopted the Law no. 338 on children's rights through which a series of mechanisms designated for the protection of children's rights were instituted, but the situation of street children did not change essentially.

According to Law no. 52 of April 3, 2014 on People's Advocate (Ombudsman), the Office of People's Advocate has no competences to collect and

process statistical data, these attributions being attributed to the National Bureau of Statistics under the Law no. 93 on the official statistics of May 26, 2017. However, the situation of the street children always constituted a priority for the Child Ombudsman. Thus, from the information accumulated by the People's Advocate under the actions conferred by its legislative mandate (the examination of applications on children at risk, monitoring of places where they are placed, submission of proposals on amending the legislative framework etc.), in the Republic of Moldova there are more than 800 minor children who annually can be included in the category of street children and respectively they do not benefit from a corresponding house and they have their shelter in the auxiliary houses or damaged buildings which represent a danger for their life and health.

As regards the access to water, sanitation, electricity and other utilities we conclude that these children do not benefit from any of these utilities, except the cases when they are returned in their biological families or in the cases when they are placed in the foster homes for children. The state also has no a comprehensive and disaggregated database on health, security and protection against abuse and violence of children, the state authorities intervening mostly *post factum*, when the children are already abandoned or they leave home. Although, from the information owned by Child Ombudsman it can be concluded that the abuse and negligence against children constitute the reasons why they abandon their families and choose a street life finding their shelter in the auxiliary buildings and informal shelters.

According to the Child Ombudsman, the national authorities in the last period have made a series of amendments and completions to the law from this field. Analyzing the main reasons why the children choose to have a street life, the People's Advocate for the protection of children's rights considers that a series of factors favors this phenomenon: poverty, alcohol abuse, violence and negligence from parents/legal representatives, violation of the right to opinion and free expression etc.

What about the adopted laws, we mention the fact that in the field of child protection it was adopted the Law no. 338 of December 15, 1994 on children's rights and Law no. 140 of June 14, 2013 on social protection of children who are at risk and children who are separate from their parents.