



# **FOSTER CARE EXPERIENCES OF CHILDREN WITH EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIOUR PROBLEMS IN CROATIA**

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# Background

- Foster care for children with emotional and behavioural disorders in Croatia is not yet clearly defined and recognized as one of the state interventions and good practices.
- Most of children are placed in institutions and many of them have negative experiences within foster care system prior to placement in institution.
- The foreign practise (eg.USA, UK) shows that treatment foster care is one of the most effective and cost-benefit interventions.

# Starting point

- The field of behaviour problems in female population is a relatively neglected in research, as well as in theory
- Due to that, research was conducted in order to identify and describe risk in young females from multiple perspectives: scientifically-theoretical, professionals' and users' perspectives, with a ***special attention to the contribution of the perspective of young females in Bedekovčina Residential Treatment*** (Croatia).

# Research- young females with EBD

- The research was based on qualitative methodology and active participation of young females.
- Two main methods of data collection were used: unobtrusive research methods (analysis of literature and analysis of documents) and interview.
- Total of **23 young females and 10 professionals** from Bedekovčina Residential Treatment participated in research.
- ***The intention of the research team was to enable active participation of young females in research, in order to gain better understanding of their perspective and their involvement in knowledge creation.***

# Placement history of young females with EBD

- Experience of multiple foster care placement (range from 1 to 4) before being placed in institution;
- Few positive experiences of foster care, and if so, with one of foster parents that they felt connected to;
- Negative experiences during foster care placement, of which some are perceived as „bad as birth family“
- Sibling placement in foster care, while they were placed in institution (due to their emotional and behavioural problems)

# Recent research

## *Children's perspective on FC*

- Children and adolescents placed in a children's home following inadequate foster care
  - multiple placement experiences
  - birth and foster family share some negative characteristics (bad relationships, violence, abuse)
  - the reasons for separation from both the birth and foster family are largely associated by children and adolescents with negative characteristics and behavior of adult members of these families

# Outline for future research

- Need for solid research on current experiences of foster care of children with EBD

## Facts

(number, gender, specific characteristics, forms , regional characteristics)

## Experiences

(children, adults who had experiences with FC, foster parents, professionals)

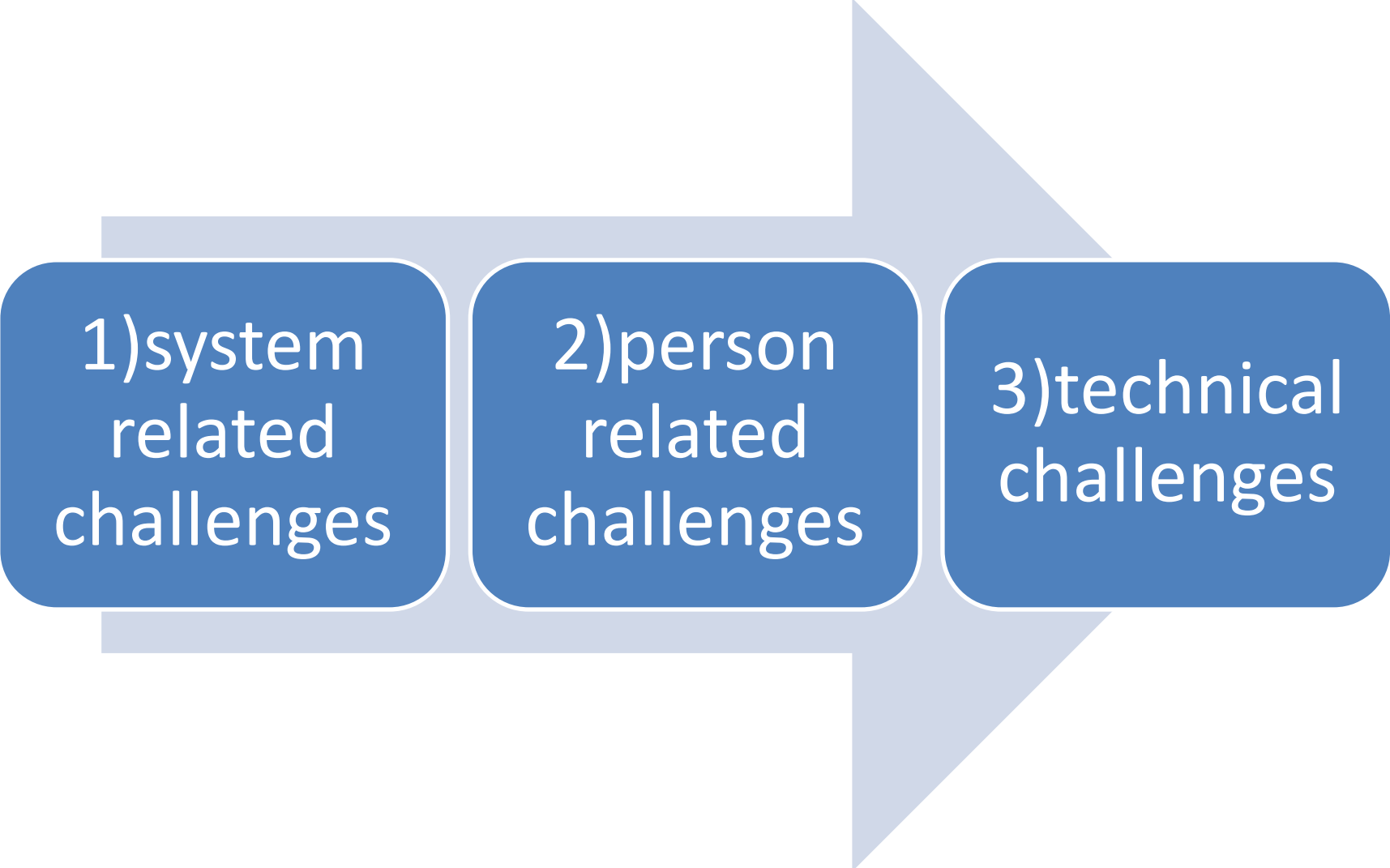
## New policies/ programs (?)

# Methods

- **Participative action research** - new insights and initiate social change in this certain area of foster care in Croatia
- Understanding PAR- what do we mean by that and what can we do about it?
- Conducting PAR- concerning participants, policies, practices, methods, outcome implementation



# PAR – challenges



1)system  
related  
challenges

2)person  
related  
challenges

3)technical  
challenges

**Thank you for attention**

