

Thirty Successful Experiences of Redistribution, Reduction,
Recognition, Remuneration and Representation in Care Work

The Eighth Day (Le huitième jour), Belgium



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Country and/or location of implementation: Belgium

Instances and/or legal framework responsible for its implementation: Le huitième jour (The Eighth Day), a non-profit organization

Specific issue covered and beneficiaries of the action or policy

The association The Eighth Day (Le huitième jour) is a non-profit social organization created in 2000 by the parents of young people with intellectual disabilities, which offers people with mild mental disabilities (Down's syndrome, et al) the chance to live independently in grouped apartments, assisted by people living in the same building, and occasionally supported by an educational team.

"Committed to an approach of empowerment rather than assistance, parents had the idea of creating an alternative living situation for their children outside of the family home" (Garcia Ruiz et al., 2018, p. 151).

As traditional homes are not suitable for them, these young people are at risk of losing their autonomy due to invasive support systems. A community of enthusiastic adults with intellectual disabilities who wished to avoid being placed in housing where they would lose autonomy, or in a supervised apartment where they would feel lonely, implemented an innovative solution, fulfilling their desire to live close to each other in individual homes. The idea was to become independent without isolating themselves and without being in a permanent institutional framework. This synergy between parents, young people and support services is the basis for The Eighth Day project.

The structure put in place by the association consists of a set of grouped apartments where young people live independently; housing reserved for able-bodied people who have accepted the principle of "active solidarity"; the possibility of assistance from a support service; an open common area that promotes coexistence and exchange; a social worker and resident leader to participate in neighborhood life, leisure and social integration; and the creation of a favorable living environment. In each house, common areas (kitchen, dining room, relaxation area, garden) and proper organization allow everyone to contribute to the enriching dynamics of the collective. Once a week, the residents, in turn, prepare a community

dinner. Individual accompaniment is combined with collective accompaniment. This is how residents learn to live by social norms and the neighbors' way of life (Garcia Ruiz et al., 2018, p. 152).

These homes also include:

- Solidary neighbors: non-professional volunteers who live in the same building and help provide security to the residents, especially when it is necessary to intervene in an emergency situation.
- Accompanying services: services such as professional insertion, learning about daily autonomy, and others, offered by entities outside the association to meet the goal of helping residents achieve their life goals.
- Educational team: referred social workers who are in charge of the development and evaluation of the residents' autonomy.
- Housing managers: they take care of the collective life in the homes and work closely with the referred social workers on individual problems. They make a bi-weekly visit to each accommodation. Their mission is to listen to the residents, take care of communal meals for and with the residents, organize social activities, and support active solidary people. (Garcia Ruiz et al., 2018).

Results expected from and obtained with the action or policy

The project has led to a set of apartments where young people can live autonomously and independently. These are the results:

- First residence, May 2002. Includes six apartments with individual accommodations. Currently has five residents and one active volunteer.
- Second residence, July 2005. Includes five apartments. Occupancy of six residents and two active volunteers.
- Third residence, November 2006. Includes seven apartments, one common area, a transit apartment and an educational garden. Occupancy of five residents and two Active Solidarity families.
- Fourth residence, August 2009. Building with 12 units, a common area and an office. This house is the result of an agreement with the city of Brussels as part of the "Outre-Ponts" district contract. Occupancy of 10 residents and three solidarity volunteers.
- Fifth residence, April 2017. Building with 39 housing units designed for seniors. Occupancy of eight residents.
- Day center, May 2018. Capacity for 10 participants.

- Day center for 15 people and housing center with 15 apartments (Le 8^{ème} jour, n.d.).

The operations of The Eighth Day are partially made possible thanks to grants from the municipality of Brussels-Capital. The organization is also supported by donations that contribute to its activities.

Obstacles and challenges in the implementation of these policies and actions

Based on the information available, there are no major implementation challenges.

Justification of compliance with the inclusion criteria

This is an innovative policy managed by the community (civil society organization) that offers a solution for a specific target population (people with intellectual disabilities) whose demands had not been considered by other public care services. It contributes to redistributing the burden of care from families to the community sphere.

For more information, visit www.lehuitiemejour.eu