



# PREPARE FOR LEAVING CARE

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**Hi! With this newsletter we wish to share some of our experiences from exchanging with key stakeholders about our project. We are also happy to share that we have reached a huge milestone in the project by completing all trainings at national level!**

## EUROPEAN SOCIAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

From the 28<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> May, Eva Martín Balseiro, Project Coordinator in Spain, Raquel Lopez, Master Trainer and Zuleima Reyes, co-trainer, as well as Florence Treyvaud Nemptov, International Project Manager took part in the **European Social Service Conference (ESSC)** in Seville. Building on the key messages from the 2017 conference, the 26th ESSC explored how services can be improved by empowering people and communities who are at the heart of social welfare. 595 delegates from 39 countries took part in the conference. Our project representatives hosted a **75 minute workshop** from the perspective of service users' involvement in co-developing and co-delivering parts of the Prepare for Leaving Care training.



Happy with the workshop, Raquel expressed “we wanted participants to know more about the project, about participation of young people in this project and in general, how they could implement this type of involvement in their projects and also how care experienced young people feel about decisions taken from others in their lives. And **they learned about us and how we claim more involvement in our decisions and how we young people would like to learn how to advocate for ourselves.** As a result of the interactive session, the participants left with a strong feeling for the project and that’s how learning should be.” Florence added that “**People really liked the workshop and gave very positive feedback** - primarily to express appreciation over the fact that the workshop was coordinated by young people with care experience and that it was very dynamic and participative”.

## Co-funder



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## Associate Partner:



## About the project:

*Prepare for Leaving Care – a Child Protection System that Works for Professionals and Young People* aims to embed a child rights based culture into child protection systems which improves outcomes for children and young people in particular in the preparation for leaving care. A Prepare for Leaving Care Practice Guidance and Training Manual has been developed by CELCIS and used to deliver the training to care professionals in the five project countries: Spain, Latvia, Lithuania, Italy and Croatia.

## Stay in touch!



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## A ONE-DAY WORKSHOP FOR KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Project partners in **Latvia** answered to the request of their key stakeholders and developed a one-day workshop based on the project and the training. The aim was to present the project, approach and methods used in the training, as well as the feedback, impressions and ideas from the training participants. The **Master Trainers developed the workshop and co-delivered it together with Liga, one of the young persons with care experience** who also co-delivered the national trainings. Her presence and insights were greatly appreciated by the participants.

15 people took part in the workshop including representatives from the Riga Municipal Children and Youth Centre; Ministry of Welfare, Department for Children and Families; The State Inspectorate: Department for Protection of Children's Rights, Office of the Ombudsperson; as well as managers of different alternative care agencies.

### Agenda of the workshop

- *Presentation of the project*
- *How did you feel when you left home?*
- *Presentation of the training*
- *Discussion on the effect of trauma on the development of the brain*
- *Group-work to evaluate Pathway Plans*
- *Learnings from the national training and reflection*

After the workshop, Master Trainer Valters Melderis said that "Participants appreciated the chance to take part in the workshop and learn more about the topic and the project itself. All of them recognized that **it is important to talk about the process of leaving care and how different agencies and bodies can support young people**. We hope that this was just the beginning of an important dialogue!"

## WHAT'S COMING UP

For all five project countries, the pre- and post-training evaluations are now being analysed together with the focus groups discussion reports. In September selected care professionals from each country will also be interviewed to measure the impact of the training. The findings will be compiled into a **training evaluation report** that will be shared later in the fall. Project Partners are also currently working on their national recommendations on leaving care, which will be shared at the **final project roundtable in Brussels on 15<sup>th</sup> November**. This event will bring together 60 key stakeholders including young people with care experience, project partners, care professionals as well as representatives from the European Commission, Council of Europe, national Ministries, Child Ombudspersons, NGOs, and universities. As the participation of young people has been central to all project activities they will be taking the lead during this roundtable and bring forth their recommendations on how to improve the child protection systems to better support young people leaving care. We very much look forward to it and hope that it will encourage the changes that are needed at policy and practice level in order to improve outcomes for care leavers.

**Wishing you all a relaxing summer!**

## Questions for reflection (from the Prepare for Leaving Care Practice Guidance):

How does the journey for care leavers differ from that of the wider population?

How can you support the individual developmental needs of young people in care settings?

Does your organisation encourage and support past care leavers to make themselves available to help other young people leaving care? How could you help to develop this idea?

How do you work to ensure meaningful youth participation in your daily practice?

To what extent do you think key workers or caregivers are aware of their responsibilities to young people leaving care?