



PREPARE FOR LEAVING CARE

 Issue 2
June 2017

Hello everyone! We hope you are doing well and that you are as excited about the developments of the Prepare for Leaving Care project as we are. Here comes the second newsletter for 2017, bringing many updates.

PROJECT LOGO!

The newly developed project logo is now officially launched! Project Partners and the International Young Expert Group (IYEG) have all been part of this process.

The IYEG group unanimously voted for the chosen logo as they felt that it best described their way into care as well as the meaning of the project. Young people motivated their choice by saying that **the logo represents:**

“A journey where you can find love in yourself and in others around you and meaning that we are ready to fly. Emotional support is really important during leaving care. And in the end, after all, the help a young person receives; the person just gets a start from where to begin a new life on their own.”

PROJECT ASSOCIATE PARTNER

Eurochild is a network of organisations and individuals working in and across Europe to promote the rights and the wellbeing of children and young people. The contribution of Eurochild to the project is related to communication (facilitating communication between project partners and external stakeholders), expertise (both on child participation and training of care professionals in prevention), advocacy (Eurochild will raise awareness in all relevant processes in which it is part) and mutual learning (Eurochild will promote the project and disseminate related project publications).

SCOPING

All five project countries were asked to provide a **‘map’ of the leaving care process** in their country. These ‘maps’ were analysed and accompanied by the findings of a desk review comprising documentation pertinent to each of the five countries as well as more general literature on leaving care in Europe. The analysis of this information informed the development of a **questionnaire** that was then completed by the National Steering Groups (NSG) in each country. **The aim of the questionnaire was to gain an understanding of:**

- The principal challenges, gaps and concerns in the journey of care leavers whilst preparing to leave care, the transition from care to independent living and, after they have left care
- Recommendations for change
- Examples of promising practice

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 Leaving Care Toolkit and Training Manual will be 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!



SCOPING (CONT.)

To gain an understanding for how young care leavers view the leaving care process **peer to peer interviews** were conducted in each of the project countries. In total, 64 interviews took place with care leavers aged 18 years and older. The **three principle questions** asked were:

- The process of leaving care - what worked for you and what should remain the same?
- Are there things you think should change about the process of leaving care?
- What skills, knowledge and experience do you think people who work with young people who are leaving care need to have?



Members of the International Young Expert Group practicing interview techniques during the kick-off in Vienna together with the SOS Youth Participation Expert.

All interviews remain confidential and audio files have been numbered to ensure anonymity.

Below are some of the key findings from the peer to peer interviews:

- Care leavers want to be treated as young adults and do not want to be looked down on or talked at but want a relationship that is respectful –key workers should walk the path with them side by side.
- Young people want flexibility, respect and, recognition of their individualism.
- Approximately a third of respondents said they thought psychological support was important and should be offered whilst in care and, if needed, through transition and after leaving care.
- The majority of respondents think preparation for leaving care should begin earlier compared to current practices.
- Accommodation was found to be an issue of concern to a large number of the respondents (mentioned in some form or other in 57 of the 64 interviews).

These key findings and more are now being collated and analysed by CELCIS in order to inform the development of the Leaving Care Toolkit and training programme for Master Trainers.

WHAT'S COMING UP

On the 15th of July NSG members and national YEG members will be provided with the first draft of the Leaving Care Toolkit. They will then have until the 25th of July to consult and give feedback on the Toolkit. CELCIS will then incorporate all the changes before sending the Toolkit to the developers of the training. This means a busy summer for project partners and we hope that you are just as curious and excited as we are to see the final Leaving Care Toolkit.

Wishing you all a lovely summer!

Young people's views on leaving care:

On the one hand it's a wonderful thing, but on the other it's also a source of concern and anxiety because you don't know what will come next, and if you do know, well, maybe you are even more frightened.

I would like it to be cheerful and relaxed, not a farewell, just a goodbye where you keep in touch with the other side, finding a point of contact and not of collision.

I mean, there are many variables, and you must be ready to face them all, having at your disposal the necessary tools to make the best decision for your future.

They need to understand that we are people. They need to understand us more.

We are not parcels in the post to be moved arbitrarily. We have the right to know and to be ready to leave.