

The background of the entire image is a photograph of four young people jumping joyfully in a snowy, open landscape under a cloudy sky. The image has a blue color cast. Overlaid on the image is a white grid of hexagons, some of which are solid white, while others are outlines. The title 'STAND BY ME' is written in large, white, sans-serif capital letters. A horizontal white line is positioned below the title.

STAND BY ME

SOCIAL-ECOLOGICAL APPROACHES
FOR CARE-LEAVERS INCLUSION
THROUGH PARTICIPATORY POLICY MAKING



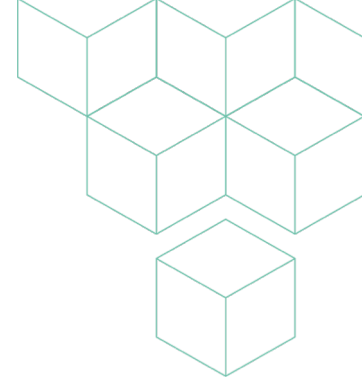


NATIONAL REPORTS

WP2 – PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH



BRASOV, 8TH May 2019



Index

1. Target groups involved
2. Care Leaving keywords
3. Resources&Challenges from CL point of view
4. Managing the Care Leaving Process
5. Needs and Changes to be faced



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Description of target groups involved

ITALY

7 boys and 4 girls, 18-22 y, in the care system as a result of civil or administrative proceedings (1 case of penal proceeding).

Most of them left centers to live in apartments provided by the care system or in foster families. A few (3) live in apartments on their own. 1 girl is still in the center as she is currently attending university.

4 of the CL involved were unaccompanied foreign minors

Most of them work, one studies, one studies and works, another is involved in voluntary service.

ROMANIA

3 boys, 2 girls. Aged 18 and 21.

Both from the state care system and the private one.

3 studying (high school/university) 1 in vocational school, 1 looking for a job.

They live in foster families, student housing and in a protected housing.

Care leavers

SWEDEN

Age range: 14-26 years (total 26 youths, 9 girls and 17 boys)
9 youths are still in alternative care such as foster care/residential care (state institution residential) where they are separated from their families

4 youths are in the end of the care-leaving process by being transferred to own apartments in residential communities
13 youths have left the care-leaving systems and are at the moment in different contexts such as job and own living arrangement and also some falling into a new care-system such as Kriminalvården

CYPRUS

16 (15 boys & 1 girl) aged 14 – 21 years old

7 in alternative care & 9 care leavers

Governmental support: Welfare - Financial support -
Educational support

Occupation: University studies or military obligations
Accommodation: shared flats (asylum seekers), back to their families or leaving alone

ITALY

Professionals aged between 30 and 45, mostly women.

Residential care educators, social workers, psychologists, coordinators of services for minors and activists.

They belong to Spazio Aperto Servizi (partner), Cooperativa Progetto Sociale, Associazione Agevolando, Comune di Vanzago, Housing Sociale Martinitt e Stelline.

ROMANIA

Range of age: 31 – 51;

Gender balance: 4 female, 1 male;

Role: psychologist, social worker, educator, managers;

Organizations:

two people work in the private system;

three work in public system.

Professionals

SWEDEN

34 professionals have been involved in project so far in WP2
(16 women and 18 men)

Role in the care leaving system/process: psychologist, social worker, operators from residential facilities, youth leaders (NGO), penitentiary officers(The Prison and probation Service)

CYPRUS

Age range: 30-55 years old

Total: 21 (15 women & 11 men)

Profession: Caregivers, Psychologists, Educators, Sociologists, Prison Staff, Social workers etc.

Mental Health Services, Social Welfare Services

Cyprus Prison Department

ITALY

Aged between 35 and 65, mostly women.

Representative of the main institutions of the Metropolitan City of Milan involved in the care leaving system: Judicial Authorities (Jouvenile Court T.M.); Municipalities and district; Region; Healthcare (ATS metropolitan city); Social Service; Juvenile Justice Center; Order of Social Assistants; Representative Associations (Camera Minorile, CNCM)

ROMANIA

Range of age: 42 – 60;

Gender: 5 female;

Role: case managers;

Organization: General Directorate for Social Assistance and Child Protection - Public system

Policy makers

SWEDEN

8 policy makers have been involved (4 women and 4 men)

Role in the care leaving system/process: police chief of departments, lawyer at municipality level and also social services, manager at The prison and probation Service, head of department Uddevalla municipality, penitentiary officers(The Prison and probation Service)

CYPRUS

15 pm 30-45 years old women

Senior officers & officers of Govermental administrative departments, NGOs and associations.

Social Welfare Services, Cyprus National Addictions Authority, Mental Health Services, Hope For Children, Youth Board of Cyprus, Cyprus Youth Council

Care Leaving Keywords

ITALY

- Hope
- Fear
- Joy
- Courage
- Future
- Autonomy
- Change
- Project
- Relations/Ties
- Opportunity
- Responsibility
- Challenge

ROMANIA

- Few alternative integration
- Lack of coherence and vision regarding the future of young people;
- Need of emotional support provided by system workers;
- Few young people who have acquired skills;
- Human resource in the system to be of high quality;
- Activities to be in accordance with the needs;
- Education system is not adapted to the needs;
- Young people leaving the system are vulnerable;
- Have poor professional training;
- Do not trust their own forces;
- Have little financial possibilities;
- Young people are manipulated and exposed to risky situations (alcohol, drugs, etc.);

SWEDEN

- Stigmatization
- Alienation
- Lottery in life and in CL process
- Strenght
- Loneliness
- Hopelessness
- Difficulties to integrate in the society
- Networking in new areas
- «Once guilty always guilty»
- Guilt and shame
- Coaching
- Inner will to make a change

CYPRUS

- Limitation of education opportunities
- Lack of preparation
- Insecurity/uncertainty
- Responsibility
- No family
- Loneliness
- Fear of independence
- Complexity of support mechanisms
- Back to the initial issue
- Adjustment issues
- Hope
- Uncertain future
- New start
- Complexity of support mechanisms

Resources&Challenges from CL point of view

Which steps and challenges do CL have to face?

ITALY

- Housing
- School and education
- Work
- Economic independence
- Money management
- Access to the service system
- Independent life
- Detachment from significant relations
- Building new relations
- Dreams, passions and free time

ROMANIA

- Finding a home;
- Job search;
- To keep their jobs, or to find another better paid;
- Self-management in the home;
- Smart management of money;
- Providing food;
- Payment of utilities;
- Continuing studies;
- Avoid dubious friendships;
- To be accepted by the community without preconceptions.

SWEDEN

- Having a own living arrangement
- Getting an occupation / Employment opportunities
- Challenge for integration in CLs life (education, employment, health)
- The perception of the general public towards CL and the system
- Lexbase/internet: risk for the CLs integrity
- No support system
- Risk to relapse into the system
- Categorizing and stigmatization
- Loneliness when the network may have disappeared
- Lost all trust for social workers and public services
- Risk of facing severe problems in the transitional phase from care to independent life, a fact that is not acknowledged by Swedish welfare system

CYPRUS

- Insecure on what the future beholds for them
- Institutionalization (lack of autonomy)
- Social Inclusion
- Financial support
- Psychological support
- Employment issues

Resources&Challenges from CL point of view

Which capacities/skills/super powers do CL have?

ITALY

- Self-sufficiency in practical matters (washing, cooking, money)
- Knowledge of services as a resource
- Ability to overcome adversity
- Resilience / ability to “survive”
- Defining their own goals
- Awareness of the stages of life
- Learn to accept their own life story
- Ability to share
- Ability to build relationships
- Ability to rely on people
- Ability to be supportive to the others
- Empathy / emotional intelligence
- Openness to diversity

ROMANIA

- Self-confidence;
- Sociability;
- Capitalizing on previous skills awareness of the moment in his life;
- Availability for mental and physical effort;
- Ambition;
- Seriousness;
- Adaptability, availability and acceptance of new situations;
- Initiative;
- Organization and management of own assets;
- Trust reserved in unknown people.

SWEDEN

- Strength to have motivation to make a change
- Strong individuals who have a capacities to adapt to a new context (if they have an NGO standing by their side)
- Well aware of the human rights
- Knowledge about the Swedish welfare model can bring inclusion
- Well aware of their needs for social, emotional, practical and financial support
- Developed process-orientated strategies with help of professionals
- They are ready to make a sustainable change (if they have a supporting network)
- Survivors that have endured very difficult situations
- Superpower such a great will to make a positive change (those are younger)

CYPRUS

- Survival instinct/ self-preservation
- Strong drive
- Teamwork
- Optimism
- Setting of life goals
- Sense of responsibility & mutual respect
- Respect and support to others

Managing the Care leaving process

Strengths and weaknesses of the system

ITALY

- + Child protection system
- + Quality of the care system
- + Skills of professionals in the care system
- + The social worker as a figure who has an overall view of the child project
- + Best practices in promoting careleavers advocacy

ROMANIA

- + Professional experience;
- + Consistency;
- + Availability for improving working methods of professionals;
- + Availability for collaboration
- + Workers' willingness to transfer knowledge and skills;

SWEDEN

- + Possibility to meet NGOs "positive adults"
- + Support from the welfare system
- + Availability for health and educational systems
- + Possibility to move with secret id number
- + No juvenile prisons – SIS community living

CYPRUS

- + Willingness to become independent
- + Development of bonds with people staying and working with them
- + Education
- + Developed different skills
- + Sense of responsibility
- + Respect and support to others

ITALY

- Care system timing does not match the needs of children
- Transition from an excess of protection to the absence of answers
- Lack of policies for careleavers
- Lack of integration between departments and services
- Loneliness and turnover of operators

ROMANIA

- Little material and financial resources
- Bureaucracy
- Loss of motivation of workers
- Too high expectations
- Professional exhaustion

SWEDEN

- Stigmatization
- Laws are sometimes not clear regarding where the support system is (national or municipalities)
- Legal system that is changing for harder sentences for CL
- Youths are placed in housing comminutes / centers where they are living with youngsters that are in deep criminalization/drug abuse
- No trust for public, national and local guidelines

CYPRUS

- Social exclusion
- Limited trained staff
- Weakness on cooperation between frameworks and governmental departments
- Overloaded units and limitations on approach each person
- Lack of psychological support
- Cutting off communication fast with the unit
- Problems on developing emotional & social ties
- Financial issues
- Institutionalization
- Dependence on welfare

Needs and Changes to be faced

Which are the most important recommendations or suggestions reported by target groups?

ITALY

- Allocate adequate resources
- Establish guarantees of housing access
- Invest in education and training
- Implement measures to facilitate access to work
- Define customized and non-standardized projects
- Promote the informal network and the role of civil society
- Involvement of careleavers in decision-making processes and in the definition of projects that concern them
- Promote experimentation for autonomy
- Maintain relations with educators and other figures in centers
- Promote the connection between institutions and services

ROMANIA

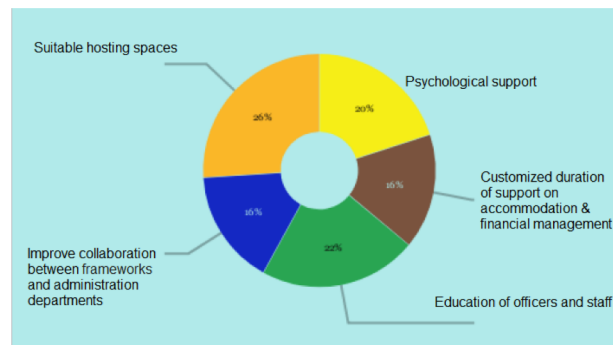
- Identification, skills and abilities;
- Guiding areas that are suitable for the young person;
- Supporting finding a part-time job;
- Accessing and supporting the young person in the course of qualification or workplace training;
- Professionals to act with professionalism and know how to make the right decisions;
- A transparent system of rewards and sanctions;
- More structured organization of activities within the children's centers;
- Organizing more workshops where hands-on skills can be practiced;
- Continuous training of staff working with children and young people;
- Adaptation of groups of children according to needs and balanced distribution of staff.

SWEDEN

- Strengthen the SWOT-analysis when working with the CLs action plan (PRO)
- Do not place youths with other youths that have a heavy drug abuse (CL)
- Including the civil society NGOs in the CL process so that when youths leave their context they can be helped immediately (PRO/CL)
- Stop the stigmatizing (CL)
- Provide job opportunities and also leisure time for the CL so that they don't relapse (PM/PRO/CL)
- Counseling time (CL/PRO)
- Overlooking the leaving process with a SWOT analysis (PM/PRO)
- Provide better laws that ensures that youths get help immediately (PM/PRO)
- Better BBIC-investigations (Social workers toolkit for investigating youths security and human rights (PM/PRO)
- See each youth for whom it is and not categorize them to specific groups (CL)

CYPRUS

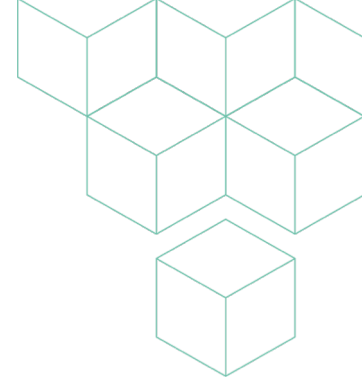
- Suitable hosting spaces
- Customized duration of support on accommodation & financial management
- Education of officers and staff
- Improve collaboration between frameworks and administration departments
- Psychological support
- Alternative sentences for minors
- Restrictive measures for bad influencers
- Raise awareness on foster families



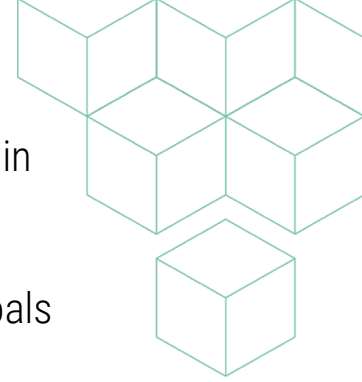
Ideas & suggestions on next steps

to design the SBM Tool, the Working Protocol and other relevant suggestions on care-leaving policy making

- Using a questionnaire to consult multiple people in order to collect data
- Easy tool-kit that can be used on both CL, PRO and PM
 - Integrate storytelling in the SBM Tool
 - Keep it simple so that everybody can use it
- Tools/methods to support young people
 - Mentoring
 - Group Discussions
 - Counselling
 - Workshops for skills and competence development
- Tools/methods to support professionals
 - Education & training
 - Offer motives / rewards
 - Support
 - Focus groups (brainstorming / stress relieving)
 - Supervision



- Promote project objectives at all decision-making and operational levels involved in care leavers support
- Clear definition of human, structural and economic resources to achieve these goals
- Strengthen services and encourage therapeutic continuity after 18 years
- Encourage experimentation with autonomy before the age of 18
- Create physical and virtual platforms to guide and inform careleavers
- Do not stigmatize careleavers as different from other young people





Thank you.

