



## REPORT OF THE JOINT STAFF TRAINING EVENT

February 7 to 13, 2016, Madrid, Spain

The training sessions between specialists, held from 7 to -13 February 2016 in Madrid, Spain, were organized by the Association TRABE – Iniciativas Para La Economía Social Y Solidaria, within the Project ***Chance and Challenge - Improve the assistance services for children and youth victims by developing innovative support programs***, project funded by the European Commission, through Erasmus Plus Program, Strategic Partnerships, implemented from September 2014 - August 2016 by Association Pro Refugiu, Romania, as coordinator, alongside its partners Caritas Prague, Czech Republic and TRABE – Iniciativas para la economía social y solidaria, Spain.



This event concluded the series of the training programs conducted in the three partner countries - Romania, Czech Republic and Spain - for social, legal counselors and psychologists -

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that provide counseling services / assistance to children, young victims of trafficking - in order to train them to use specific techniques - coaching and peer-to-peer support.

During the training - with participants from Romania, Czech Republic and Spanish hosts - was attended by guests from the Spanish National Police, Trafficking in Persons Department, Unit against Immigration Networks and Document Falsification (UCRIF), representatives of the General Prosecutor Office, specialists in human trafficking, collaborators of the hosts association (TRABE) - lawyers, social workers, psychologists, social educators, cultural mediators - but also survivors of human trafficking who shared their experiences working with peer-to-peer technique.

The training started with the presentation of the legal framework, statistics, social context and resources available regarding trafficking in persons phenomenon at national and international level. The intervention of representatives of the Spanish National Police (UCRIF) was useful in promoting understanding of this complex phenomenon, by presenting in an ample manner the operating mode in the case of traffic situations and the intervention methods used to facilitate dialogue with people belonging to this vulnerable category; officials brought to the forefront the importance of international cooperation in the fight against human trafficking and they assessed the close collaboration with the Romanian authorities as being positive and effective, considering the fact that a large number of Romanian citizens are trafficked to Spain. Valuable information came also from the representatives of the General Prosecutor Office.



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The structure of the training was an active one and involved a large number of specialists who approached from various perspectives the complex phenomenon of trafficking and the services provided to its victims. Were presented ways of intervention and to that end it was carried out a visit to the Concepcion Arenal Center, the place where the counseling and assistance sessions are being conducted, and was also presented the mobile unit that the specialists use to provide outreach assistance.

All these information have prepared the comprehensive framework for the presentation of **peer-to-peer** strategy, used as an innovative tool in assisting young victims / trafficking survivors. Were used case presentations, videos, discussions with survivors of sexual exploitation, current activist against human trafficking.

**Peer-to-peer** method is a strategy that involves the participation of members of a particular group in order to promote change for the benefit of another group. The strategy is often used in promoting individual changes in a bid to change knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors. The peer education can generate also changes in the entire group or community, rules and collective actions to stimulate change that could have an impact on programs and policies. This approach is based on the belief that people, especially young people, are more willing to listen and respond to information coming from people who have similar characteristics. In this sense, young people who have the role of **peer educators** must be qualified to play an active role. They also need to be trained on how to convey acquired knowledge and beliefs.

To talk about the experiences using peer-to-peer strategy, were invited both collaborators of the host association, specialists in direct assistance offered to victims of trafficking, and also former victims of sexual exploitation, who have worked with this method acting as **peer educator**, approaching the potential victims of trafficking, within a project successfully completed.

Considering that Spain is a destination country for a large number of Romanian citizens victims, a real help in understanding the specificities of the phenomenon in this country, represented the intervention of the Romanian specialist Nicoleta Mirela Ionescu - social worker and a cultural mediator, with extensive experience in direct assistance offered to sex workers, victims or potential victims of trafficking.

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The subsequent debates and the impressions shared by both *peer educators*, and also by specialists who work directly with victims / potential victims of trafficking, were useful in efficient analyzing the effectiveness of the method, its limitations and the risks that those involved may be exposed to.

Through the interactive structure, the training sessions were a real exchange of experiences between Romanian, Spanish and Czech specialists regarding trafficking in persons phenomenon and its implications at nationally and internationally level.

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