



SECOND TRANSNATIONAL MEETING Brussels, November 28th, 29th, and 30th, 2008

On the 28th, 29th, and 30th of November, 2008, the 2nd Transnational TRAIN TOGETHER meeting took place in Brussels on **training for professionals who work with child victims of sexual abuse**.

This meeting provided the programme partners with a forum in which to discuss progress made by the National Follow-up Committee on developing initial and ongoing training programmes for professionals who work with child victims of sexual abuse.

Meeting participants include:

SOS Enfants ULB, Belgium:

Mrs. Clémentine **GERARD**, psychologist and researcher with the SOS Enfants-ULB Centre of the Saint Pierre C.H.U. in Brussels. Coordinator of the TRAIN TOGETHER programme for SOS Children – ULB

Dr. Marc **GERARD**, paedopsychiatrist and coordinator of the SOS Enfant-ULB Centre of the Saint Pierre C.H.U. in Brussels, leads a multidisciplinary medical-psycho-social team in diagnosing symptoms of child sexual abuse and providing therapy in its aftermath. Dr. Gerard is an expert in maltreatment, notably in sexual abuse.

Mr. Pierre **PATINY**, Police Superintendent, Hearing Superintendant at the Inquiry Service of the Police Services Control Permanent Board, responsible for courses on listening techniques for the interview.

Mr. Michel **CARMANS**, specialist consultant of the Federal Judicial Police (Head office of the Judicial Police, Technical and Scientific Direction, behavioral science services) and is responsible for courses on conducting interviews with children.

Mr. Philippe **MORANDINI**, 1^{er} Prosecutor Substitute for the prosecution of Dinant, Member of the High Council of Justice

Mrs. Natasha **WINNERS**, psychologist, researcher with the SOS Enfants-ULB Center of the Saint Pierre C.H.U. in Brussels.

English CHILDREN'S LEGAL CENTRE, Britain:

Ms. Kamena **DORLING**, legal police officer at the Children Legal Centre, leads the programme on refugees and youth asylum seekers, and coordinates the Train Together programme at The Centre.

Ms. Christina **SZURLEJ**, researcher with the Children's Legal Centre.



Ms. Holly **ROGALSKI**, researcher with the Children's Legal Centre.

KARO, Germany:

Mrs. Cathrin **SCHAUER**, Grad. Nurse, Grad. Social-Tutor/Grad. Social-Almoner (UAS), Manager of KARO e.V. Coordinator of the Train Together programme for KARO.

Mr. Michael **HEIDE**, police officer.

Mrs. Brigitte **DZIALLAS**, translator and co-worker.

ISTITUTO DEGLI INNOCENTI, Italy:

Mrs. Beatrice **BESSI**, psychologist and clinical psychotherapist, expert in therapy for child and adult victims of violence; consultant specialising in interviewing children with police services during legal proceedings; teacher and expert at a national and international level. She works as an expert for the Artemisia association and for the Istituto degli Innocenti, and serves as a member of the Italian Follow-up Committee for the TRAIN TOGETHER programme.

Mrs. Carmen **NAPOLITANO** is a lawyer and expert in children's rights. Mrs. Carmen is also a member of the Italian Follow-up Committee for the Train Together programme.

IREFORR, Italy:

Mrs. Ester **DI RIENZO**, psychologist and psychotherapist, is an expert of the Appeal Court in Rome. She works with a center for children and their families in the municipality of Rome. Mrs. Di Rienzo's work involves psycho-diagnostic evaluations, therapeutic treatment, and training.

Mr. Filippo **SQUICCIARINI**, inspector for the state police, youth service in Potenza. Mr. Squicciarini has been working for several years on violence against children.

Mrs. Assunta **BASENTINI**, youth court psychologist in Potenza.

Mrs. Angela **MARSICOVETERE** is a social worker in the province of Potenza who works on maltreatment analysis and therapy.

MEDERI, Poland:

Mrs. Joanna **CIELECKA-KUSZYK**, paediatrician and president of MEDERI Foundation works with several professionals in the protection of child victims within the paediatric hospital where the foundation is based. Mrs. Cielecka-Kuszyk coordinates the TRAIN TOGETHER programme for the MEDERI Foundation.

Mrs. Małgorzata **ZBROSZCZYK-SZCZEPANIAK** heads paediatric services and works in cooperation with the MEDERI Foundation;

Mrs. Joanna **BARCELLONA**, conducts research and coordinates international cooperation with the MEDERI Foundation;



Mr. Jaroslaw **POLANOWSKI** is a prosecutor. He works with governmental and non-governmental institutions in the protection of child and adult victims of violence.

NOBODY'S CHILDREN FOUNDATION, Poland:

Mrs. Maria **KELLER – HAMELA** is a psychologist and Director of the international cooperation at the Nobody's Children Foundation. For 17 years, the Foundation has been working towards the protection of child victims through professional training and by implementing child-friendly interview rooms. Ms. Keller-Hamela is the coordinator of the TRAIN TOGETHER programme for Nobody's Children Foundation.

Mrs. Monika **SAJKOWSKA** is a sociologist who has conducted a number of research projects on the interview of child victims. Ms. Sajakowska is the Director of Nobody's Children Foundation.

Mrs. Marta **SKIERKOWSKA** is a psychologist for Nobody's Children Foundation.

THE INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR CHILD AND FAMILY (IFCF), Romania:

Mr. Mihai **SERBAN**, psychologist and police officer at the National Agency against the Trafficking of Persons, Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reforms, coordinates the TRAIN TOGETHER programme for the IFCF.

Izabella **POPA**, medical doctor, Assistant of the National Coordinator of the International Labour Office-Romania, National Coordination of the programme for the abolition of work for minors.

Mrs. Manuela **DANESCU** is the Director of the Department of Strategies and Programmes, National Authority for the protection of children's rights.

Voix de l'Enfant, partner coordinator of the TRAIN TOGETHER, France::

Mr. Hervé **THEAUDIERE**, Vice-president of la Voix de l'Enfant.

Mrs. Giulia **MANCUSO**, sociologist and coordinator of the TRAIN TOGETHER programme.

Mrs. Odile **MAURICE**, social assistant and family therapist



Friday, NOVEMBRE 28th, 2008

The first day of work opened with Mr. Hervé THEAUDIERE, Vice-president of la Voix de l'Enfant, providing an overview of the agenda items to be covered over the next several days.

AGENDA

Friday, November 28th, 2008

9am – 10am: Presentation by SOS Enfants and la Voix de l'Enfant on findings arising from research conducted since the last conference.

10am– 1pm: Each National Follow-up Committee presents its progress to the conference delegation.

11am – 11.20am: Coffee break

1pm – 2pm: Lunch

2pm – 4pm: Discuss best practices and setbacks to initial and continuous trainings programmes intended for professionals with social, medical and psychological careers who work with child victims of sexual abuse.

3.40pm – 4pm: Coffee break

4pm – 5pm: Discuss organising the Third Transnational Meeting in Warsaw, led by Joanna KUSZYK from the Mederi Foundation in Poland.

8pm: Dinner

Saturday, November 29th, 2008

9am: Discussion of existing training available to professionals who deal with child victims of sexual abuse and recommendations for improvement to the European Commission and the European Council led by Mrs Donata BIANCHI of the Istituto Degli Innocenti in Italy.

9.30am: Presentation by Mr. Morandini from SOS Enfants Belgique concerning the prosecutor's role in proceedings involving children who have endured sexual abuse. Mr Morandini placed an emphasis on multidisciplinary training.

10am – 12.30am: Discussion of best practices and setbacks concerning information programmes, initial and ongoing training for **judicial** professionals who collect evidence on cases concerning child victims of sexual abuse.

11am – 11.20am: Coffee break

1pm – 2pm: Lunch

2pm – 5pm: Evaluate the Belgian training model introduced by Doctor Gérard based on the experience of Mr. Darius Razavi, professor in psychology at the University, who works together with the SOS Children ULB.

3.40pm – 4pm: Coffee break

8pm: Dinner

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Sunday, November 30th, 2008

9am – 12pm: Determine what steps each organization must take to prepare for the third transnational meeting in Warsaw.

11am – 11.20am: Coffee break

12.30pm: Lunch before leaving

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After approving the agenda, the partners provided a brief presentation on the progress achieved since the previous conference.

Hervé THEAUDIERE stressed the importance of sharing our perspective, analysis, and experiences with other professionals. He indicated that it is a pleasure to meet together within the framework of this European Programme.

Hervé THEAUDIERE thanked the Belgian partners, who prepared this seminar, and asked Doctor **Marc GERARD** to start.

Marc GERARD reminded the partners that the “Train Together” conference in Brussels builds from the “AGIS” project, which many partners present today had participated in.

“SOS Enfants” of the University of Brussels is located in a large hospital and works closely with paediatric services, police authorities, and judicial services as necessary..

Marc GERARD said it was a pleasure to organize the conference in Brussels. Mr. Gerard urged the partners not to be discouraged by the poor weather and stressed that work is our main priority.

La Voix de l’Enfant coordinated the AGIS programme to determine best practices in interviewing sexually abused children to be used as evidence in criminal proceedings.. Conferences took place in Paris, London, and Florence (in that order) and concluded in Paris in December 2007.

Each partner has learned a great deal from the AGIS programme, including:
Having partners who represent a number of different professions from several European countries creates a multidisciplinary framework for discussions during the conference concerning best practices for interviewing child victims of sexual abuse. In discussing this subject, we will work towards developing concrete recommendations against the backdrop of a multidisciplinary model.
Being able to network and exchange opinions among professionals who have different perspectives and ideas to contribute, thus improving each partner’s overall knowledge on the subject.



Marc GERARD underscored the consequences of failing to address this pressing issue in each country, but remained optimistic that the National Follow-up Committee could reverse these effects. The National Follow-up Committee must remain open-minded to perspectives espoused by an array of professions to determine what does and what does not work in practice. This framework must allow for an exchange of ideas and perspectives among the judicial, medical, and psychological professions, in particular.

Marc GERARD noted that each sector contributed by identifying key points, based on best practice, as part of developing recommendations for the AGIS project in the best interests of child victims of sexual abuse.

Throughout 2006 and 2007, the AGIS project provided the opportunity to identify gaps in training for professionals who work with child victims of sexual abuse as a crucial issue. This includes training for not only policemen in conducting interviews and investigations, but also professionals who work with child victims of sexual abuse prior to, during, and after the interview.

The European Commission recognizes the quality of the work undertaken by la Voix de l'Enfant in support of this new project. During this session, each country is to identify existing initial and ongoing training for professionals who work with child victims of sexual abuse, while distinguishing between skills-based training and knowledge-based training. In doing so, each partner should consider what training components are necessary and what is missing in a certain number of sectors or countries.

Marc GERARD wished all participants a pleasant and productive day at the conference.

Hervé THEAUDIERE excused **Martine BROUSSE's** absence as due to illness.

Before proceeding to the agenda items, Mr. Theaudiere reiterated the partners' common objective to define the contents and the modalities of training intended for professionals involved in child defense, and protection. He stressed that the primary objectives of this conference are to adopt a multidisciplinary approach towards developing recommendations for improved training for professionals who work with child victims of sexual abuse, while keeping the child's best interests at the forefront of discussions.

Hervé THEAUDIERE stated that it is within the framework of these objectives that this meeting is taking place. Be gathered around this table presents the opportunity to hear about the gaps, dysfunctions, and successes of training for professionals who work with child victims of sexual abuse, while departing from the usual approaches provided by governmental, administrative, or European authorities. The first stage involves an analysis of the training provided in each respective country.

As a teacher, **Hervé THEAUDIERE** underscored the difference between having the best intentions during the information gathering/sharing process, and translating those intentions into concrete actions. Through international cooperation, we will work towards developing common recommendations on training based on the situation analysis,

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As the moderator, Mr. Theaudiere will refer back to these objectives as necessary, to ensure the discussion is focused and corresponds with the conference objectives.

Mr. Theaudiere identified two categories of international conferences, including conferences where each delegation presents its findings and conferences where a multidisciplinary working group openly shares information.

Hervé THEAUDIERE stressed that it is essential to adequately prepare for discussions prior to engaging in an international meeting. Most delegations have been able to submit the requisite information in time, allowing other partners to understand the situation in each county and work within that context.

Mr. Theaudiere said that it is essential for the delegation to agree on concrete steps that need to be taken in preparation for the Warsaw conference, so as not to duplicate the work undertaken in Brussels. . The focus in Warsaw should be on developing propositions, based on the current situation in each country, for how training can be improved for professionals who work with child victims of sexual abuse.

Hervé THEAUDIERE reiterated the importance of working together and learning from the experiences of others. It is necessary for each delegation to harness the opportunity presented by having different cultures and professions participate in discussions. A committee of experts can sometimes be consulted for giving recommendations, which are not far away from regulations.

After exchanging information with Giulia MANCUSO and the la Voix de l'Enfant team, **Hervé THEAUDIERE** concluded that the partners will also have a lot share.

Hervé THEAUDIERE clarified that he will not be strict about the content of discussions, but rather on respecting timing and staying on topic in order to move forward with the agenda. He suggested that each delegation present an overview of the situation analysis of relevant ongoing training provided to professionals in its respective country.

BELGIUM

Coordinator **Clémentine GERARD** was responsible for collecting all relevant information for the Belgian partner and delivered a corresponding presentation, reminding all partners that the presentation will be available on the Extranet.

In Belgium, the National Follow-up Committee gathered information on several professionals, including therapists, magistrates, policemen, and professors. Questionnaires were sent to targeted professionals to determine what trainings they had received/provided that qualified them to work with child victims of sexual abuses. The questionnaire is also available on the Extranet.

Of the 100 questionnaires sent, only 23 answers were returned. It is unclear whether the dismal response rate is due to a lack of time, interest, or there being a language barrier.



Clémentine GERARD noted that there was a lack of resources and time available to contact the relevant professions by telephone. After having received several questionnaires, the team acknowledged that some questions were flawed.

The results that follow are not to be generalized, as they are based on a restricted sample; rather, they must be reviewed at face value. Of the 23 responses received, 17 came from different professional services, including, 5 SOS Enfants teams in Belgium, 14 French-speaking teams, and a ULB SOS Enfants service—all of which care for child victims of sexual abuse in some capacity.

F colleagues, various associations interested in child maltreatment, a judge from the Superior Council of Justice, a lawyer, and several police officers each returned a completed questionnaire. Twelve additional forms of optional training, attributable to the judicial, youth, academic, psychological, medical and paramedical sectors, were identified because of the survey.

The results of the questionnaire demonstrate that training for professionals who work with child victims of sexual abuse is not compulsory in Belgium. It seems as though most professionals who work with child victims of sexual abuse receive some form of training, but not to an expert level. Training provided to police investigators in interviewing child victims of sexual abuse is the most comprehensive. Police officers are evaluated after completing initial and ongoing training on information collection procedures.

Judges generally choose to be trained in areas that suit their own interests. In the medical-psycho-social sector, it takes place in the same way. Training provided to teachers and professors demonstrate significant gaps, including high turnover rates. In a general way, access to the training seems to depend on personal motivation and willingness to undergo training, the trainers' motivation to deliver training, training availability, and financial resources allocated towards covering the cost of training.

Hervé THEAUDIERE underscored the fact initial training for professionals is not systematic or obligatory. Everything is optional.

Michel CARMANS explained that legislation outlines the requirements for training provided to police officers and must be followed. These legislative provisions refer to functional and judicial training. Without such training, police officers cannot conduct interviews. Initial training focuses on developing knowledge and skills and is evaluated from the onset through a written exam at the end of the training period. If police officers pass this exam, they can continue with the practical part, which is also evaluated by an exam. Once a police officer has successfully completed this training, he or she is qualified to interview child victims of sexual abuse. Police officers are required to undergo initial training only once, but receive three sets of ongoing training sessions annually.

Hervé THEAUDIERE added that ongoing training is often optional and varies according to the needs of each professional, and his or her level of experience.



Clémentine GERARD added that each sector that responded to the questionnaire received information on the subject. However, when it comes to psychologists or social workers, ongoing training is most often provided in the form of supervision or conferences.

Hervé THEAUDIERE asked if Belgium was able to identify multidisciplinary training.

Clémentine GERARD answered that there are two examples of multidisciplinary training, as well as the CL training.

Michel CARMANS recognized that, unfortunately, training is often knowledge-based and does little to develop practical skills that complement the knowledge gained. In addition, it is difficult to determine which staff members should receive training. During the conference that took place in Paris, it was agreed that not everyone can attend training and, as such, it is necessary to have particular skills in order to participate.

Clémentine GERARD added that, in Belgium, there is existing research about training offered by universities and schools on child maltreatment. We contacted the appropriate people to obtain this information.

Giulia MANCUSO explained that, due to the short delay in receiving reports from each country, there was not enough time to translate all reports, but a copy of all is available for all participants and will be added to the Extranet.

ITALY

Beatrice BESSI presented the report compiled by the Istituto Degli Innocenti. This report, along with the relevant laws and an independently developed questionnaire, were sent to local governments, regional institutions, some non-governmental organizations, and Ministries involved in developing policies and legislation against sexual violence towards children.

A national seminar on this subject took place in Florence last October. The results of the seminar were included in the report, but it is not considered a good reference, as it is difficult to synthesize the Italian experience in the professional training sector.

The national associations of different professional sectors (psychologists, lawyers, social workers,...) work on the establishment of a protocol.

These regional and local initiatives were created by different professional associations.

There are basic principles to remember, such as the fact that sexual violence against a child is a crime, with short and long-term effects. It is a social problem in need of prevention strategies. Training and knowledge of pertinent information are different, but equally important and must reinforce professional qualities.

Several types of professional training exist. The first level characterized by the acquisition of relevant information, while the second level includes integrative courses to assist certain



professionals in identifying cases of sexual violence and referring them to specialized professionals.

Only certain categories of professionals receive training. Another issue, already mentioned by Belgian partners, is the high turnover rate. Even if people receive training, they do not remain in the same position.

Training choices are varied and diversified at a national level. Training is not systematically offered by universities, nor is it compulsory when provided to high level professionals. However, several universities in Milan and Parma have begun offering courses on sexual violence against children.

In general, each region in Italy has a training programme. The document on the situation analysis does not include all trainings provided by the non-governmental associations on this subject.

The information programmes on initial and ongoing training are frequently adapted to the needs of professionals.

Hervé THEAUDIERE asked the Italian partners if they had identified any multidisciplinary training available in their country.

Beatrice BESSI explained that in Italy, all training programmes are more or less multidisciplinary and organized for psychologists, social workers, lawyers, and magistrates. The objective is to describe the problem in all its aspects and to create a network between all professionals.

Assunta BASENTINI added that the IREFORR working team cooperated with the Istituto degli Innocenti in researching information on training magistrates. This contribution appears in the report presented by the Istituto degli Innocenti.

The IREFFORR working team is comprised of sociologists, psychiatrists, psychologists, criminologists, lawyers, and magistrates. These professionals are subscribed to the Italian association of judicial psychology, which is focused on the training with a multidisciplinary approach.

A multidisciplinary training programme is available in Potenza.

Filippo SQUACCIARINI explained that in Italy there had been judicial reforms on sexual violence against women and children in police services. The law requires each police station to have a specialized unit working in this area. These teams are trained annually.

GERMANY

The German partners identified best practices that exist in their country. They organised five national meetings with different professionals, including psychologists, police officers, the ECPAT team, and organisations for child protection. This information is available on the Extranet.



Although national training is varied and diversified in Germany, it is often very expensive, thus preventing it from reaching a wider pool of interested professionals.

These programmes are intended for many professionals, including police officers, and officials representing public and non-governmental organisations.

Optional trainings is available, but few people take advantage of it.

In December, the Karo teams will have three meetings to identify federal police on the training subject. The need for training is also linked to improving techniques for interviewing child victims of sexual violence.

The partners sent 80 questionnaires to governmental and non-governmental institutions, police officers, magistrates, psychologists, and pedagogues, but only received two replies.

The low response rate demonstrates that the participation to training programmes is optional.

These two responses came from the Department of Adolescents and from an organisation that works with child victims. The two institutions underscored the financial difficulties linked with participating in training programmes.

There had been no coordination at a national level. Police officers in each region are generally unaware of training opportunities available to them.

POLAND

Joanna KUSZYK presented multidisciplinary work undertaken at a governmental and non-governmental level. Training available at the non-governmental level appears to be rather strong in Poland in terms of initial and ongoing training. Initial training covers procedures concerning maltreatment, in general, including sexual abuse of minors.

In Poland, there are three basic procedures often referred to as "the blue card" for policemen, social services, and medical services. The medical protocol, "small blue bear", is not compulsory. It was created two years ago in Southern Poland in a paediatric hospital with a strong gynaecological department. This procedure describes the gynaecological exam that must be performed on children who are hospitalized. This procedure is exclusive to hospitals, gynaecological, and paediatric departments where child victims of sexual abuse are hospitalized. However, this procedure is not compulsory, is not used in all hospitals, and is not recognized by the Ministry of Health. This procedure ought to be adopted in all hospitals throughout Poland.

Compulsory training is provided to all doctors. Training includes three hours of coursework for those who specialise in paediatrics and gynaecology. There is no final exam, but academic credit is received upon completion.

Multidisciplinary training is available in Warsaw. Last year, the "Blue Academy" was created. Three hundred professionals received 120 hours of training. This programme is organised by the government, but NGOs, such as the Nobody's Children Foundation and the Mederi Foundation, are also involved. There is also a "Municipal coalition", which aims develop a concrete multidisciplinary system. The representatives of this coalition meet once a month. Doctors also participate in these meetings. In Poland, we are striving towards



developing a concrete system that can be integrated into hospitals across the nation. However, this goal has yet to be achieved.

Joanna KUSZYK asks **Jeroslaw POLANOWSKI** to speak.

Jeroslaw POLANOWSKI explained that there are programmes in Poland, which were created at a governmental level on the subject of family violence and problems related to alcoholism.

In 2006, the government developed a budget for this training.

In criminal procedures, there are special guidelines on the theme of family violence and sexual violence against children. Guidelines also require that only judges (and not police) can interview child victims of sexual abuse.

One hundred twenty hours of professional training are dedicated to the prevention of domestic violence. Other training recommended by governmental and non-governmental organisations is intended for social workers, psychologists, lawyers, health representatives.

Trainings is multidisciplinary and includes social workers, medical professionals, academic professionals, judges, magistrates, and police agents.

To date, more than 1600 people have attended these training sessions.

There are no exams at the end of these training sessions, but professionals are asked to complete evaluation questionnaires.

If the professional wishes to receive a diploma from the State, he or she has to follow the training that is recognized by the State and then pass an exam. Either way, such credentials are not required or mandatory.

Maria KELLER-HAMELA discussed training offered to those who interview child victims of sexual violence. It is important to know who interacts with the child before determining which judges, psychologists, prosecutors, etc. need to be trained. In Poland, courses are offered on victimology, which covers some aspects of interviewing children. However, basic training for interviewing children is not compulsory.

The law imposes a three-year training period on judges and prosecutors after finishing university.

During the training, only five hours are dedicated to victimology and interviewing victims (adults and children). Once this training period has been completed, the prospective judge or prosecutor must pass an exam to be qualified in their respective profession.

There is no compulsory training for interviewing child victims. Some professionals interview children for the first time in their lives without having obtained any training.

The Nobody's Children Foundation has organised some training programmes intended for judges and prosecutors on interviewing children.. This training is based on theoretical knowledge, but focuses also on the development of practical skills.

Additional training is provided by other NGOs, but in an unconventional way.

Professionals interviewing child victims of sexual abuse must attend compulsory training and obtain a certificate upon completion. The establishment of supervision and ongoing training is equally important.



ENGLAND

Kamena DORLING discussed initial and ongoing training for professionals who work with child victims of sexual abuse in England.

A PowerPoint presentation and corresponding table will be available on the Extranet.

Following the last Transnational Meeting in Paris, the Children's Legal Centre team collected information and identified the professionals who work on this in England.

There is a lot of material available on the training for professionals who work with child victims of sexual violence.

The CLC team had contacted and interviewed professionals working in crown prosecution services, the education studies board, office of criminal justice reform, national policing improvement agency, Essex social services, Essex local safeguarding children board, criminal barrister association, and charity victim's support, among others.

Follow-up Committee collected information on existing training programmes in a detailed document that has yet to be completed.

Kamena DORLING underscored the strengths and weaknesses drawn from this analysis.

Best practices include:

- "Achieving best evidence in criminal proceedings" outlines training for police officers who interview child victims. Police officers and social workers attend a two-week training session on how to interview children.

Under the Children Act in 2004, every region in England must have a local safeguarding children board (LSCB). One of the responsibilities of the LSCB is to identify training needs and to deliver multidisciplinary training. The members of the LSCB include police officers, police authorities, academic establishments, hospitals, and social services. Each of these professions can receive training working with child victims of sexual abuse.

- Certain witness support schemes exist, which were designed to help children after they had disclosed abuse and had been interviewed. Support and assistance are also offered to children in understanding criminal procedures before, during and after proceedings have ended. Practices vary according to region. Detailed training is provided to child witness supporter workers in the area of child sexual abuse.

- Intermediaries can be implemented as a special measure if the child victim of sexual abuse has specific communication needs when going to court. The intermediaries assess the situation to ensure that the relevant actors, including the judge and lawyers, are aware of those communication needs. Legal training for these professionals is very detailed. Normally, they are professionals who already experience in some sort of communication, like orthophony.

Kamena DORLING touched on the gaps in training provided to professionals who work with child victims of sexual abuse in England. Although an array of training is available, it is not compulsory. Barristers and solicitors, for instance, are obliged to complete a certain number of hours of training per year on an ongoing basis; however, such training depends on their personal choice.



Many children experience trauma in court due to the nature of the adversarial system in England. Children are required to undergo cross-examination. Judges and barristers are insufficiently aware of the difficulty that children have with evidence and few know how to speak with a 10-years old child in a non-legal way.

Kamena DORLING stressed the need for all judges to receive a training.

Compulsory training must include seminars on sexual crimes and on the psychology and development of the child. Until recently, such training was not well developed.

There is a need for standardizing training programmes at a national level..

The training provided by national police services, for example, can change locally.

Kamena DORLING acknowledged the importance of determining what level of training each professional who works with child victims has.

Cost in relation to the scope of necessary training is also a factor. For example, in England it is compulsory for at least one person in each school to assume a leadership role in child protection. This designate must receive initial training and ongoing training every two years. With an estimated 5,000+ schools per country, there are significant resource and cost implications.

Although a lot of guidance is available on the subject, we need to ensure that all professionals who work closely with child victims of sexual abuse are properly trained on this subject.

ROMANIA

Izabella POPA presented the work undertaken by the Romanian Follow-up Committee. She indicated that the Romanian delegation had distributed questionnaires to professionals who work with child victims of sexual abuse. Although few questionnaires were returned, it is evident that training available in Romania is insufficient.

It is for this reason that the National Authority for children's rights, represented at this conference by Mrs **Manuela DANESCU**, decided to widen the scope of analysis towards the violence against children in general, by also including child labour, illegal migration, neglect, etc..

With financial assistance from UNICEF based in Romania, an analysis was undertaken on child abuse prevention and intervention, children's opinion of these services, and training offered to professionals involved in this process.

Several conclusions were drawn from this analysis. Only four universities in Romania provide initial training on child abuse and neglect. One is for lawyers and the other three are for social workers.

All the other universities (law, medical, psychological, etc...) provide such information for specialized professions, such as lawyers who practice family and who deal with child protection related matters. However, there is no specific training on dealing with sexual violence against children.



Two masters programmes intended for professionals in different sectors focus on violence against children.

The Romanian Follow-up Committee contacted 26 NGOs and only 11 offer training concerning child protection and sexual violence.

They also contacted the specific institutes for magistrates, doctors, teachers, and other professionals, but none of them have a specialized training on the subject.

A national action plan was drafted and there is a public debate on the subject in Romania. This action plan has specific measures concerning professional training and the possibility for relevant NGOs to deliver this training and to create a document outlining modules on preventing and intervening in cases of sexual violence against children.

Izabella POPA indicated that the development of a national strategy would regulate training offered to such professionals in Romania. However this strategy has not been fully developed.

She has participated in different training programmes in this field as a trainer and as a trainee. She added that the subjects are better understood when they contain pedagogic films and documentaries.

The Romanian work team is thinking about creating a training centre and producing such pedagogic films in Romania.

FRANCE

For France, Giulia MANCUSO reminds that a multidisciplinary follow-up committee has been set up to allow for a discussion of the different perspectives held by the various professionals who attend training and who provide training. This committee set up a questionnaire, which was sent to several professionals who work in associations, medical judicial units, and in the education sector, and called a number of universities and training centres. She noted that it has not been easy to contact the different services in order to obtain information that is more precise.

As in the other countries, the training available is diversified, but not very specialized in the area of working with child victims of sexual abuse.

We received 35 responses out of 100. These responses were entered into a chart that is available in French and English on the Extranet.

Odile MAURICE underscored that magistrates receive exceptional initial training, while police officers and “gendarmes” receive exceptional ongoing trainings.

“Ad hoc administrators” assist the child once abuse has been disclosed, but don’t receive initial or ongoing training in this area. Private paediatricians likewise do not receive any initial or ongoing training. Based on the responses to the questionnaires, it seems as though the institutions canvassed do not distinguish between providing information and offering ongoing training. This was one of this questionnaire's difficulties. She added that training centers need to be able to deliver training, but the nature of this training is ill-defined.



Hervé THEAUDIERE indicated that we have reached the end of the first part of the agenda, which consisted of sharing our research on the training situation in our respective countries. It is important to acknowledge that each country has difficulties in collecting information due to the large number of professions. It is as important to discuss what training is provided to professionals who deal with child victims of sexual abuse as it is to identify gaps.

In France, another complication was present. Some professionals were hesitant about sharing certain information and attempted to hide the gaps in training so as not to reveal the true situation.

Given the complications all partners faced in collecting information from professionals who deal with child victims of sexual abuse, it is unlikely we will be able to develop an exhaustive outlook on the situation in all countries. As such, we need to work with the information we were able to collect and use it to complete the database. We must discuss all issues pertaining to best practices and gaps in training to ensure no important point is overlooked.

The first is the non-compulsory notion. Initial and ongoing training is often not compulsory, especially when general training concerning sexual abuse focuses specifically on the challenges faced by child victims. Decisions over whether to undertake additional training to work with children who have been sexually abused rests with the professional. Aside from certain training available in England and Belgium, related modules are non-compulsory and, when available, are inadequate in length. We need to work together to analyse what can be done to address the non-compulsory nature of training professionals who work with child victims of sexual abuse.

Secondly, there is a large number of operators who provide training in this area, which makes it difficult to assess the quality of all training that is available. It is important to guarantee the quality of training, including training contents, level to which trainers are qualified and selection of appropriate professionals to train.

It is also important to consider related resource implication. Such training is often delivered by private organizations and NGOs who may not be able to bear the cost without receiving financial assistance.

There is also a lack of coordination between the different organisations that provide training for professionals who deal with child victims of sexual abuse.

In some countries, the training provided is considered weak in terms of content and differentiation.

Hervé TEAUDIERE reiterated the positive elements mentioned by the partners, such as the notion of selecting participants to attend relevant trainings.

It is necessary to know the degree of contact a professional has with child victims of sexual abuse in order to determine whether and to what degree that individual should be trained to carry out their duties properly.



The following best practices were identified:

- **In Belgium**, those who interview minors must first obtain certification on conducting investigations with children.
- **In Italy**, networks are being implemented.
- **England** is recognized for having multidisciplinary working teams and training opportunities. There are also intermediaries who accompany the child prior to, during and after criminal proceedings to minimise any trauma the child could experience.

Hervé THEAUDIERE suggested that everyone discuss and analyse best practices and shortcomings of existing training programmes in each respective country, even if the information is not exhaustive. As mentioned earlier, all relevant documents should be made available on the Extranet.

Marc GERARD responded that the term “non compulsory” sounds too strong to him. From the moment that training is commenced, professionals identify who the primary responsables are on these subjects from a scientific and humanistic perspective.

Training is further complicated by competition among professionals and this point should not be overlooked.

Programmes become compulsory once they have gained a degree of legitimacy and are highly relevant to a particular area of knowledge that the given profession should be aware of.

Marc GERARD attended a number of “training” programmes that were unhelpful and did not touch on the complexities of the issue. As such, we must be cautious on the types of programmes selected to move from being non-compulsory to compulsory. Dynamic and multidimensional training, that integrates work experiences, should be promoted so that it can gain legitimacy and make this transition..

Hervé THEAUDIERE thanked all participants for their input.

Ester DI RIENZO acknowledged that the lack of a compulsory training illustrates the lack of protective national legislation in relation to gathering evidence from child victims of sexual abuse. In Italian legislation, there are no requirements for interviewing children. Such decisions are left to the discretion of the given professional and may vary from person to person. For example, children can remain in a protected interviewing room during criminal procedures, but this is left to the judge’s discretion. Legislation in Italy does not contain any judicial, clinical, medical and social requirements in relation to the protection of child victims of sexual violence. There is no obligation for these professionals to follow relevant procedures that may benefit the child. Everything depends on the professional’s choice, as no legislative obligation states otherwise. It is imperative to reflect requirements in national legislation to ensure that professionals provide necessary protection for child victims of



sexual abuse. When professionals are well trained based on standards reflected within domestic legislation, it maintains continuity and ensures quality child protection standards.

Izabella POPA stressed that training must be compulsory. In Romania, several approaches toward establishing compulsory training were identified, including requiring professionals who work with children to attend a minimum of 42 hours of training annually concerning violence against children. These standards have been effective since 2004, but are not fully implemented. The chief of local child protection services did not know where to send professionals to be trained, because there was an insufficient number of training facilities to offer the volume of training required.

Romania is considering developing a curriculum that suits the basic training for professionals who work with children who have experienced violence. This curriculum must be approved at a national level and involve every ministry concerned with approving compulsory training.

Some child protection departments in Romania have set up their own training centres, but this is just the beginning.

POLAND

Joanna KUSZYK commented on training available to those in the medical profession who may come into contact with child victims of sexual abuse.

In Poland, training is offered by governmental and non-governmental organisations. In terms of medical training, it was possible to develop and establish training courses led by non-governmental organisations. If doctors have the permission of National Association of Doctors, they can obtain educational credit for attending training.

In Poland, there is a very strict programme for doctors. If doctors want to specialise in a particular area, they must complete training equivalent to 300 educational credits over a three-year period. It is not necessary for training to be compulsory at the medical level because people working in this field who want to continue their work must obtain relevant academic credit.

However, this training is not multidisciplinary.

One of the problems in Poland is that contacts are not available from whom to obtain relevant information about procedures identifying signs of sexual abuse among child for legal and medical professionals. When cases of child sexual abuse arise, the procedures to be followed are unclear. It is, therefore, important to introduce a system for sharing information among professionals and organisations.

Jaroslaw POLANOWSKI explained that in Poland, children are interviewed in protected “child friendly” rooms, which are numerous in number.



Hervé THEAUDIERE thanked everyone again for their input and invited additional comments.

Hervé THEAUDIERE revised **Marc GERARD**'s question on what gives someone the legitimacy to define what is compulsory and what is not.

Hervé THEAUDIERE mentioned two sources of legitimacy, including:

- 1) political legitimacy stemming from policies and legislation; and,
- 2) professional legitimacy arising from the establishment of internal regulations unique and the recognition of common practices.

Hervé THEAUDIERE asked each partner to discuss the different subjects that can be covered when drafting recommendations. He asked the participants if they have any questions.

Again, he touched on the discussion that emerged earlier on which training is necessary for each/all professionals; what the difference is between information-based training and training based on the acquisition of skills? Who decides what concerns the training and what concerns the information?

According to **Hervé THEAUDIERE**, it can be difficult to make the link between both information-based training and skills-based training. This is not the case, however, for England. **Hervé THEAUDIERE** asked if anyone objects to this point.

Odile MAURICE reiterated that the professionals who responded to questionnaires sent out by the French delegation did not distinguish between information-based training and skills-based training.

Giulia MANCUSO underscored that some professionals do not know how to become involved in conferences and seminars.

Some conferences discuss child sexual abuse, but do not cover practical aspects of working with sexually abused children.

Marc GERARD reminds that it is important not to forget the importance of integrated persons into an internship in an experimented service or in a service capable of integrating them to its training and giving them responsibilities according to his/her level in order to make them progress.

This is a field that is often neglected, but should be fundamental at the level of specialisation. Professionals from each area are best equipped to respond to such nuanced questions. There can be trainings for professionals working with child victims of sexual violence.

Pierre PATINY added that multidisciplinary internships could be established to bring professionals together to better understand the role of each participant. These workshops need



not be limited to working in the field. He thinks this could form a component of multidisciplinary training.

Marc GERARD enquired as to whether practical, long-term internships for doctors, nurses, psychologists, and others have been established that allow people to choose in their training and allow them to carry out case, as it is the case in Belgium.

It is important to train new staff and allow for adequate time for the trainee to fully understand best practices and its limitations.

Until now, police have not been accepted into the programme, but criminologists and various justice officials have. It is important to limit the number of trainees so that service standards for children and their families remain adequate.

Trainees should bring something new to the table, while demonstrating their interest by asking questions and continually seeking new challenges.

Whether internships should be offered is an important question that is moving us in the right direction during our discussion.

Beatrice BESSI explained that identifying a person or an authority to establish rules that regulate training at a national level could be a problem. It would be necessary to define minimal points.

She noted political and financial problems as influencing the progression of this subject in practice. .

Kamena DORLING underscored the difficulties that exist between judicial and social professionals, as the former focuses on judicial procedure, while the latter's primary interest is child protection. Common training exists, for example, between police officers and social workers on interviewing children. However, conflict arises from the variant objectives each professional holds in relation to child protection.

Marc GERARD stressed the need to address challenges during training, not evade them.

Hervé THEAUDIERE underscored the issues that arise when the perpetrator confronting confronts the victim. In France, the accused's defence is expected to prove the child is lying, so that his or her client wins the case. Both the person being accused and his or her counsel have the right to due process under the law. However, this doesn't mean that the defender, once trained, must be aggressive towards the child or act in a way that may destabilise the victim. Defence counsel should be aware of the impact of their behaviour at trial, namely during cross-examination.

All parties involved during court proceedings should perform their functions in a way that best protects the child.

For example, a programme in France provides for a separate room where child victims can be questioned in the presence of his lawyer by a video conference. Defence counsel remains in the courtroom, separate from the child, thus limiting the potential for defence counsel



confronting the child. A child who has been sexually abused by an adult need to be protected from additional aggression from professionals who come into contact with him or her.

Recommendations should be proposed at this level.

Beatrice BESSI agreed with **Hervé THEAUDIERE**, but noted that professionals who work with child victims of sexual abuse can also influence the children they come into contact with. For this reason, children are not permitted to receive therapy for up to two years after having been victimized to ensure that the child's statements while being interviewed have not been influenced, except when the judge overrides this stipulation subject to some criteria that the psychologist must follow. Practices in the judicial field have, according to him, "invaded" the clinical field.

Lawyers often think speaking with a psychologist has influenced a child's testimony and, as such, the testimony is not upheld in court.

There are cases where the accused's right to due process has hindered child protection.

Hervé THEAUDIERE expressed the importance of intervening where sexual abuse has occurred so as to best protect the child.

Giulia MANCUSO noted that based on the situation analysis reports sent by certain partner countries, information and training programmes intended for teachers and families were established.

She asked whether providing training to teachers and families on the evidence collection process may foster accountability among professionals who work with child victims of sexual abuse. It is important to underline the difference between information and training for professionals. Not all the professionals facing situation of child sexual abuse need to be trained. Too much information should not be provided, since every participant should be allowed to establish a link with other professionals, who have the means, knowledge, and skills to address the needs of the children during this process.

She also questioned whether having the presence of a single professional who would receive training for each school would work so that all teachers did not require training in this area.

Hervé THEAUDIERE affirmed that this is a debate on "not providing too much information" and asked which the immediate reactions are.

Hervé THEAUDIERE opened a discussion on items that have not yet been covered, including participants' involvement, selection, appropriateness, and training capacity. This subject is linked to the selection of the professionals conducting the interview.

Michel CARMANS raised the issue of selecting interviewers who collect evidence from child victims. These professionals sometimes invest too much of their time elsewhere, don't know their limits, and find themselves quickly confronted with practical situations. Professionals who undergo training must be aware of and guarantee the special needs of child victims of sexual abuse. The child should also have access to psychological

Michel CARMANS noted that a rotation occurs among investigators who collect evidence



from children for a period of three to five years. After this period, the investigators “disappear” due to a change in services or because they have other cases to investigate.

Hervé THEAUDIERE asked the partners to share their opinions and comment on this.

Marc GERARD stated that ongoing training is not offered to professionals who work on a rotational basis. When discussing training, it is important to be mindful of this dimension.

Michel CARMANS stated that some magistrates and other categories of professionals do not have a specific training and they are not confronted with problems when dealing with child sexual abuse cases. Therefore, the training must also consider what is best for a professional.

Maria KELLER-HAMELA stressed that all judges who interview children must receive specific training on protecting the child and identifying evidence.

This should be mentioned in the recommendations put forward at the end of this project. We should also recommend that non-trained professionals should not interview child victims of sexual abuse.

The German partners explained that many professionals (including social workers, sociologists, nurses and others) only receive brief notions of this subject, but are not formally trained.

Conferences and meetings aim to raise awareness among professionals about the subject, but are not intended to provide training.

Only special investigation police receiving training.

The childhood office does not receive training either, but does receive information on the subject.

Professionals confronted with cases of child sexual abuse are often uncertain of how to behave.

The conferences, often very expensive, only consist of debates and do not train professionals.

Maria KELLER-HAMELA asked if the objective of the programme is only to make recommendations to improve the training system for professionals interviewing the child or also for other professionals who are in contact with the child victim.

Giulia MANCUSO answered that the programme is on training professionals who work with child victims of sexual abuse. This includes, but is not limited to, interviewing and collecting evidence from child victims.

Ester di Rienzo affirmed that professionals need to have a clinical experience with very young children in order to be capable of being in contact with them and understand how they express themselves (i.e. using gestures and non-verbal language). The person conducting the interview must be informed about the child’s life, his family, school environment, and everything concerning else that may be relevant in understanding the child better..



Hervé THEAUDIERE reiterated that the programme is very clearly positioned on training of professionals who are in contact with the child before, during, and after the interview and when the abuse is first disclosed. There are people who work with child victims at different skill levels. What type of training should be established for these different professionals?

Joanna KUSZYK added that in Poland, hospitalization is sometimes necessary for child victims of sexual abuse to protect the child and allow him or her time to understand what has occurred.

If the medical staffs caring for the child are trained appropriately, the service welcoming the child could become a diagnosis place for the child victims of sexual violence.

Hervé THEAUDIERE asked everyone to express what they think about the hospitalization of children.

He thinks that due to the multiplicity and the nature of the forms of sexual aggressions, it can be difficult to establish specialized teams. Teams of investigators, doctors, and social workers all contribute to the child victim's files at some point; however, it is possible there are people who have a more suitable level of expertise.

Giulia MANCUSO specifies that the professionals who perform particular functions change from one country to another. In France, for instance, medico-judicial units were created to welcome and care for child victims of sexual abuse. They are located in a hospital environment that gathers all professionals who collect evidence from and work with child victims of sexual abuse. Meetings can take place among professionals during which they can share their experiences.

Giulia MANCUSO stressed the importance of these meetings among professionals, which can take place at a local, regional, and national level. These meetings provide professionals the opportunity to gather and exchange experiences about daily practice and allows them to establish relationships.

Hervé THEAUDIERE believes that reminds that it is important to talk about the compulsory nature of training and decide if it must be "imposed" by the profession itself. Will the legitimacy come from statutory texts, through the development of common practices, or both?

Hervé THEAUDIERE suggested that the following factors be considered when determining the best approach towards training content:

- skills
- which minimal behaviour
- expertise



- which field are to receive training

He also questioned implementation and regulations of training. Thirdly, this will allow training to be organised in a qualitative, quantitative, and financial dimension.

Pierre PATINY added that he is worried about the Italian partners' recommendation on knowing the child's language, behaviour, and development. They mentioned that it would be necessary to establish a multidisciplinary training assuring knowledge and understanding of the role of each participant in the evidence collection procedure and those who work with child victims of sexual abuse in other capacities within each country. Police officers must, for example, be aware that after listening to a child in the context of gathering evidence, the child will be seen by a psychologist for a psychological exam and by a doctor for a gynaecological exam.

Hervé THEAUDIERE estimated that the first level of the training can help with understanding how to work with children after they have been sexually abused.

Filippo SQUICCIARINI explained that in Italy, there is a special procedure that is applied to the interview process, which is conducted by a psychologist, a judge of the youth court, or the examining judge in a separate room.

Hervé THEAUDIERE mentioned the different steps of the judicial procedure when working with child victims of sexual abuse in preparation for the interview, during the interview, the investigation, the judicial proceeding, and follow up after the trial is over.. He asked whether there are particular aspects of the interview that should be discussed.

Michel CARMANS noted that the proper selection of trained professionals is an integral aspect of child protection. is often discussed. It is important to establish common skills for all professionals working with the child victim of sexual violence.

Hervé THEAUDIERE opened the debate on attitudes held by different professionals.

Michel CARMANS stated that each professional must be conscious of his/her responsibilities and be respectful of the child when providing evidence. For example, the police officers should not judge children who are disclosing evidence. Each professional should maintain his/her role.

They must have a professional attitude and follow a strict protocol for conducting interviews with child victims. It is necessary to know that other professionals can take children into their charge. Actually, this is a legal obligation in Belgium.



Maria KELLER-HAMELA underlines that professionals must be sensible to the needs of the child, have knowledge of the child's trauma, the consequences of sexual violence on a child, the abusive dynamics of the family, and understand incest, among other related topics.

The professionals conducting the interview must not direct the child during the interview.

Not all professionals are capable of interviewing children. It is necessary to be knowledgeable of child psychology, the development stages of the child, asking appropriate questions, and finishing the interview.

It is important not to misunderstand the roles of professionals.

Pierre PATINY explained that it is important to have a rigorous protocol during the hearings and to follow it. Many interviewers ignore protocols. It is important to remember that the end of the interview is an important stage of the hearing.

Ester DI RIENZO underscored the difference between young children and teenagers. According to her experience, teenagers have a certain spontaneity to talk about facts, whereas young children are more indirect.

It is important to consider the effects of disclosing evidence of family violence, which constitutes the majority of cases of sexual violence. Listening to the child's evidence is not easy, as the child can be scared of disclosing facts that will have consequences for his/her family. The effects of the trauma must be taken into consideration during training provided to professionals..

Hervé THEAUDIERE asked the partners to consider the development of a protocol for magistrates.

Pierre PATINY responded that in Belgium protocols for the King's prosecutors and police officers have been legislated since 2001. This legislation took into consideration the type of protocol to be used and taught to police officers.

He noted that the English delegates believe that legislating these practices should constitute best practices. In Belgium, magistrates are invited to training for police officers, but generally attend infrequently. However, magistrates who work with child victims of sexual abuse should systematically participate in three annual supervisions with police officers.

Hervé THEAUDIERE asked whether if this document on best practices is only a reference document, a protocol used by the magistrates, or something used in emergency situations.

Beatrice BESSI explained that in Italy, magistrates do not have voluntary training. **Mr. PAOLINI**, an Italian prosecutor, made a protocol on training staff to combat the existing deficiencies in the procedure between the child's first disclosure and the trial.



Izabella POPA noted that in Romania, NGOs train magistrates using a protocol similar to the British one. This training was established three years ago in the north part of the country.

Hervé THEAUDIERE asked the English partners if their protocol is effective.

Kamena DORLING explained that the guidelines on “Achieving best evidence in criminal proceedings” for police officers and judges for conducting a hearing in youth court. These guidelines underscore professional responsibilities, so as to avoid posing inappropriate questions to the child victim. This protocol is followed and respected, but not legally imposed.

A judge's role is different in England than in other countries, as they can ask questions directly to the child. There is a reference document for judges, but their training has some deficiencies.

Hervé THEAUDIERE asked if magistrates and other professionals had drafted this document.

Pierre PATINY would like to know if the document they are discussing is the “memorandum”.

Kamena DORLING explained that in 1992, the health department's home office created the “memorandum of video recording interviews with child witnesses for criminal proceedings”. This protocol has been updated twice since 1992 and the last version was developed in 2007.

Michael HEIDE discussed his experience with child victims of sexual violence who represent a majority of the cases where the police intervene.

Police officers receive information concerning child sexual abuse. The criminal police unit specialises in these cases, while 5 to 10% of police officers rely on the prosecutor's office.

In most cases, even when police officers are well-trained, the child does not want to cooperate. It is important to establish a reliable relationship with the child and limit the questions asked to those which are necessary in order to understand the key points. We need to allow the child to express him/herself without asking directive questions. The child's well-being is the most important thing. The child's trauma can emerge during the hearing, especially if it is the first time the child discloses that he or she has been sexually abused.

Michael HEIDE discussed the difficulties that can arise after the interview has taken place in case of family violence. If the suspects are imprisoned, the child returns to his/her family environment and German law does not include any child protection provisions.

An example of good practices is the video recording of the interview that takes place in a protected room. A psychologist can be present while collecting evidence from the child. The interview is recorded from the onset, but the child is often required to repeat what occurred several more times, including before the court.

The consequences are often inadequate when accused persons plead guilty to receive a reduced sentence. In these cases, the child does not have to testify in front of the court.

If the accused person disputes the facts, the child must appear in court several times.



Hervé THEAUDIERE suggested approaching this subject during the next transnational meeting that will take place in Warsaw.

Joanna KUSZYCK was pleased that the next programme meeting will take place in Warsaw, Poland in the Spring season.

She suggested two places for accommodation:

1. the Ibis hotel situated downtown with an “in house” meeting room.
2. the hotel located in a hospital at “Entre les Bois”, which is 15 km away from Warsaw. This hotel has meeting rooms, at the Mederi Foundation.

On Thursday, April 23rd, it will be possible to visit the paediatric hospital, a home for children and women victims of violence, the Nobody Children’s Foundation child friendly interview rooms and offices, the police’s hearing room the blue line organization (linked to the Psychology Institute), and the emergency line for victims of maltreatment.

Hervé THEAUDIERE suggested two options. We can either arrive on Thursday morning or Thursday evening. Everyone voted for the first proposition.

Hervé THEAUDIERE suggested a vote on deciding which hotel to choose. Participants unanimously voted for the Ibis hotel.

Hervé THEAUDIERE concluded the agenda for the day.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29TH, 2008

Hervé THEAUDIERE opened this second day by discussing two side points:

- **Giulia MANCUSO** announced that, due to the flight problems, Donata BIANCHI will not be able to attend the meeting.
- **Mr. MORANDINI**, Prosecutor of the King
- **Giulia MANCUSO** reminded all participants the research done on European texts within the AGIS programme concerning child victim's evidence collection were included in the CD-rom of the final report.

Among these texts, the Agreement of the Council of Europe for the protection of children against exploitation and sexual abuse was opened for signature on October 27th, 2007.

Article 5 of this Convention shows the importance of training for professionals who work with child victims.



Quoting article 5 – “**Recruitment, training, and sensitization of people working with children**”.

1. Each party takes legislative or other necessary measures to raise awareness towards child protection and rights among professionals in regular contact with children in the education, health, social protection, justice, police sectors, as well as in the sectors concerning sports, cultural, and leisure activities.
2. Each party takes legislative and other necessary measures so that the people identified in paragraph 1 have adequate knowledge of the exploitation and sexual abuse concerning children, the means to discover them, and the possibility foreseen in article 12, paragraph 1¹.

In relation to the articles quoted, **Giulia MANCUSO** underscored the awareness created by the convention in providing access to information and campaigns on working with child victims of sexual abuse and determining what preventive measures can be taken (Articles 6 et 8).²

In general, this convention mentions the points that were discussed yesterday and during the first Meeting in Paris, including the importance of training professionals and providing relevant information to parents, teachers, children, and the public to create awareness about the issue.

In terms of professional training, the convention tackles *the adequate knowledge of exploitation and sexual abuse concerning children, the means to detect them, and ability to respond*.

La Voix de l'Enfant has participated to the World Forum on education and training organised by UNESCO.

The Forum highlighted the importance of access to information and ongoing training.

¹ **Article 12 – Description of the suspicions of exploitation or sexual abuses**

1. Each part takes legislative or other necessary measures so that rules of confidentiality imposed by the internal law on certain professionals working directly with children do not represent an obstacle to the possibility, for these professionals, to indicate to the services in charge of child protection, any situation of a child for whom they have reasonable motives to believe that he/she is a victim.

² **Article 6 - Education of children**

Every part takes the legislative and other necessary measures so that children receive, during primary and secondary school, information on the risks of exploitation and sexual abuse, as well as on the means to protect themselves, according to their age. This information distributed also to parents presents a more general information on sexuality and pays particular attention to risk situations, notably those resulting from the use of the new information technologies and communication.

Article 8 – Measures towards the public

1. Each party promotes or organizes sensitization campaigns that inform public on the subject of exploitation and sexual abuse concerning children and the prevention measures that can be taken.

LA VOIX DE L'ENFANT
PROGRAMME « TRAIN TOGETHER - SE FORMER ENSEMBLE 2007 – 2009 »



La Voix de l'Enfant has also participated in a two-day meeting on the programme LEONARDO DA VINCI and other European projects related to training.

Giulia MANCUSO underscored the importance of these programmes and talked about the possibility of having concrete exchanges among the different countries and different experts.

These documents contain proposals for programmes that encourage professional exchanges during ongoing training sessions. She suggested that partners study these programmes and evaluate the discussions that arise in order to develop programmes of professional training.

She suggested that partners include in the Cd-rom on international and European texts concerning training at the end of the programme, as had been done for the AGIS programme.

Giulia MANCUSO wishes that the speech of Donata BIANCHI could be briefly summarized during the meeting in Warsaw.

Hervé THEAUDIERE allowed Mr. MORANDINI to comment.

Mr MORANDINI introduced himself as the first substitute of the Prosecutor of the King in Belgium. As such, he comes into contact with a number of children in a professional setting and works with the people who collect evidence from children. He explained the nature of his daily work and the shortcomings of the Belgian system.

There are two types of magistrates in Belgium :

- magistrates who are called “assis” in charge of judging a dispute between two people, or between the society and one individual.
- magistrates called “debout” (prosecutors are included in this category).

Belgium has an inquisitorial system, not an accusatory system, as is the case in England. The prosecutor is a magistrate who may also intervene, except in judicial matters. He verifies the legality of the judge’s work, guides the judge, and guarantees public order.

The prosecutor in Belgium is the chief of the police. No inquiries are made without his preliminary agreement. 92% of the inquiries are directed by the Prosecutor of the King and 8% of the inquiries by the investigating judge. Minors who have experienced maltreatment and/or poor academic conditions are introduced to the prosecutorial system, and also come into contact with psycho-medical-social professionals, doctors, psychologists, nurses, social workers, and teachers, among others. The purpose is to identify malpractice, and to protect the minor. The prosecutor, doctors, and people working directly with the child are entrusted with that child’s most personal experiences.

Prosecutors must receive consent from the family and social workers who have worked with the child before commencing legal action.

Evidence collection is paramount in denouncing rape, aggression, maltreatment, malnutrition, torture or solitude imposed on children.

Mr. MORANDINI indicated that some magistrates have not received training and do not realise that their role is to allow the minor to express themselves and not merely to collect evidence. Penal law should allow the child an opportunity to express what has occurred



during an interview—not compel a testimony against his or her will. If the child does not want to talk, he will not talk.

The public prosecutor generally chooses who interviews the child, since 92% of inquiries are dealt with by the public prosecutor's department. This is the only instance when the prosecutor can give an order to the police. According to law, the prosecutor ought to undertake the interview himself and must guarantee that the hearings are held in the best conditions. Prosecutors do not receive specific training on sexual violence.

Only federal police officers are trained and receive evaluations two to three times a year. They watch and analyse recordings of interviews with child victims of sexual abuse.

Mr MORANDINI acknowledged that the lack of training for magistrates is a major shortcoming, as they are not sensitive to the fact that children who refuse to disclose information can still be victims. Magistrates have an important role and should receive compulsory training on collecting evidence from children.

Belgian police officers are extremely well trained. Police officers who participate in interviewing the minor and collecting evidence from him or her are not familiar with the file. The police officer who is concealed (behind a mirror) is familiar with the file. At the end of the interview he or she can request that some questions be reformulated.

Once the child has been interviewed **Mr. MORANDINI** brings in an expert psychologist to determine the child's credibility according to the Youle grille SVA criteria.

Afterwards, he appoints afterwards a psychologist to conduct a psychological analysis of the child that can be relevant during the judicial truth seeking process. It's particularly difficult for the child if he or she must face a parental authority.

The role of the Prosecutor of the King is to appoint appropriate people to interview child victims, provide support to them and ensure they are properly trained. Those conducting the interview, Expert psychologists participate in training two to three times per year to improve their competence in this area, but this varies according to each person. It is regrettable that the magistrates do not receive appropriate training for carrying out this integral role in child protection.

The Dutroux case demonstrated the damage that can result from misinterpreting the statements a child has made while being interviewed.

The Prosecutor of the King intervened in such cases with all social workers as since 20 years ago the Belgian law set up the "déjudiciarisation", which means that any assistance provided to child victims should be separate from the judicial process. Legally, such assistance includes any sort of intervention made by specialists first in contact with the minor, including social assistance.



These professionals should refer the matter to the specialized social worker managing and coordinating the contact that the child has with other professionals during the intervention stage.

The principle of "déjudiciariser" requires that the judge avoids intervening in matters between the child and professionals providing assistance to him or her. On the other hand, if the adviser provides assistance to minors, but believes such assistance will not be effective, he or she must refer the matter to the Prosecutor of the King who should then verify whether the adviser's conclusion is accurate. If not, then, he has to seize a judge. The prosecutor should make a concerted effort to ensure the child receives appropriate assistance.

If there are no viable solutions, the prosecutor will seize a judge who presides over youth-related matters, who shall authorize assistance within or external to the familial environment. The specialised social worker assumed the role of implementing compulsory guidelines and service controls.

The Prosecutor of the King can intervene at many levels by ensuring that the child receives appropriate assistance.

In Belgium, several problems arise involving social care, including:

1. Sharing incorrect information to the public. Basic facts would allow the public to identify the appropriate professional to contact when a situation of child sexual abuse is disclosed. Without members of the public having access to this basic knowledge, it will not matter how well trained professionals are if children are not referred to them.
2. The large number of participants makes it difficult to exchange of information, especially when participants fear violating their professional integrity. This is a serious problem in Belgium, even though this paradigm is largely misguided. Social workers, for instance, are not bound by professional secrecy. Multidisciplinary training would allow each professional to understand the role of other professionals who work with child victims of sexual abuse. Multidisciplinary training allows participants to share their primary functions with other professionals without encountering this problem.

All this is not only about having a specific training; it also involves the establishment of global standards for training.

Mr. MORANDINI expressed that child maltreatment occurs everyday. Professionals are competent, but are too accustomed to dealing with their particular phase of intervention. Training would aim to remove this division. Everyone ought to understand the limits and possibilities of social security intervention, as established by legislation.

It is insufficient for a law to be read without being explained during training.

An exchange among various professionals must allow for role decompartmentalization. Each professional should discuss his or her role in working with child victims of sexual abuse.

Training should be centralized in each state in order to develop a global vision, inspire new dynamism, and ensure geographic representation.



It would be necessary to create a call number and to have a person in charge for each geographical criteria. According to **Mr. MORANDINI**, participants' isolation is an important cause of loss of the meaning of a child's words.

Beatrice BESSI asks if children are prepared for the hearing, if there is a set up procedure or protocol.

Mr. MORANDINI explained that people close to the child are asked not to talk about facts. The child can be accompanied by a reliable person of his/her choice to reassure him/her. The interview takes place in a specially adapted room. The interview procedure and the presence of a psychologist are explained to the child, as imposed by the law. Extreme urgency interviews are very rare.

Pierre PATINY reminded everyone that there is no preparation, or preliminary interview with a psychologist as can happen in some countries.

Mr. MORANDINI assured that the spontaneous nature of a child's testimony is essential.

Marc GERARD underlined that a preliminary accompaniment in the child's interview can be set up.

Pierre PATINY specifies that the child will not be prepared by a police officer.

Marc GERARD answered that in his service he can discuss the presumed facts with the child. Some members of the team do not have any knowledge of the judicial system, and they show a certain "resistance" to acquiring this knowledge.

Pierre PATINY thought that the solution to this "resistance" is teamwork.

Izabella POPA asked two questions: the first about the presence of a psychologist during the interview and the second about the evaluation of the child conducted by the psychologist after the interview.

She explained that in Romania, the law outlines that a psychologist should be present during the interview and can intervene if necessary. The psychologist must also prepare the child before the interview by explaining to him the steps of the interview and its value.

Regarding the evaluation by a psychologist of the child's testimony after the interview in Belgium, **Izabella POPA**, asked if this evaluation is based on the video recording of the child's testimony or if a psychologist meets and speaks to the child.

Mr. MORANDINI reminded everyone that the presence of a psychologist guarantees the psychological protection of a child. In Belgium, this does not exist. The Prosecutor of the King can ask this, but he is not obliged to do so. He can ask for "assistance to the interview".

– If a psychologist attends the interview, he must establish the conditions in which this interview will take place and make a child's analysis.



- The second mission that the Prosecutor of the King can ask to the same or another psychologist, is to establish the credibility criteria on the basis of the written re-transcription of the child's statements. Certain psychologists are against the SVA criteria. Some psychologists wish to be present during the interview in order to understand what the child experiences. **Mr MORANDINI** refuses, as this is not an 'assistance mission'. There is confusion among psychologists who want to be at the same time assistants, credibility analysts, and therapists all at the same time. Now, they are only present within the framework of the Prosecutor of the King's mission.

- The third mission that the Prosecutor of the King can give to the same psychologist or another one, is a mission for the psychological expertise. And in that case, the expert has to contact the minor, his parents and family, know the history of the problem in order to bring a legal help, which can be useful for the help of the youth.

Concerning the training, **Mr. MORANDINI** reminded everyone that police officers must be "well" trained, as psychologists do not always distinguish between expertise and therapy. The interview must take place in the best conditions, and a judicial framework is not the same as a care framework.

Izabella POPA asked how much time lapses between the interview and the fostering of the child in cases of severe violence and of danger towards the child. She explained that in Romania this can take at least two months. The social worker is often not believed by the prosecutor or the judge.

Mr. MORANDINI answered that the interview can last three hours, according to article 39 of the law.

When facing a very serious situation, on the basis of the penal code, by judicial authority, the prosecutor of King can place both parents in custody, as they will receive a warrant for arrest from the investigating judge. The parents will not have any contact with the minor anymore. For the child, the prosecutor seizes, as a matter of urgency, the judge of the youth, who will summon parents very quickly and arrange for fostering for a period of 14 days, renewable only once for 60 days.

Izabella POPA explained that in Romania a law should impose a minimum of four hours for a child's fostering in urgent situations.

Mr MORANDINI reminded that when an audiovisual interview is made, it becomes an official piece of the record, the written transcription and the tape are submitted to penal records. The suspect may watch the tape, read the interview, but according to the law, a judge may not invite a child to come to court. The audiovisual interview has the same value as a testimony in court. The suspect cannot ask for a confrontation with the child.

Pierre PATINY reminded that court parties are allowed to have access to pieces of the record, but only the Prosecutor of the King has the power to agree with this, while clarifying the conditions.



Mr MORANDINI specified that the recording may not be taken out of the record and as a prosecutor, he is able to take the decision to insert a report's photocopy in the social file. A record is secret in an inquisitory system, magistrates are on oath, they work in silence, in respect for everyone and for public tranquility.

Hervé THEAUDIERE asked if magistrates and social workers are in favour of training.

Mr MORANDINI answered that magistrates have asked for that, but Belgian justice lacks means. Moreover, magistrates should be given the impulse to seek a training instead of remaining shut in their courts giving the excuse of having too much work. Their hierarchy doesn't always show the initiative to send them to attend trainings and to remind them that work is done with human beings rather than with papers.

Mr MORANDINI claimed that there is a wide demand from social workers. A conference on professional secret has been organised in the Dinan urban districts with doctors, medical and social experts.

To give them a practical training, there is a need of convincing people in the field. Training is currently too framed on scientific aspects. Trainings need to be more modest, basic and centralized.

Mr MORANDINI specified that currently, trainings depend on the good will of people. Lectures are organized in the evenings, but there is no financial grant for costs.

Hervé THEAUDIERE firmed up details about his question on the centralized organism, responsible for training that might be set into action by political will or by magistracy.

Mr MORANDINI replies that in a democracy, financial means come from the political sphere. Politics should then be involved, and it must be reminded that the importance of a good money management may be the implementation of a central, reliable organism, with clear missions. For example, a memo sticker in diaries for help call might be a reference. Magistracy will comply to political decisions that govern law rules. Politicians may require that all participants in youth affairs must attend an ongoing training.

Kamena DORLING asked if a child might be interviewed a second time, in order to collect as much information as possible.

Mr MORANDINI replied that the procedure is written, in contrast to the English system. In the inquisitory system, a paper file must be set up, witnesses must testify through police, in charge of the minutes' redaction. The law states that any information transmission to the judicial authority must occur through minutes.

For instance, if a child remains silent during his/her interview, the prosecutor will undertake investigations, interrogations in the neighbourhood, among child witnesses and family surroundings. If the situation improves and the child agrees to talk, because he/she was fostered and somehow blossomed, the magistrate alone can ordain a new interview. In this case, his demand must be motivated in order to avoid a feeling of secondary victimization in the child. Generally, a child does not testify in a trial. In very rare situations, the judge may command it, if his judgment is motivated: the child is then interrogated through video in



another room. This law has been in force since the year 2000, a judge cannot summon a child that has been interrogated in an audiovisual interview.

Pierre PATINY specified that the credibility analysis corresponds to the analysis of the child's statements, but the SVA is only used when there are revelations. An interview without revelations is not finished. A judicial case is not only based on a child's statements record, instead a whole investigation is carried out.

Marc GERARD underlined that SOS-Enfants members or other professionals frequently testify, certify that they indeed heard the child's words or noticed a specific behaviour. Then, they prepare a certificate or give elements of the medical records at their own initiative, because they feel affected. It is important to continue to help a child who didn't speak during the interview and to support him/her, as well as his/her family, to find solutions with the advisor. The criminal trial will not take place, but there is however clinical matter and belief that facts occurred.

Mr MORANDINI agreed with **Marc GERARD's** statements. Even if the judicial record does not come to an end, the protection record continues with youth help. The judiciary system does not always find a solution and its limits should be admitted and remain in a legal mission frame.

Pierre PATINY tackled the information and training themes again. Their basis would be information, in order to allow participants from all sectors to meet, know each other and each other's limits.

Mr MORANDINI suggested to training on how to gather a child's statement, training that parliament would make compulsory, and to require that all professionals (magistrates, social assistants,...) follow together the same practical training, based also on exchange. If the training organism is centralized, it can, through its local intermediaries, get organized at a local level.

Giulia MANCUSO asked what themes would be tackled in this multidisciplinary training.

Mr MORANDINI proposed a system already set in a simple way in every country, even if magistrates are present, and to recall the purpose of everyone's mission. In Belgium, young magistrates often have a unique training that is to work on a large quantity of cases. As they are the last arrived, they are appointed to work on youth cases. Some of them, showing goodwill, will try to get trained by meeting other professionals. But others will remain in their office, bent on their files and social assistants will lack motivation.

Giulia MANCUSO asked if basic themes, such as the child or the abuser's psychology should be tackled...

According to **Mr MORANDINI**, this topic is a second step, as psychologists should not be substituted. The training's aim is to ensure everyone knows his place.



According to **Marc GERARD**, there is a need for a training that informs everyone, but that should allow a specialization for most difficult cases.

Mr MORANDINI said that an abused child must be taken in charge by professionals attending an ongoing training and a regular refreshment courses.

Hervé THEAUDIERE thanked **Mr MORANDINI** for the quality of his speech.

Hervé THEAUDIERE continued recalling that one of the programme's objectives was to outline proposals for professionals working in direct contact with the child.

Hervé THEAUDIERE explained that a part of this work had been done. Documents from various follow-up committees that partners have sent or will send to la Voix de l'Enfant will be published on the Extranet and will be completed by the analysis that will be undertaken during the conference.

The vice president of La Voix de l'Enfant reminded everyone that the programme's second objective is to create a basic training module common for all professionals working with child victims, that will lead to specialized training, depending on whether the professional is part of the judiciary, police, psychology or medical sector.

The third objective included discussion of the contents of an interprofessional common procedure.

The fourth is based on international multidisciplinary cooperation, thanks to the organization of transnational meetings among the programme's partners, and will reinforce the network launching of professionals according to the AGIS programme.

It is important to recall these goals and to center work days.

Regarding the overview, **Hervé THEAUDIERE** explained that as many information as possible has been gathered and that presentations have led to an understanding of the diversity and complexity of situations. This information collecting work must be carried on.

Regarding trainings, **Hervé THEAUDIERE** suggests to work first on general needs, goals and contents and to define the basic common training. Every follow-up committee will continue this debate in order to submit proposals.

The issue about a specific training for each professional area will be tackled by determining this training's objectives and contents.

The European Commission must be submitted recommendations about the good works of every country.

Hervé THEAUDIERE suggests to formalize concepts regarding the needs for a common basic training, the goals to be set, and to validate contents.



Partners suggest that the common transversal basic training for first circle professionals intervening with child victims (magistrates, psychologists, lawyers, police officers...) matches the following objectives and needs:

- 1) The necessity of a protocol and rigour in its application.
- 2) The ability to communicate with the child (be able to listen...)
- 3) The ability to define the various protagonists and to determine their assignments.
- 4) To adopt a neutral professional attitude.
- 5) To detect abuse indicative signs on children.
- 6) Trauma psychology
- 7) To be aware of the child victim's difficulty to communicate
- 8) To be aware of and follow the child's opening development
- 9) The given training must be as close as possible to protagonists in the field, the training programme must be common at a national level but its setting up must be regional to allow a meeting of participants.
- 10) The knowledge of trauma indicators, like trauma effects on communications and memories. The more trauma a child has been submitted to, the more difficult it gets for him/her to speak. It is also very important that each professional meeting the child is aware of personal resonance. To listen to a child victim may bring about a reaction of detachment or an excessive implication.
- 11) The implementation of exchange among professionals participating to the training must be one of the transversal training's goals.
- 12) The study of real cases
- 13) Basic information about judicial procedure.

Hervé THEAUDIERE asks English partners to present their actions concerning basic multidisciplinary training and their proposals to improve the training.

Kamena DORLING explains that local commissions for child care are a good training example. They are responsible for multidisciplinary training and are an example of good work to gather professionals and explain the role of the different protagonists. However, even if these trainings are also meant for police officers, they are more developed in the social field.

She reminds that the training of judicial professionals should be developed and that awareness should be raised in judges and lawyers.

As far as the basic multidisciplinary training is concerned, in it important to gather professionals, to define this training's contents and every professional's role, their area of intervention. A basic awareness should be raised, focused on the knowledge of judicial procedure, child communication and development and the impact of violence.



German partners notice the importance of a training about the impact of violence on a child and its insertion in a basic training intended to all professionals.

14) To explain the aims of a child's audiovisual interview, these being not only social or judicial.

15) To allow professionals to give time to ongoing training in order to develop a child protection competence and the ability to ensure a “well being” of the presumed child victim.

Pierre PATINY asks the English partners whether the multidisciplinary training programmes existing in England are compulsory or depend on a personal choice.

Kamena DORLING answers that the obligation depends on the professional category. Police officers interviewing a child are forced to attend a training that will allow them to obtain the better testimony and to carry out the investigation. It is a two week training common with social workers'.

The training organization responsibility and its needs are supported by child care local commissions.

A recommendation could define ongoing training needs for all professionals intervening with the child victim.

Romanian partners underline the importance of a legislation, of prevention and intervention programmes in the training field.

A training program should tackle the theme of interviewing a child and communicating with him/her.

Recommendations should be addressed to judges in order to avoid, during the interview, a second victimization of the child.

A multidisciplinary training programme gives the possibility to better understand the role of each participant. The ongoing training allows the development of professional skills and a better protection of the child and avoids a second victimization.

The programme's partners exchange opinions about the importance of an audition protocol and a rigour in its application in every country.

The multidisciplinary training helps understand everyone's mission and work and establish trust among other professionals intervening with the child victim.

The Belgian partners suggest that the training be organized in two phases, in twice two days, with an 8-day gap in between.

Marc GERARD presents professor **RAZAVI**'s argument. He is a psychology teacher, absent



because of a medical conference.

He presents a summary of the most important points concerning training assessments.

Evaluation is an essential aspect in a training. **Marc GERARD** recalls the distinction between the theoretical and relational acquired knowledge and highlights the fact that the training evaluation should deal with both practical performance and theoretical acquisitions.

Training quality evaluation has a cost in terms of time, money, personal investment and for the new development of the persons working in the field.

Different assessment types may be offered: an evaluation exam centered on theoretical knowledge, on texts through interview simulations before and after the training, the observation of learned and applied relational competences on the field.

There can be four levels of training evaluation:

- 1 – satisfaction questionnaires on received acquisition after a training and not on theoretical and practical acquisitions
- 2 – the assessment of attitude changes following a training through the technique of acquisition questionnaires.
- 3- the amplitude of acquired knowledge and talent transfer to real practice through observation in the field, interviews with professionals and supervisors.
- 4 – after training, the synthesis of the assessment of results and the protagonists' efficiency in front of a child victim of sexual abuse;

A training assessment is often limited to the satisfaction of its participants and/or to acquired knowledge, but does not involve acquired competences during the whole training cycle.

Scientific studies on the topic show that competence theory or acquisition transfer towards practice would only correspond to circa two thirds of what has been learned. When there is a training, transfer is not optimal. Professionals make little use of what they learned and go back to their usual automatisms. This seems to be due to a lack of follow-up after training.

It would be interesting to inquire what could be added to practice and to acquisition consolidation after training. Reinforcing what has been learned is necessary as competences acquired during training tend to get lost with time passing. Their transfer into practice will be possible through this acquisition reinforcement.

Research must study how to keep acquired skills and make trainings more active, less theoretical.

A study was carried out in SOS-Enfants teams, with psychology students. A scenario was elaborated, based on presumed sexual abuse on a 10 year old girl, who had revealed facts to a school friend. With the help of this scenario, an active training on caregivers communication performance in front of a presumed sexually abused child was created.

Each participant, recently qualified psychologist, conducted an interview with a professional playing the child's role, before and after training. Everything was recorded and analyzed with content analyzing systems.



The training consisted of 30 hours focused on the first interview with a child having disclosed a sexual abuse to another child. 15 hours of role-play in small groups were organized in 6 sessions. Meanwhile, theoretical information with recommendations were given. Participants were placed in front of their mistakes while transcribing their interview again. A group discussion took place on the subject.

Concerning the study, an improvement of communication strategies has been achieved and closed questions were reduced.

It is important that professionals taking victims into charge learn to work with high emotional levels as they might go to pieces in complicated and emotionally overcharged situations.

Thanks to that study, deficiencies in the training of newly appointed psychologists having a communication degree could be highlighted. These are often thought as communication experts, while there are imperfections as far as communication is concerned.

Another study was carried out by the police on the interview of child victims of sexual abuse. They received a sample of six reports on six interview transcriptions of children aged 5 to 12. Participants were six police inspectors trained to interview children sexually abused in their family.

The first qualitative phase analyzed the emotional block, the other person's speech interruption. The study was about what could inhibit the child during those interviews.

Through evaluations, these interviews were then classified in two groups, either very good or very bad, with the possibility to add personal comments.

Conclusions show that the methodology is well assimilated and put into practice, but variably according to the cases. Difficulties are to be found mostly at the interpersonal level, in the relational and emotional handling, in the interviewed child's block and in the difficulty to take his/her emotions into account.

After this study, it has been recommended not to underestimate the importance of interpersonal climate in the child's revelation, of the child's and investigator's characteristics, including the latter's ability to dominate his/her emotions.

All trainings need to focus both on relational and emotional control and on interview techniques.

A greater collaboration between police inspectors and psychologists as far as trainings and interviews are concerned, could improve both child's care and interview quality.

Hervé THEAUDIERE underlines the importance of the training's evaluation and its contents definition in a logic of professional skills.

He suggests to continue the debate in mentioning the contents of ongoing trainings for each professional.

Ester DI RIENZO cuts in and underlines the interest of **Marc GERARD's** intervention and notices that this training model based on role-play can be used with several professionals in transversal training.

Béatrice BESSI explains that another training kind may be a case study.

In second level training needs, **partners** highlight:



- the social worker's and psychologist's responsibilities, role and work
- a need for a second level training for magistrates
- the relation with the child's environment in psychologists' training
- in magistrates' training: the need for a better understanding of the child's therapy and follow-up, of repair mechanisms and the possibility to have recourse to psychologists during the procedure.
- In social workers' ongoing training: the information on the abuser's behaviour towards the child, on abuse strategies, on manipulation detection and perverse communication.
- In the training of lawyers working on child reports: preparation elements concerning the particular context they are about to face, the abuser's communication with the child
- England underlines that the training for lawyers and judges gives information about the way to ask a child questions, to lead a cross-examination and to apply special procedures aimed at protecting the presumed sexual abused child victim.
- Media must take place to basic multidisciplinary training programmes in order to learn how to communicate on the relevant theme

Partners notice the importance of including into basic training of practitioners who have been authorized and requisitioned to examine the presumed sexual abused child victim. They would receive a training on judicial procedure, on the child victim's problematic, on child psychology and of each caregiver's role in the protection and care procedure.

Romanian partners notice the importance of a compulsory training that all professionals would take the commitment to follow.

German partners also experienced the reluctance of working together with practitioners and the difficulty to encourage them to attend a training. A training programme was organized by the Federal Republic, carried out by Czech police (not English-speaking) and two persons only actually attended it.

Cathrin SCHAUER reminds that practitioners have a heavy work burden and therefore are not very available.

Hervé THEAUDIERE summarizes the work to be continued:

- to point out professional that ought to be included in the first and second level training programme
- to define the work still to be achieved in the frame of National Follow-up Committees

Before continuing the work, **Belgian partners** underline the importance of **prevention** and the fact that **teachers and school staff ought to be part of prevention programmes**.

In France, the teachers' participation to prevention programmes depends on individual initiatives. In some regions, teachers attend training programmes on child maltreatment with the aid of videotapes created by various associations.

In Italy, there is no unique training for teachers at national or regional level, but there are



initiatives from some schools that implement trainings informing teachers about the risks of sexual violence. Teachers often report maltreatment cases.

The Belgian partner suggests to train one resource person per school.

In Romania there is no training dedicated to teachers on child psychology or on maltreatment on children. In the last three years, the National Authority for children protection has been organizing with National Education Ministries a training on children's rights and on maltreatment including sexual violence. This training was given in all schools and to teachers. A documentary was created by the International Labour Organization on child work, showing various exploitation forms (child prostitution, sexual violence,...) on children and existing in Romania. This documentary allowed to sensitize teachers and make them realize exploitation situations they used to face in school. The documentary's positive impact made it possible to broadcast it on a larger public.

The English partner notices that in England, guiding lines, which are variable from one region to the other, show that every person working with children must receive a training. These professionals are classified into three categories and each professional category has its own training level:

1. those being in regular contact with children and young people
2. those working regularly with children and young people
3. those having peculiar responsibilities in child protection

A training level 1, 2 and 3 corresponds to each category. The local commission for child protection has the responsibility to organize this training. Each professional category is obliged to reach the requested training level. In schools, a referent person must attend this training and is not allowed to spread the information received.

In Poland, there is no compulsory training for teachers, but in schools an educationalist or a psychologist becomes a referent for teachers in problematic situations. Educationalists' trainings are different according to regions.

Nobody's Children Foundation published a book for teachers entitled "*How to talk with sexual abused children*". It gives advice on how to intervene when sexual violence situations on a child are detected.

Maria KELLER HAMELA reminds that sexual violence prevention issue is complex and telling children that their body belongs to them and that they can say 'no' is not enough to prevent situations in which the abuse is carried out by people close to the child. Preventive intervention exists, but not a real prevention.

Another point tackled by **Belgian partners** is about instructors' training and training tools.

Mr THEAUDIERE presents the points to be discussed during the last work day:

- instructors' training
- selection of participants
- support for professionals
- work field definition for Committees until the Warsaw meeting, with return dates for



documents to be translated and for exchange during this next meeting

Mr THEAUDIERE defines the steps of the works to be achieved

- 1st step: Finish the reports on the overview for December 5th
- 2nd step: Send the Follow-up Committees' reports before Warsaw for March 15th, 2009.

Some of the Italian and English partners will leave early on Sunday morning and will not be able to be present during the last meeting.

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 30, 2008

Hervé THEAUDIERE starts the last day of work by asking partners if they wish to add comments on the questions and reflections tackled during the last two days of work.

Concerning the Follow-up Committees' works, **Hervé THEAUDIERE** reminds that the work on **training programmes' overview and the information table** is not complete for all partners. The chart must be officially filled in order to be mentioned in the final report and distributed to every country's competent authorities.

Every Follow-up Committee will be able to describe **objectives, needs and contents** for a **multidisciplinary** (compulsory) **training** and second level **follow-up training** to be given to professionals' various categories.

Every Follow-up Committee will have to **discuss again** and **complete** the points that have been debated during this meeting, concerning training programmes' overview in every country, and the objectives, needs and contents of an initial and ongoing training programme that has to be proposed.

Fixed objectives for Warsaw are to define programmes and contents for a European proposition and to develop professional cooperation at an international level.

Every Committee must also work on:

- **Framework proposals (minimal general recommendations) to be submitted to European Commission;**
- **how to develop professional cooperation**, a topic which will be discussed during the Warsaw meeting;
- **propositions about information, training and awareness programmes for second circle professionals** (teachers, educators, practitioners, lawyers and all persons likely to intervene without playing a central role in the child victim of sexual violence's report.

Hervé THEAUDIERE suggests to fix a work agenda:



- **December 5th** is the limit date to send overview charts, even if incomplete.
- A final document about overview must be sent to La Voix de l'Enfant by **January 31st**, so that each document can be translated.

Warsaw preparation: Follow-up Committees must work on the previously tackled points: information, first level, multidisciplinary and ongoing training, international cooperation.

- **By March 15**, a synthetic document about all reflections that came out from every Follow-up Committee must be sent to La Voix de l'Enfant.
- **The Warsaw meeting will take place on April 24, 25 and 26, 2009.**
- **By the end of June 2009**, all documents necessary for the final report writing must be sent.

The final report must be about overview in each country, recommendations to improve training system in the various countries and final recommendations common to all partner countries.

These common recommendations will be discussed and elaborated during the Warsaw meeting and through the extranet.

Maria KELLER HAMELA underlines that common recommendations must not be too detailed so that they can be applied to all partner countries, even if their systems are different.

Giulia MANCUSO emphasizes the importance of the **extranet** use to finalize documents to be mentioned in the final report.

Concerning the **final report's writing**, **Giulia MANCUSO** suggests, as agreed with **Donata BIANCHI**, coordinator of the programme for the **ISTITUTO DEGLI INNOCENTI** during the Paris meeting, that each partner, together with the members of its Follow-up Committee, writes the final report's part concerning its own country: overview, recommendations, etc. ...

Possible suggested dates for the programme's final conference that will take place in Paris are : December 3 and 4, 2009 (preferential date) and November 26 and 27, 2009.

The final date will be communicated as soon as the availability of the conference room will be set.

The final conference will start on Thursday morning, with partners arriving on Wednesday evening, and will end on Friday afternoon.

Giulia MANCUSO asks partners to communicate the difficulties they meet with the extranet or other communication means available for the programme.

She asks the partners to send power point presentations they did not have time to present during these 3-day work before December 5, so that they can be added to the other documents on the extranet.

On a screen, **Giulia MANCUSO** shows partners how to have access to the extranet TRAIN TOGETHER page, to a work group, to a Forum, to directory. She explains the functioning and the use of each section, of documents present in categories and sub-categories, how to react and finalize on-line documents in a work group; how to start a debate or express one's opinion in a forum's open topic.



She also adds the possibility of using Skype.

The programme coordinator explains that concerning the payment of the coordinator's and of each partner association's two experts, half of the total amount will be sent through bank transfer, including advanced travel fees for the transnational meeting in Brussels .

Each partner must keep all receipts and bills in order to ensure all reimbursements.

She presents the programme's website and the possibility to add documents for each partner country. The reading list with all publications' references on the published subjects in every partner country will also be completed and inserted.

Izabella POPA underlines that this meeting made her understand that other partner countries have the same problems, as far as professionals' trainings and public institutions' intervention on the set of themes in question and that initiatives start from private initiative and not from a national political action.

She is a movie production faculty student and wishes to direct social documentaries. She asks partners and La Voix de l'Enfant to give her the possibility to shoot a short documentary on work in this European programme. It will show Romanian authorities that the issue of training professionals working with children has a European relevance.

Hervé THEAUDIERE expresses the importance of such a documentary and gives La Voix de l'Enfant's support to this initiative.

He suggests to go around the table to discuss the last points such as instructors' training and follow-up for professionals, who could be integrated in complementary trainings according to their competence field.

These points could also be discussed in the framework of the National Follow-up Committee.

Clémentine GERARD presents a few listed points, together with psychology teacher Mr **RAZAVI**:

- In most countries, instructors' training still needs to be developed and this aspect receives very little consideration
- The instructor must be an expert in the field covered by the training, but currently there is a real “training market” in which everyone wants to be (and can be) an instructor
- The necessity to create a trusting relationship between participants and the trainer
- The importance of the instructor's ability to train
- This “ability to train” is influenced by his/her personality, the integration of training techniques, by his/her clinical experience, his/her group interaction mode, his/her training motivations,...
- The instructor's know-how and skills are important to develop motivations in participants that will lead them to experiment new attitudes...
- The instructor must be trained to group animation techniques



- The group must have benefit from his/her acquired clinical sense in the field and receive help to create links between training and real-life situations
- An identification with the trainer and necessary conditions to induce a change process in the participants through training

Pierre PATINY underlines the importance to have a recognised qualification, based on regulations, in order to become a trainer.

Michel CARMANS explains that in Belgium, only investigators having practice in interviewing children can be instructors on child interview techniques, as far as federal police is concerned. The candidate is selected by a commission composed of persons in charge of federal police training and other jury members. The training lasts 28 working days; 8 days are dedicated to education; the remaining days to role-play, supervisions, etc. ...

Marc GERARD notices that there is a strong demand in that field and that professionals lack time to dedicate to it.

Pierre PATINY explains that an instructor must hand down knowledge and skills and not just give simple information. Being a trainer cannot be improvised, a certain knowledge must be present.

Beatrice BESSI explains that a knowledge is often learned thanks to a practice initiated during work experience.

Clémentine GERARD presents the synthesis points of some good practices, set out by the Belgian Follow-up Committee,

- The training should ideally consist of three main lines:

1. a good level theoretical education
 2. practical skills acquisition
 3. professional training course with an experienced instructor
- Sessions aimed at reinforcing acquired skills are necessary to keep an asset level (individual or group supervisions,...)
 - A training assessment should be set to ensure acquisition transfer into practice
 - Training programmes should ideally consist of less than 20-hour intensive training with role-plays, in order to allow a real change of habits
 - Role plays should be performed in small groups of maximum 6 participants, so that they could experiment, evolve and be completed by working groups
 - Individual or group supervisions, as well as work experience in places supervised by an instructor should be proposed
 - At a theoretical level, a module approach would be most adequate:

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- 1) a module on general competences at the level of a basic relationship
- 2) a module on relational techniques applied to different situations (with a child alone, with the child and the mother, the child and his/her parents,...)
- 3) a module on the victim and his/her behaviour
- 4) a module on the perpetrator and his/her behaviour
- 5) a module on maltreatment and sexual aggressions signs
- 6) a module on incestuous families

— At the level of practical skills to be communicated, the following must be set:

- Techniques aimed at improving the participants' communication skills (good practice: open questions, empathy, interviews...)
- Recorded role-plays, case studies and simulation exercises
- Recording viewing that will allow a change in automatisms

Beatrice BESSI underlines the secondary trauma of the professional working with the child victim.

Michel CARMANS notices the importance of a selection based on psychometric tests, on self-questioning, on the ability to work in group. Training cannot exist without a selection;

Hervé THEAUDIERE thanks all partners for their participation, the team of La Voix de l'Enfant and the Belgian crew for organizing this meeting, interpreters and the technician.