

## **DAPHNE PROJECT**

### **(Focus Group of 18 and 19 June 2006)**

On 18th and 19th June, at the European Centre of Mediation, of Brussels, there was the first focus group of the Daphné project - 05/069/YC "MIND - How to understand family conflicts in order not to create victims" The following took part: Marilia Lara and Helene Van den Steen for the European Centre of mediation, Rossana Caselli and Angela Bertolucci for the National Centre for volunteers, and Teresa Novak for Slovenia, Loreta Golubevaite for Lithuania and Dace Benaire for Latvia. There were also the French—English translators, Anna Tharasidis and Rosanna Riente.

**DAY OF THE 18 06/2006**

**A) *Rossana presented the program of the day, the objectives of the Daphne project, "MIND", and explained the two preceding experiments (see the distributed material)***

**Rossana** said that the projects Daphné "Matilde" and "Ancora Matilde" have among their objectives to develop a culture of mediation in Europe and thus to share the experiments done, in order to offer a support for the country which is eager to set up centres of mediation, created on the basis of the requirements of the respective countries. The first Daphné project had as partners Italy, Germany and Spain. The second Daphné project had as partners Italy, Greece, Bulgaria and Belgium. This project makes it possible to introduce mediation in Bulgaria, which initially did a work on the effects of separation on children; the installation of mediation centres was subsequently considered as one of the possible solutions.

Some time ago, CNV started to deal with the protection of the rights of children within the framework of family violence. The 3rd Daphné project has the objective of fighting violence towards children and women and also of developing family mediation in Eastern Europe and in agreement with Resolution No.616/1998 of the European Council of 21 January 1998 (see the distributed material)

**B) *Each new partner was presented, and explained why they decided to take part in the Daphné project.***

**Loreta:** (from Lithuania). Loreta works in an association which deals with protecting women's rights to employment and women's rights at local, national and international level (Socrate and Leonardo da Vinci). In 1996 its institution was occupied to set up structures to protect women and children from violence. The 2nd stage was to set up a telephone service at the disposal of women who were victims of violence, but this was removed for budgetary reasons. Now it is occupied with training people to be able to work with the families which experience violence. According to the association, family mediation is necessary, but Lithuania does not have professionals. There is much divorce, and thus mediation would allow for assistance to children and also better collaboration between various associations and institutions. Could this project help us to know how a centre of mediation would function in this respect? And especially, how can this centre help victims of violence? (In this light, Helene spoke about space meetings as possible tools)

**Tereza:** (from Slovenia) works in an association based on 1992 deals . This association is occupied with the promotion of volunteer work, certain sectors of health and in particular gives psychological assistance to refugees. The association aims to give assistance either inside the country or to nearby countries: Kosovo, Macedonia, etc. the association is also particularly occupied with encouraging the participation of the citizens in assistance to people in difficulty as refugees. The association offers psychosocial assistance for women and refugees; moreover, it has supplementary programmes for children and old people. In its country mediation is known, although the only people who know about mediation are the lawyers and NGOs, who have information, but not the majority of people; therefore, apart from the system of justice there is no form of mediation. It is difficult thus to find solutions. As in Slovenia there is a major problem of school violence, the great defect is that the people who work in practice do not have any training! A mediation service is needed in the schools because there is more and more separation, and children are often in conflict. The practice is characterized by the fact that children are always with their mothers, and thus their fathers do not manage to take advantage of their rights. The true problem is poverty, and poor knowledge of the laws overlooks this.

**Dace** comes from Latvia. Here the problem is different, although in this country the women do not know the laws and do not have the practical experience to know their rights. There exists in the courts (the Court of justice for children) the practice of recognizing the entrusting of children to their fathers, because they earn more money; this practice is used even in cases of family violence. Its association set up a Help Line in 1997 in order to help all people who undergo a crisis. In this service there are 17 voluntary workers. Successively, in 1998 there was created a Crisis Centre, which offers psychological and legal assistance, in which 10 people work. The goal of this institution is to provide a service of assistance to people in crisis. Marital violence in Latvia is a big problem; this centre is the first to deal with this type of violence. The centre also has support groups. When we examine those who call them, the percentage of victims of violence is the same, at least between men and women; however, the majority of the people who go to the centre during the day are women (80%) There is a very new service: Help Line for children, but this service is uncertain, because the administration wants to create its Help Line. It asks initially to know the Daphné project better and if a service of mediation can be integrated in its association.

According to Dace there is a lack of organization and coordination between the organizations which occupy themselves with helping people in crisis. It should be specified that mediation is already known in Latvia, which already took part in a seminar organized by justice in 2002.

### **C) *the purpose of the 3rd Daphne project, "MIND"***

The Daphne project, "MIND" favours the exchange of info and experiences of support to the victims of family conflicts, especially during separation and divorce. These results will be reached by offering support to and reducing the vulnerability of underage children through 1) the exchange of info on how to start a Family Mediation (FM) centre; 2) assistance in the creation of such centres in three receiving countries; 3) the creation of a European network of FM workers. Expected results are: a) project lines sharing; b) 3 close examination seminars in the receiving countries; c) editing of 500 information booklets and 3200 illustrative brochures; d) training of 15 FM workers; e) online counselling; f) telematic forum on FM. Main beneficiaries will be underage children. Main target groups will be parents, volunteers, public personnel, lawyers, and teachers.

To respond to the problem, the project will: 1) Offer assistance in the FM centre start-up in order to intervene in family conflicts and manage them without violence, which frequently makes children the real victims. 2) Favour the creation in three receiving countries of FM centres, managed by NGOs and public institutions, in order to have results sustainable in time and to develop solidarity and training in conflict mediation. 3) Create a European network of mediation experts, able to develop further European kinds and practices of FM.

The project is a trampoline; the CNV helps the various countries to set up and to make mediation known, but after that each country must envisage its strategies and its techniques to evolve/move the project. The CNV will share its experiment compared to the preceding projects. The project is structured in different stages:

1) Inner result: project guide lines shared with the partners

2) Three seminars of close examination, adaptation, participation and experience sharing in 3 receiving countries (Lithuania, Latvia and Slovenia). 15-20 public personnel, teachers and volunteers will participate in the half-day seminars, in order to examine and adapt the materials and the experiences of previous Daphne projects on FM.

The following dates were fixed:

12 - 13 September 2006 in Lubiana SLOVENIA

5 - 6 October 2006 in Riga LATVIA

3 - 4 November 2006 in Caunas LITHUANIA

3) 15 people will be trained to become FM workers after appropriate selection and following agreed criteria and the behaviour code approved by the European forum on FM. Training will be for 180 hours, 120 of which in Italy, 30 online and 30 formative credits. The training course (120 hours) will be organized in Italia (Lucca) from the end of November

4) Online counselling.

5) Publicity is needed for the training to be a success: 3200 illustrative booklets and 500 booklets of information on the usefulness of FM will be distributed in the target group (after adaptation and translation in the languages of the receiving countries of the existing Daphne material). The booklets, which explain very simply and briefly what mediation is, will have to be used for publicising the seminar, the training course and the subsequent starting initiatives of the Centres of Mediation, and will be printed by each partner in his language (approximately 1000 leaflets for each country) It is possible also to adapt and to print small books which were used in the other projects; this will be done at the end of the training course by CNV

6) Implementation of a telematic forum on FM on CNV Web site and a European network of online FM centres.

***D) The last point of the day was the budget. Angela will send by email the model of the invoices which each country will have to return in order to be able to obtain the refunding of the expenses incurred. She will also send to each country all the formulas relating to the payments for sections, naturally on the basis of the date which was fixed.***

With the x-ray group there was an intervention by Mrs. Pero of the European Community. Rossana made a small summary of the previous day in order to update Mrs. Pero. Successively, Rossana required each partner to give their definition regarding:

- Family;
- Violence;
- Mediation;

in order to be able to find a joint definition which makes it possible to better work together, because the way in which one hears these words will influence the way in which we will intervene in each country.

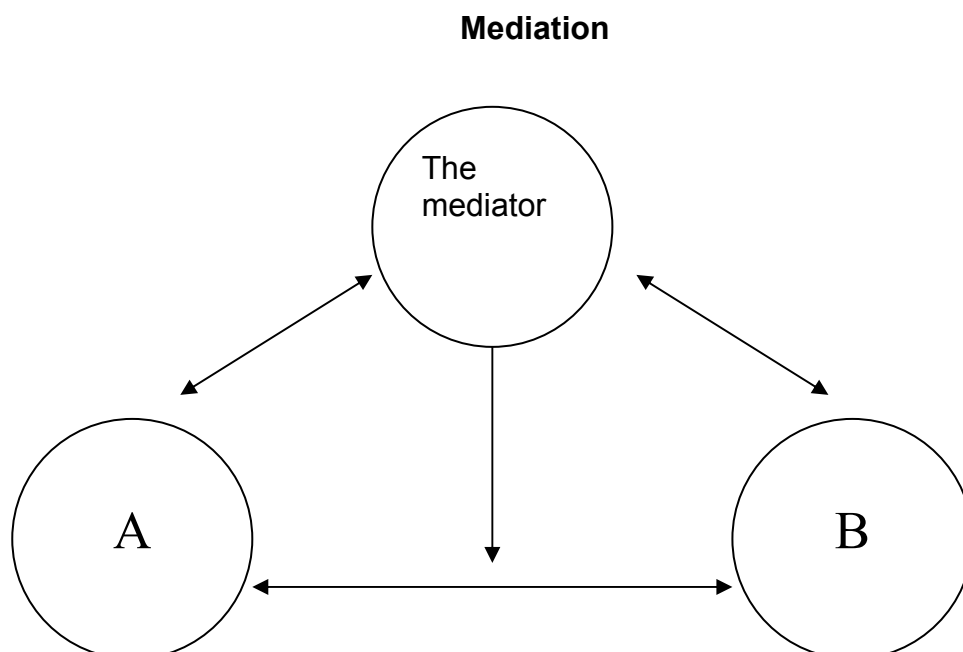
The definition of family is very broad on the basis of evolution at the statistical level. We should see this evolution in the Seminars which will be organized in each partner country to adapt the Family Mediation to each Country.

Helene gave the definition of violence which we used in the projects "Matilde" and "Ancora Matilde":

"violence is all forms of physical or psychological abuse by one person towards another in order to control his behaviour by the use of fear. These abuses may be reinforced by the traditions, the laws and the attitudes prevailing in heach country

It is the concept of making another person do things which she does not want to do, or to prevent her from doing things that she wants to do. Violence is everything that is antiliberal, or that blocks personal development. Violence is not simply the act, but is rather a style of behaviour. Everything that is against human rights is violence.

This definition is the basis of the importance of the education of the concept of freedom in the fight against violence



Mediation means working on the relationship.

At the beginning, mediation tries to establish a relationship where each partner understands how the other feels, to have a circular relationship and a common communication which will make it possible for people to speak for themselves, without the mediator having to speak for the other one. Each one speaks for himself. Subsequently, the mediator must be able to step back at the time the partners are able to get along, to communicate.

The mediator intervenes as a third party, to allow for respectful communication, respect for the other person, for his competences and his differences.

The mediator gives to the partners competences to communicate, to find self-confidence in their own competences (to be sure of oneself = empowerment). It is necessary to attain recognition of the other, of the expression of the other and his responsibilities.

The mediator helps to establish an exchange, in order for each partner to find confidence with himself and successively to recognize the other.

Mediation is a culture which makes it possible to recognize that there is a conflict and that it is possible to manage it, that the conflict can be positively managed and that the partners can manage to change.

The Daphné project allows for the possibility to succeed at a political and legislative level (

During the x-ray group, two questions were put to Mrs. Pero:

1. Loretta asked whether it is possible to have an advance of 70% of the expenses of the project, because the Association which directs the project will receive the expenses in advance.

ANSWER:

The contracts of the Commission are really strict and the person in charge of the project is the principal partner, in this case the Italian association CNV. If there are problems, it is the principal partner who deals with them, at its own risk. The delays of the Commission are enormous, although today the Commission is faster, but normally it is necessary to calculate a delay, a 6-month deadline. The Daphné project is not like the other European projects (Erasmus); the project in question presents difficulties concerning the payments by the Commission. Rossana specified that their Association will pay subsistence expenses directly, but that each country will have to pay the travelling expenses, and successively they will be refunded.

2. The other question concerned the precise details concerning the invoices.

ANSWER:

It should be known that the risk to the country responsible is of not being refunded at the time of receipt, or else that the invoices are not in conformity with the parameters envisaged by the Commission. It is thus necessary to be very careful with the conformity of the documents, because everything must pass through the country which organises the project, since it is this country that requires to be refunded. If any of the other partners have a problem or a question, they must refer it to the country responsible, which will submit it to the Commission. The Commission usually does not say "No"; but at the same time it is necessary to raise the question concerning the requirements of each partner country. The Commission's purpose is to facilitate the project, and hence it is not strict at budgetary level; however, once the budget was approved it can no longer be changed.