

Be the change



10 Standards for care leavers



In August 2016, the project of International youth exchange: “**Be the change**” gathered 53 young adults (care leavers), aged 18 – 25, from 15 world countries to develop standards for care leavers.

During the **10 days** young adults shared their experiences, knowledge and visions, finally making **10 Standards for care leavers**. The following text is the original product of their work.



1. Every care leaver should be involved in their own care leaving plan and have a say in what has to be done.

Each professional working with a care leaver should develop for him/her a care leaving plan based on the young person's individual needs, capabilities and talents, but most importantly with the participation of the young person as the central figure. Such a plan would bring more stability in the life of the young adult and he/she will feel more secure about the future



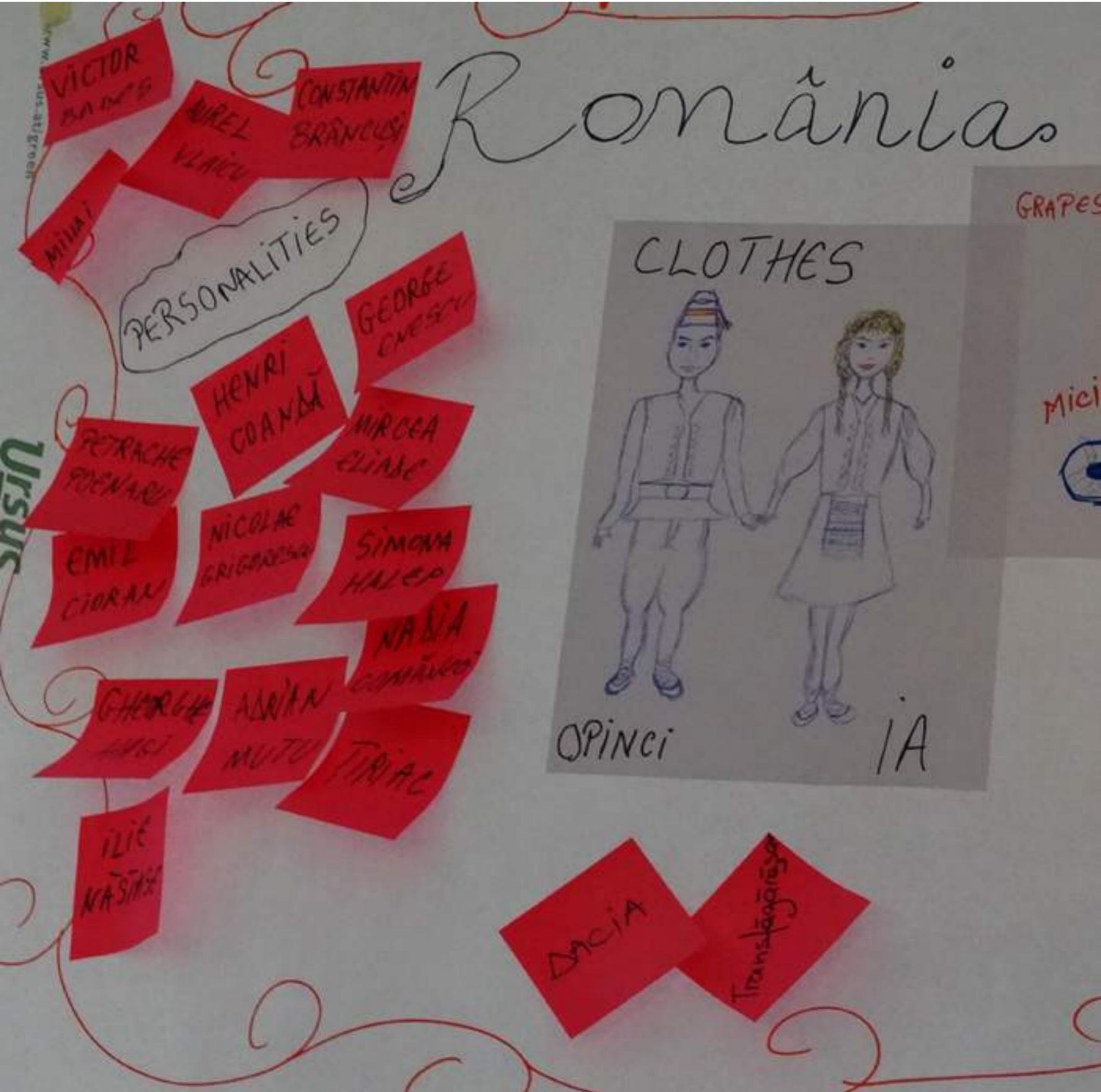
2. Every care leaver should have equal rights, opportunities, access to social benefits and be adequately informed about this right.

On the one hand, there should be special programs and trainings aimed at educating care leavers about their rights and how to advocate for themselves. On the other hand, it is important that professionals are not only aware of children and young people's rights but also about how to apply these rights in their daily practice.



3 ■ When applying for college/ university every care leaver should have benefits and access to scholarship sponsored either by governmental or private organizations.

In order to encourage care leavers to continue their education, there should be special programs and scholarships for young care leavers. This would give them better job possibilities in the future



4. To be able to find and succeed in a job, every care leaver should get help to become aware of and get recognized with their potentials, so that they gather the chance to improve them.

Care leavers should receive professional job counseling in order to know better what their strengths are and how to continue developing their abilities and talents.



5. Free health insurance for everyone. Care leavers must benefit from a free health insurance.



6 ■ To live his/her life, every care leaver needs to feel connected to some people they can rely on.

Having significant adults in their life could really help care leavers. Having a trustful relationship with an adult can bring a lot of stability and support in the care leaver's life.



7 ■ The workers supporting care leavers should be motivated, qualified, supportive and supervised.

Social workers and youth workers, engaged in supporting care leavers, should have received specialized training on skills required for providing better guidance and assistance to young adults. In order to prevent burn-out and decrease in their motivation they must be supervised and consulted on a regular basis



8 ■ To take care for one's own, care leavers need to have knowledge about life skills and how to organize their daily routine, like in a peer to peer training.

Young adults, leaving care need to be involved in trainings, improving their social competences. It would be best if they can learn from somebody who has been through similar hardships as them. This is why peer to peer training programs should be available, so that young adults can benefit from the experience of older care leavers



9 ■ Care leavers need to know how to ensure their capability to keep a roof over their head.

They should be trained and guided on how to manage their own budget.



10. After leaving care, society should provide the opportunity to turn to a mentor who guides and supports them emotionally, if needed.

There should be mentorship programmes for young people, leaving care. If careleavers can develop a trustful relationship with a mentor who can provide emotional guidance and other types of support, this will lead to better outcomes for the young person. He/she will feel more supported and in hard times can turn to their mentor for help.



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