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THE ONE STOP SHOP PROJECT NEWSLETTER

OSS II: SUSTAINABLE RETURN AND REINTEGRATION IN LA; PROMOTING VOLUNTARY RETURN

From 29th February to 1st March 2016 a transnational meeting was held in Sao Paulo (Brazil) with representatives from the three European countries (Spain, Italy and Portugal) and the eight Latin American countries (Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Paraguay and Uruguay) participating in the project. In recent months, a number of activities have been carried out in order for the project to be disseminated by its partners (OEI, ACOBE, ICEI, FEDELATINA and ALCC), and in this third edition we will outline some of the main actions undertaken in the project. As set out in the project, a monitoring and evaluation visit was made to three One Stop Shops in Latin America: Brazil, Chile and Paraguay. Finally, success stories involving real cases of returnees will be presented, in addition to a summary of the recent return projects being presented to different donors.

Additional information on the project can be accessed either through the project's website <http://www.oei.es/ventanillasunicas> or by subscribing by email at ventanillasunicas@oei.es. Through this email address, issues, suggestions and doubts can be submitted in order to establish discussion forums on themes related to One Stop Shops and their corresponding model. We hope it will be to your liking and we welcome its dissemination.

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PROJECT CONSORTIUM:





ADVANCES IN THE PROJECT: TRANSNATIONAL MEETING, SAO PAULO

From 29 February to 1 March a transnational meeting was held in Sao Paulo (Brazil), with the aim of sharing experiences on executing the project, analysing niches for opportunities, problems, and challenges faced.

During the sessions on 1 March, an institutional presentation, also open to the public, was given on the project, as well as a presentation on the progress made. A joint work plan was also drawn up to address the most pressing challenges and an analysis of the project's future was carried out. Worthy of mention is also the presence of representatives from Brazil's Ministry of Education (María Auriana Diniz), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Luis Almeida), the Minas Gerais Institute of Higher Education (Marcelo Bregagnoli), the Sao Paulo Municipal Secretariat of Assistance and Social Development (María Rita Freitas) and Spain's Ministry of Employment and Social Security (Lucía Cobo).

The meeting was chaired by the Brazil Director of OEI, Adriana Weska, and the team from the General Secretariat who is coordinating the project transnationally: Gloria Arredondo and Ana Amor.

The main agreements reached by the attendees notably included the definition of strategies to more effectively reach the project's beneficiaries and a review of the coordination and communication mechanisms on "both shores", particularly those related to information monitoring for NGOs with One Stop Shop users, as well as other aspects.

The rest of the agreements reached were related to the capacity to optimise insertion plans, improving the dissemination of the project and optimising the remaining months of its implementation. With respect to the optimisation of reinsertion plans, it is worth stressing the need to promote the application of agreements to certify skills, to try and incorporate the Rights Approach into the project plans and to continue working to promote synergies with other organisations in order to promote networking and optimise resources to benefit returnees and provide them with comprehensive assistance.



ANALYSIS OF THE OPERATIONS OF ONE STOP SHOPS IN BRAZIL, CHILE AND PARAGUAY

On the occasion of the transnational meeting in Sao Paulo, the One Stop Shop coordinating team had the chance to visit and exchange information with One Stop Shops in Brazil, Chile and Paraguay, carrying out evaluation visits in the field, holding work meetings with key institutional actors and interviews with the project's beneficiaries.

The Brazil One Stop Shop continues to work intensively to create a network of resources for returnees to Brazil. At present, this Network is made up of the Ministério do Desenvolvimento Social e Combate à Fome (MDS), Ministério das Relações Exteriores (MRE); Ministério da Educação (PRONATEC); Centro de Referência da Assistência Social (CRAS), SENAC and SINE (Site Nacional de Empregos). Therefore, every need of returnees can be met by at least one partner in the network (training, employment, social development, social assistance, qualification recognition, etc.).

The Chile One Stop Shop has worked in close coordination with Chile Valora (Chile Values) to generate mechanisms that certify skills for immigrants and returnees, with a view to confirming and acknowledging the professional experience gained in their working life outside Chile. The OEI aims to develop pilot methodology to certify skills by identifying the backgrounds of those returnees who are willing to verify their professional experience.

Furthermore, the Paraguay One Stop Shop is equipping itself with a broad catalogue of resources for Paraguayan returnees. More specifically, they have highlighted the agreements signed with the Secretary of Development for Compatriot Repatriates and Refugees from Paraguay, and with the Ministry of Employment. Moreover, set activities are being planned for disseminating the service in Europe to potential returnees interested in moving back to Paraguay.



ACTIVITIES IN EUROPE: PAST AND FUTURE WORKSHOPS, NEW PERSPECTIVES ON RETURN PROJECTS (VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING)

The One Stop Shops in Europe have continued to run workshops geared towards professionals and people interested in returning to their countries of origin, providing them with information on resources and the operations of the One Stop Shop project. In the workshops held from the end of 2015 to the present day, it is worth mentioning the workshop geared towards professionals, held in Bilbao on 15 April, in collaboration with the Area of Equality, Cooperation, Co-existence and Festivities from Bilbao City Council. During the workshop, attended by 22 participants, information was provided on available resources, recipients, access requirements of the above and what's on offer. A video was also shown that featured personal experiences of returnees to Uruguay.

On 22 March, Fedelatina, a partner in the project, organised a training session about the psychological effects on immigrants and those applying to return through SAIER (the Service of Immigrant, Emigrant and Refugee Assistance), from Barcelona City Council.

Additionally, on 5 March the ICEI organised a seminar on Voluntary Assisted Return in Savona (Italy) at the head office of the USEI association (Unione di Solidarietà degli Ecuadoriani), in Italy. The seminar was part of a free training course for voluntary staff lending their services to the immigration sector, and was initially organised by USEI in Savona before being replicated in other Italian cities.

In Portugal the partner of the ALCC project held a briefing on 21 March with the Brazilian Consulate in Portugal in order to strengthen the campaign and to give the project visibility. On 4 April a meeting was held at the CNAI headquarters with potential beneficiaries in order to present the operations and services offered in the OSS II project, and also to provide individual assistance to those people interested in participating.

In the coming months more of these workshops will be held, and in April a briefing is scheduled with the participation of 21 managers from the Social Services Areas of Madrid City Council.

When we speak about the return of people in a vulnerable situation to their countries of origin, we must also address the situation facing victims of human trafficking. As a result, the OEI has presented a project within the framework of the [European Union's Asylum, Migration, Integration Fund \(AMIF\)](#), set up for 2014–2020, which aims to foster the safe return and reintegration into countries of origin for women and minors who have been the victims of human trafficking. The fund will create a transnational network of multiple actors working in coordination to ensure safe voluntary returns and education and employment reinsertion, avoiding re-victimisation and working to prevent recruitment in four countries in Latin America with a high rate of human trafficking (Brazil, Colombia, Paraguay and the Dominican Republic).



SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCES OF PEOPLE RETURNING WITH THE HELP OF ONE STOP SHOPS

E.C. spent half a lifetime living in Barcelona, and a whole lifetime as a victim of sexual exploitation. The organisation "Mujeres pa'lante" (Women Moving Forward) discovered her case and offered her support in the reinsertion process, helping E.C. to freely make a final decision about what she wanted to do with her life. This decision was to return to her country of origin, Peru. Her return has been made possible by the One Stop Shops, and once in Peru they supported her in finding relatives or friends' support networks, particularly given that E.C. didn't know where to turn when she went back. The search was not successful, but the One Stop Shops helped her to find accommodation where she could feel comfortable and could start to write her own story from her country of origin.

V.B. was living in different countries in Europe, until she settled in Spain for twelve years. Her perception is that *"the paperwork in Spain is very, very complicated"*. In Spain she had a business and successfully registered as a freelancer. However, after being refused the renewal of her freelance papers she decided to return to Brazil, barely six months ago, to look after her sick parents and to enjoy being with her children. She became aware of the OEI One Stop Shop project, and welcomed help to return with a business venture initiative called *"gringa lanches"* for meals on wheels. The One Stop Shops helped her with all the necessary paperwork for becoming an entrepreneur and with her return, because the procedures to follow are far from easy: *"I went to different places that are supposed to be specialised in business ventures to get information, but they didn't know what information I needed... Sao Paulo is a whole other world". "People are looking for fast and cheap food in Brazil, and there are areas where there is nowhere to eat close by. That's where we come in; we have fixed places and now a regular clientele. I didn't have experience in gastronomy before, but I saw it as an opportunity and One Stop Shops helped me and gave me guidance". "Today I've got two delivery vans, and our working hours are from 12pm until 2am. I didn't have problems in Spain but many people have spent months waiting for a flight to Brazil. I don't see myself going back to Spain; that was one chapter in my life. Now I see my life here"*.