

**PAMECA IV TEAM LEADER'S SPEECH AT THE DRUG PREVENTION EVENT
AMONG YOUTH IN LEZHA ON 31 MAY 2016**

**Dear Minister of Internal Affairs, Dear Minister of Education
Dear Director of the Albanian State Police
Dear representatives of Local Police Directorates
Dear representatives of Civil Society, Dear Principals, Teachers and Students,**

My name is Giorgio Butini and I am the team leader of PAMECA IV. I received with great pleasure the invitation to attend this drug awareness raising event and to deliver a message to you. The project I lead is an EU funded technical assistance project which supports the Albanian State Police in many aspects and whose aim is to help the Albanian law enforcement agencies (such as the police and the prosecution), to ensure a safe environment for the Albanian citizens.

I commend the ASP for the organization of this awareness raising and information event on the risks of drug abuse, which is part of a larger campaign the ASP is organizing with young people across the country to keep them away from risky and unhealthy behaviours (for instance the road safety part of this campaign where PAMECA IV has been intensively involved in several cities of the country with its European ICARUS project). This shows the proactivity and seriousness with which the police has taken up its duties and I am also happy and proud to see so many of you here.

The involvement of the teachers in educating the young generation and directing them towards healthy behaviours is one the prerequisites for a healthy society, for a responsible youth and at the end of the day, for projecting a better future for the country. While the police works to disrupt the supply of illicit drugs in school premises, you teachers, social workers and civil society can greatly influence the lifestyle choices of the students through development of knowledge and skills and cultivation of values. That is why it is indispensable for the police to join forces with teachers, civil society and social services in this respect. PAMECA IV has assisted in the establishment of the institution of Social services- Schools and Police partnership, which is in its full development stage in Tirana and will be expanded throughout the country. I believe there is already enough awareness and understanding among all stakeholders for the benefits and indispensability of such joint efforts and I have no doubts it will be a successful initiative in other regions of the country as well.

My message to pupils and students would be:

Recognize your own individuality and work hard to pursue your goals for a life of meaning. Don't fall into the trap of doing drugs for social acceptance and recognition. Arm yourself with information and read a lot!

Enrich and develop yourself!
Discover a passion and stay busy!
Do sports and empower yourself!