

EUROPEAN PLATFORM FOR REHABILITATION

The network of leading service providers to people with disabilities

NEWSLETTER

Special:

- Europe-wide comparison of Quality Management in the **Social Sector**
- Seminar on EU **Funding**
- **EPR** Innovation Prize
- **Projects**

Sections:

Events	cal	lendar	

News from the 3-5 members

CAPs 6-7

Knowledge

7 **Management**

Projects 8-10

Public Affairs

EQUASS 13-14

14 **EPR Secretariat**

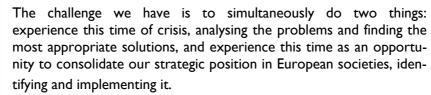
Editorial

Dear EPR members.

The current edition of the EPR Newsletter, an important communication and information link, appears at a time during which our member organisations, and consequently EPR itself, are facing extremely challenging circumstances.

The social, economic and political situation puts us face to face with deep changes in how the health and disability-related social services are framed and financed, sometimes dramatically, with major impact on the functioning of service providers.

This time has put in perspective the importance and relevance of social services, strengthening its indispensability to social cohesion, to social quality, and as a fundamental pillar of the European Social Model.



As a thriving organisation which is experiencing sustainable growth, with a permanent and multifaceted scope of activity, EPR will for sure maintain and strengthen its cooperation in order to find the best ways for building the future in times of crisis.

11-12 The Workshop for Directors in June will provide an excellent opportunity to jointly share concerns, discuss scenarios and find paths

for development.

lerónimo de Sousa

EPR President CRPG CEO





























Jerónimo de Sousa

Centro de Reabilitação

Profissional de Gaia CEO



























Calendar of EPR events 2009

January

29-30 January, Ageing and Disability, information seminar, Mulhouse

February

10-11 February, Empowerment, third session of the learning group, Brussels

March

23-24 March, Disability Management/relations with employers, project meeting, Brussels

April

3 April, EU Funding opportunities, information seminar, Brussels

23-24 April, Outcome Measurement in VET, benchlearning group, Brussels

May

14-15 May, Challenging behaviour, information seminar, Brussels

June

8-10 June, Outcome measurement in Medical Rehabilitation, benchlearning group, Ljubljana

11 June, Strategy development and implementation, workshop for directors, Bled

September

Outcome Measurement in Medical Rehabilitation, benchlearning group, Brussels, date to be confirmed

October

13-14 October, Outcome measurement in VET, benchmarking group, Waterford

15-16 October, Transition as a key challenge in Rehabilitation, annual conference,, Waterford

November

2 November, Disability Management/Relations with employers, project final event, Dublin

19-20 November, Management of Human Resources, information seminar, Brussels

Integrated services and decentralised service provision, learning group, Brussels, date to be confirmed,

December

9 December, Implementation of Quality Assurance in Rehabilitation services, information seminar, Brussels

10 December, Empowerment, public affairs conference, Brussels

^{*} This is the list of EPR events as known at the time of publication. In case of changes in the EPR calendar of events, members will be duly informed. It is advised to confirm details of events with the secretariat prior to attending.

News from the members

Glasgow City Council Leader Opens Momentum Headquarters

.On 31 March, Glasgow City Council Leader, Steven Purcell, officially opened Momentum's new headquarters. Momentum is one of the first organisations to receive support from the new Scottish Investment Fund, created to help enterprising Third Sector organisations become more efficient. Ian Welsh, Director of UK Services for Rehab Group, which incorporates Momentum, said: "We are delighted to officially launch our new Headquarters, a key investment which will in turn allow us to continue and extend the work that we do to support people across Scotland to identify and achieve their goals. Since 1990 we have continually



expanded and developed new innovative services and thanks this significant award from the Scottish Investment Fund



lan Welsh, Director of UK Services, Rehab Group and Steven Purcell, Glasgow City

we can continue to build equal chances, equal choices and equal futures for people in Scotland." Enterprise Minister, Jim Mather said: "It is especially important in the current climate that we harness the Third Sector's ability to help increase sustainable economic growth, build on our economic recovery programme and help Scotland emerge faster and stronger from the down-

turn. The £30 million investment fund was launched by Ministers last summer to support established Third Sector organisations with the potential to grow their turnover or become financially sustainable. The fund is managed by Social Investment Scotland on behalf of the Scottish Government.

Contribution of Laura Delaney

laura.delaney@momentumscotland.org

Astangu Vocational Rehabilitation Centre

In the framework of the ESF programme, Astangu Vocational Rehabilitation Centre is activating The Centre of Disability Related Information and Assistive Technology. It is a two-year project ending in December 2009. The Centre of Disability Related Information and Assistive Technology offers its services throughout Estonia. Main activities are:

- Gathering and disseminating information on various assistive technologies and environment adaptation possibilities that increase the independence of people with disabilities
- Expertise regarding adaptation of the work and home environments
- Counseling in the field of assistive technologies In December 2009, the ESF grant will end and The Centre of Disability Related Information and Assistive Technology will be in the Astangu Centre's budget from January 2010. Astangu Centre has also launched a new therapy for our clients - work with clay (work in the clay field). Work in the clay field means unguided creative activity. Clay offers opportunities for cooperation between "self" and others. It helps to observe attitudes and relationships, helps clients to

notice his/her behavioral manners and to change these by finding new approaches towards the clay. Work with clay has proved to give good results with clients who have had traumatic experiences, It also helps with finding self-confidence in cases of adjustment and relationship problems. The therapy sessions take place once or twice a week on an individual basis.

On 27 January the Astangu Centre submitted two projects to ESF under the measure "Increasing the Availability of Qualified Labour Force". The topics of the planned projects are supported employment and sheltered work. Regarding these proposals, the Astangu Centre would like to thank Paal Haavorsen and Donal McAnaney for their agreement to participate as experts. On 6 February the Astangu Centre submitted three Mobility project proposals to Leonardo da Vinci. Regarding these proposals Astangu Centre would like to thank Luovi, Theotokos Foundation and Centre de Réadaptation de Mulhouse for their partnership.

Contribution of Marika Hass

Europe-wide comparison of Quality Management in the Social Sector



Quality of social services – what exactly does that mean in Greece and Lithuania or in Northern Ireland and Germany? Which quality management systems are available in these countries? What do

they specialise in? What can be standardised throughout Europe? These questions will be addressed by a project team of seven partners from four countries. The involved parties held a kick-off meeting in Germany at the Josefsheim Bigge.

"Quality management is a big issue with social organisations. However, a Europe-wide comparison of the systems used by social service providers has not existed up to now", explains Martin Künemund, project manager at the Josefsheim. "We intend to make this comparison."



"We are conducting the first Europe-wide comparison of quality management systems for social organisations" Martin Künemund, Project manager

The Josefsheim, a service provider for people with mainly physical disabilities, will lead the project. Hubert Vornholt, managing director of the Josefsheim, describes the commitment: "Quality management is an integral part of our company philosophy at the Josefsheim; it is required in order to reach and hold a high level of quality on behalf of people with disabilities." Project manager Martin Künemund was pleased to announce: "We have been able to include leading social organisations from four countries as partners". The Cedar Foundation (Northern Ireland), Panagia Eleousa (Greece), the Valakupiu Rehabilitation Centre (Lithuania) and the Norddeutsche Gesellschaft für Diakonie group which all are, like the Josefsheim Bigge, service providers for people with disabilities. The Stiftung Liebenau, based near Lake Constance, specialises in care for the elderly. The Technical University of Dortmund will conduct the scientific monitoring.



"What does quality mean to services for the elderly or disabled people?" This question is addressed by the EU supported project BEST Quality.

The project caries the title BEST Quality. BEST is an acronym that stands for: Benchmarking European standards in Social services Transnationally. It receives financial support from the European Union.

As a first step, the partners will develop a grid to compare the various quality management systems. While doing so, legal requirements will be taken as much into consideration as the practical experience that the partners have had themselves with the implementation.

NEWSLETTER

"We compare the systems on an economical level as well as on a level that takes account of the specifics of social service providers", says Winfried Henke, quality manager at the Josefsheim Bigge. "Such specifics are, for example, a holistic approach, ethics and the provision of services that cater to the needs of the people who use them." The Equass, EFQM and ISO systems will, amongst others, be put to the test.

The project partners will present the results of the project in the autumn of 2010. One of main parts will be a scientific study that will have been made by the Technical University of Dortmund. Another important item will be recommendations made to the European Commission about which quality management system best meets the requirements and assures the standards set by the European Union.



"The needs of the people who use our services are of central importance." Winfried Henke, Quality manager

"Many social service providers work entirely without using any quality management as they are not sure which system is the right one for them", says Winfried Henke. "These service providers will be given practical assistance by our project results. Also, for the first time, politicians and sponsors will receive a Europe-wide comparison." BEST Quality will conclude with an international symposium in Cologne in September of 2010.

More information can be obtained with the project newsletter. This can be requested on the website www.best-quality.eu



Project-Workshop at the Partner "Pagania Eleousa" in Messolonghi in Greece

Centre Action Plans (CAPs)

AGEING AND DISABILITY: ELDERLY DISABLED IN SOCIETY

2009 started with a training seminar which took place on 29-30 January 2009 in Mulhouse. 18 persons participated in the meeting. CRM, as host organisation, contributed most of the participants and speakers, including some important contributions from external speakers from France. Marian Maaskant from Pergamijn and University of Maastricht in the Netherlands acted as an international expert in intellectual disabilities, while Jan Albers, EPR senior consultant, acted as facilitator. The seminar started with general trends and figures about ageing in Europe and in France. More specific issues were then discussed, such as services for ageing people with intellectual disabilities, the difficulties of coordination of services and the fragmentation of the sector and the organisational aspects within a centre. The general presentations were illustrated by site visits but also by presentations of practices by the participating centres which fostered an extremely useful exchange of experiences. This 1,5 day seminar was much appreciated by the participants and set an energetic and productive tone for EPR's activities in 2009!

For more information: nadege.jibassia@epr.eu



LEARNING GROUP ON EMPOWERMENT

On 10 and 11 February the third and final session of the learning group on Empowerment took place at the Hotel du Congrès in Brussels. During the first day participants discussed with Frans Nijhuis, Professor at the University of Maastricht, the impact of different European cultures on the VrijBaan Empowerment Method at the level of the clients, professionals and organisations. On the second day, with Annemarie Schellekens-Corjanus, trainer at Bartiméus REA College, participants learned how to compose a tailor-made training based on the empowerment profile of the service-users. The combination of theoretical and practical information was highly appreciated by the participants.

For more information: nadege.jibassia@epr.eu

SEMINAR ON EU FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

On 3 April 2009, EPR organised a targeted Seminar on Funding Opportunities for the Disability Sector in 2007-2013, at the Leopold Hotel in Brussels. On the basis of past experiences and positive feedback of the participants in previous trainings, EPR involved Jan Dröge of Schuman Associates Consultancy. He shared his expertise in EU structural funding and programmes with the support of Oana Penu, EU Funding and Environmental Policy Consultant, who moderated the practical exercise session.

In the middle of a financial crisis, with organisations facing on the one hand the challenges of being involved in national recovery plans and on the other the risk of cuts in public expenditures, the Seminar focused on new opportunities offered by *ad hoc* strategies that the European Commission is implementing to support national authorities, which are not always aware of these transitory, but still valuable, measures.

In an effective combination of professional expertise and theoretical and practical approaches, the event provided the participants with information on the following:

NEWSLETTER



"I feel more confident in answering calls for proposals now, thanks to the acquired information" – A participant

The event gathered 24 participants from EPR member organisations, who actively participated in the

debate and practical exercises.

Considering the participants' feedback gathered through evaluation forms, the Seminar on EU funding opportunities was very well received, scoring about 8 out of 10.

For more information: simona.giarratano@epr.eu

- The new EU Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) and updates on several other EU programmes such as PROGRESS, ESF, Lifelong Learning and the 7th Research Framework, including the specific actions and activities they can fund
- Strategies to develop a project idea into a successful project proposal, and tools for proposal writing, including evaluation of budgets and financial reports
- Benchmarks in partner search and partnership-building
- Project implementation and project management
- The application procedures for each funding programme as well as the framework for implementation and reporting
- An innovative approach to simulation exercises



Participants working in groups

Knowledge Management

EPR Innovation Prize

In 2008, EPR launched its Innovation Prize, which aims to stimulate the development of innovation and the dissemination of best practice within the network. The Prize is to be granted to a professional or team which inserts in the KMC the most innovative and high quality practice in his/her organisation.

The competition for the Innovation Prize was open from 19 September 2008 to 31 March 2009.

Six practices have been submitted to a selection procedure in which all EPR coordinators are involved. The selection is made on the basis of pre-defined criteria which have been used in the RehabGroup network and adapted to the European context. The practice with the highest score will be selected. The winner will be invited to attend the EPR Annual Conference 2009 to receive the Prize which consists of a voucher of 1.000 Euro to be spent on EPR activities. Moreover, the winner will have the opportunity to present its practice to a wide audience of rehabilitation professionals.

For more information: nadege.jibassia@epr.eu

Projects

ÆGIS



On 1 April 2009, in the context of the AEGIS subproject "Users & Stakeholders workshops", EPR together with Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (KUL) coorganised a Belgian workshop,

(working language was Dutch) aiming at presenting the project, as well as gathering feedback from Belgian end-users and other stakeholders on some core use cases. The workshop was organised at the KUL campus in Heverlee. In total, 53 persons took part in the workshop, among them 35 end-users with disabilities (people with vision, hearing, mobility and cognitive impairments) and representatives of Belgian umbrella organisations (FEVLADO, Licht en Liefde, Werkgroep Vorming en Aktie vzw).



AEGIS National Workshop in Leuven

For more information:

<u>aegis@epr.eu</u> <u>http://www.aegis-project.eu</u>

EQUABENCH



On 26-27 February 2009 the Institute for Rehabilitation Republic of Slovenia hosted the second EQUABENCH workshop on Management by Process and Facts. The participants presented different management systems used in their centres and EPR, in the person of Jana Kukučková, EQUASS coordinator, illustrated its Knowledge Management Center (KMC) to be included in one of the innovative practice guide. All the presentations from this and the previous workshops are available on the project website. Also available on the website is a downloadable version of the project leaflet.

The draft of the first Innovative Practice Guide focusing on Leadership and Constancy of

Purpose is available and will be soon finalised.

Other Guides in the series include:

- Management by Process and Facts
- People Development and Involvement
- Customer Focus
- Results Orientation
- Continuous Learning, Innovation and Improvement

The next workshop on People Development and Involvement will take place on 28-29 May 2009 at Josefsheim Bigge in Germany.



EQUABECH workshop at the Institute for Rehabilitation Republic of Slovenia

EQUASS in Practice

The start-up seminar for the "EQUASS in Practice" project took place on 12-13 January 2009 in Oslo. The meeting gathered all project partners from Europe as well as representatives of the local Leonardo da Vinci agency SIU (Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education). The discussions around the table focused on the first thoughts about a national implementation strategy of EQUASS Assurance for each country and identification of potential EQUASS Local Licence Holders. EPR was designated to evaluate the 'EQUASS in Practice'-project and to register all dissemination activities throughout the project period.



EQUASS in Practice project partners on the roof of Oslo Opera

The second seminar will be held on 22 and 23 June in Porto.

For more information please visit: http://equassinpractice.epr.eu and http://www.equass.no

Prometheus



The first activity of the Prometheus project was the kick-off meeting of the CEN Workshop (CEN/WS51), which took place on 9 February 2009, and which should result in a CEN Workshop Agreement (CWA). 51 national and international stakeholders in the social sector participated in this consultation and debated on defining a Common Quality

Framework and core criteria for quality assurance for Social Services of General Interest. The CEN Workshop 51 - Common Quality Framework for Social Services is the initial stage of the Prometheus project and will run until September 2009.

Contributions to the consultation will be collected via LiveLink as well as via two follow-up meetings in Brussels on 27 April and 7 September 2009.

So far, approximately 36 % of the participants gave feedback via an evaluation form. The overall impression of those who gave feedback is that they appreciate the opportunity to contribute to the debate of Quality for SSGI with different stakeholders in the setting of the CEN workshop. Finally, on 10 February 2009, the project partners attended a meeting during which they were presented an overview of the project's activities, division of tasks, financial issues, etc. This meeting was also attended by two representatives of the European Commission.

For more information visit: http://prometheus.epr.eu

NEWSLETTER

Reintegrate



The Reintegrate project, which aims to develop and implement disability management tools, has reached a culminant point of the pilot and evaluation of the developed instruments. During the first months of the year, five centres across Europe explored the on-line tools and face-to-face training course. They consulted employers, to whom the instruments are mainly addressed, to collect their feedback on the relevance, quality and feasibility of the developed products. This trial phase ended with an evaluation meeting between the project partners and professionals from the pilot centres. The meeting took place on 22-23 March in Brussels and enabled each pilot centre to share their experience and opinion on the instruments. The centres and the consulted employers were positive about the products developed with the main remarks that some parts should be more adapted to the local context. Three centres expressed a high interest in the implementation and use of the tools beyond the duration of the project.

EPR encourages its member to consider the future exploitation of these tools, since it strongly believes in the potential of these tools and their added-value for service providers which are willing to strengthen their cooperation with employers and raise their awareness on the needs of workers with disabilities.

The project partners will propose a list of concrete initiatives for the use of the tools by EPR members in coming period.

For more information: nadege.jibassia@epr.eu



Pilot centrres' representatives - Evaluation meeting in Brussels

Public Affairs

EPR delivers key note speech at CZ PRES Ministerial Conference on 'Social Services – A Tool for Mobilizing Workforce and strengthening Social Cohesion'

EU2009.CZ

On 22-23 April 2009 Jan Spooren, EPR General Secretary, was a key note speaker at the ministerial conference

on 'Social Services – A Tool for Mobilizing Workforce and Strengthening Social Cohesion ' organised by the Czech Presidency of the European Union, in Prague.

Jan Spooren contributed to the first session on "Sustainability, Quality and Accessibility of Social Services". He illustrated the thesis that a sector-specific and multi-perspective quality approach can solve the traditional tension between these fundamentals (universality – quality – sustainability) of social services, showing the added-value of a European framework to define and assure high quality of social services. The political relevance of this conference can not be underestimated, given the attendance of high level policy-makers from the European Commission

(e.g. Vladimír ŠPIDLA, European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, and Equal Opportunities) and from the Member States (e.g. Petr NEČAS, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, Czech Republic).

The most striking conference conclusions were the recognition of sustainable funding and stable regulatory frameworks as pre-conditions for quality, and the economic importance of social services in supporting people to enter the labour market. Finally, the conference called upon Member States to invest also in the social services sector as part of their recovery plans to overcome the current economic crisis.

More information available at

http://www.mpsv.cz/en/6504

Informal Network of Social Service Providers



The Informal Network of Social Service Providers had its first meetings on 23 January and 9 March, where relevant European policies, e.g. on active inclusion, and the Social Protection Committee's work on quality were monitored and discussed. Moreover, it was decided to organise on 17 June a seminar on Social Services of General Interest, and the impact of EU policies and legislation at the national level. Most attention will be given to following areas:

- Competition/tendering in the social services sector
- State aid and subsidies to social service providers
- Cross-national service provision

For more information: simona.giarratano@epr.eu

At the Social Platform

socialplatform

Service of General Interest Working Group

On 19 February, Jan Spooren and Simona Giarratano participated in two meetings at the Social Platform, the working group on social services of general interest, and the first Steering Group of the year. During these two meetings, the priorities and action plan for 2009 were discussed, including an interesting debate on how to further work on quality in social services and how to implement the 9 quality principles for social and health services. The meeting also offered a good opportunity for EPR to present the Prometheus project.

'Towards a European society that cares for all'

On the 24 April, the Social platform held its General Assembly, in Brussels where all the Platform's members participated to discuss the activities report of 2008, to nominate the new Management Committee and to choose the 2010 annual theme. Among the very relevant topics proposed, the selected one was 'Towards a European society that cares for all'. Such an approach would refine real care needs and different issues that need to be addressed within this: specific issues for particular target groups (for example, disabilities, mental health, community care policies and services, women as prime care givers, domestic migrant workers); funding mechanisms; care as a central issue as opposed to a peripheral issue often associated with employment related issues. The issue of care would also give concrete expression of a more social Europe, which is the mission of the Social Platform.

For more information: simona.giarratano@epr.eu

"The annual theme of care would link the broad spectrum of the membership of the Social Platform, i.e. service providers, activists and advocacy groups working with different target group across the life-cycle, to ensure maximum input from members on this theme which has the potential of ensuring that all voices are heard."

Social Platform

Dialogue with the European Commission



As a representative of civil society, EPR has a seat in the Disability High Level Group (HLG) of the European Commission within the Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (DG EMPL). Following the last meeting of the group on I April, it became clear that one of the priorities of the HLG for 2009 is the implementation at the national level of the UN Convention on the right of person with disabilities.

EPR had the opportunity to contribute to the debate at the Commission, and will continue doing so in the future. Moreover, in an effort to further collaborate with the DG EMPL on issues that EPR considers to be of high importance to the disability sector, Jan Spooren and Simona Giarratano discussed with the Disability Unity how EPR and its members could contribute to some of their activities.

For more information:

simona.giarratano@epr.eu



Assurance of Quality in Social Services (EQUASS Assurance) New certified organisations

- Origod AS, Norway
- Bergmoprodukter AS, Norway
- **iFokus AS**, Norway
- **Jobbintro AS**, Norway
- Norservice AS, Norway



EQUASS website in Norwegian

The Norwegian-language EQUASS website was launched on 3 February 2009 and has received positive feedback from AVRE and ASVL's members ever since. The idea behind the website is to disseminate information about EQUASS in Norway, to share experiences among service providers and give instructions to implement the standard. Its other purpose is to be a helpful tool for organisations which are in the certification process. The website contains a list with direct links to all organisations in Norway certified with EQUASS Assurance and EQUASS Excellence. A database with detailed information on the self-assessment questions has been created. It also includes the original texts in English, the Norwegian translation and instructions on how to interpret the criteria. Advice and tips on how to implement EQUASS Assurance and examples of documentation necessary to prove the organisation meets the criteria are also published. In addition a password-protected area has been created for all organisations who attended an introduction course where a database with examples of documentation sent by the members/certified organisations is available. The protected area also includes a forum/message board where the organisations can share experience and discuss during the implementation process.

Contribution of: Jeanette Kværnes, Project Coordinator, Attføringsbedriftene - AVRE

EQUASS upcoming events

20 April 2009 - EQUASS Consultancy Training in Lisbon (Portugal)

27 April 2009 - Second meeting of the CEN Workshop in Brussels (Belgium)

11 May 2009 - EQUASS Core Group meeting in Amsterdam (The Netherlands)

8 & 9 June 2009 - EQUASS Excellence Auditor Training in Brussels (Belgium)

9 June 2009 - Meeting EQUASS Awarding Committee, Brussels (Belgium)

22 & 23 June 2009 - EQUASS in Practice project meeting in Porto (Portugal)

7 September 2009 - Final meeting of the CEN Workshop in Brussels (Belgium)

Call for EQUASS Excellence Auditors

The European Quality in Social Services (EQUASS) is looking for persons who are interested in becoming an auditor in the EQUASS Excellence system.

EQUASS Excellence auditors are involved at each stage of auditing organisations that apply for EQUASS Excellence certification. The audit team consists of two auditors who score the self-evaluation report. The team visits the applicant's company in order to clarify aspects of the organisation and to ensure that the evidence presented in the application document and self-evaluation document matches with the real "on-site" situation. The training process for auditors will contain: fundamentals of the EQUASS Excellence system (three hours), a case study (nine hours) and benchmarking the results of the case study (three hours). Prior to attending the EQUASS Excellence auditor training, approximately six hours' preparatory work will be required.

The next training will take place in Brussels on 8 and 9 June 2009.

Quality consultants that are qualified for auditing organisation according to EFQM (or national equivalent) and/ or ISO 9000 can be appointed as EQUASS auditors after a two days training.

For more information: equass@xs4all.nl

EPR recruits a Project Assistant



News from the Secretariat

Claude Delfosse, who joined the EPR secretariat in October 2008 as an Intern, has been recruited as Project Assistant through the end of 2009 to assist with the recent growth of EPR activities and projects. She provides invaluable support for the implementation of EPR activities, the coordination of European projects and the organisation of EPR meetings. Her tasks also include research and provision of information on topics of EPR Member's interest and the maintenance of the website.

Email: <u>claude.delfosse@epr.eu</u>





The European Platform for Rehabilitation (EPR) is a network of leading European providers of rehabilitation services to people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups. EPR's member organisations are influential in their countries and stand for high quality service delivery in the fields of vocational education and training, reintegration, medical rehabilitation and social care.

EPR assists its member organisations in achieving continuous professional improvement, best practice and competitiveness in every aspect of service delivery. Through its Public Affairs activities, EPR enables service providers to contribute to the formulation of European social policy, and facilitates access to EU funding.

Recognised as an important player on the European scene, the network receives structural funding under EU's Lifelong Learning Programme. EPR has a seat on EU's High Level Group on Disability and has participatory status with the Council of Europe. EPR cooperates actively with all key sectoral stakeholders.

EPR on the web!

For regularly updated information on EPR and its activities, please check our website:

http://www.epr.eu

Contact us:

Jan Spooren, General Secretary - jan.spooren@epr.eu

Simona Giarratano, Public Affairs Officer - simona.giarratano@epr.eu

Nadège Jibassia, Project Coordinator - nadege.jibassia@epr.eu

Claude Delfosse, Project Assistant - claude.delfosse@epr.eu

Sarah De Roeck, Financial Administrator - sarah.deroeck@epr.eu

Jana Kukučková, EQUASS Coordinator - jana.kukuckova@epr.eu

Guus van Beek, EQUASS Manager - equass@xs4all.nl

EUROPEAN PLATFORM FOR REHABILITATION

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The EPR newsletter is issued three times a year.

Editor-in-Chief: Jan Spooren; Editor: Simona Giarratano

EPR, Rue de Spa 15, B - 1000 Brussels, Tel: +32 2 736 54 44, fax: +32 2 736 86 22

www.epr.eu

Send your questions, comments and contributions to simona.giarratano@epr.eu