

epr

european platform for rehabilitation



ANNUALREPORT09



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## A Word from the President

In keeping with our strong belief in governance and accountability, the European Platform for Rehabilitation (EPR) presents the Annual Report 2009. The Annual Report covers the work completed over the past year, the results achieved and the resources involved. In addition it is EPR's chance to report to its members as well as its partners and citizens at both the national and European levels on an annual basis. It offers EPR the opportunity to subject themselves to the scrutiny of our stakeholders therefore increasing the relevance of our activities.

The EPR network carried out a diverse series of activities in 2009 to support capacity building within its membership, enabling the member organisations to respond successfully to the increasing challenges within the disability and social services sector. By doing so, the EPR aims to contribute to the quality of life of people living with disabilities served by its members, to the fulfilment of their rights, as well as to the creation of a more open and inclusive society.

Throughout 2009 the EPR focused on the following issues:

- **Managing transition in rehabilitation** (annual conference)
- **Empowerment of people with disabilities impact and measurement** (public affairs event)
- **Responses of social service providers to face the impacts of economic recession** (strategic workshop for directors)
- **Quality management, return to work and accessibility** (projects)

I would like to use this opportunity to highlight and acknowledge the strong commitment of a large number of people who give our network

its vitality: directors, centre coordinators, professionals from the member centres and the EPR Secretariat in Brussels. Through networking, sharing concerns and exchanging experiences, we have all together been able to build one more piece of future!

At the end of my two years' term as President, I would like to express my pride on being president of such a professional, committed and prestigious organisation. During the last two years, EPR has been able to maintain a path of sustainable development and growth, with a few remarkable results, which could be considered as cornerstones for our network:

- **Charter on Modernisation of Disability-related Health and Social Services**
- **First EPR Strategic Plan (2009 - 2011)**
- **EPR Governance Manual**
- **EQUASS Management Strategy**
- **Human Resources Manual**

In a turbulent and demanding sectoral context, we remember where we came from, know where we are, and agree where we want to go - even though this is not always evident these days. We have been able to build a professional organisation, with a strong ideological anchor, strongly committed to the "achievable utopia": to build an open and inclusive society.

Finally, I would like also to take this opportunity to wish Bjørn Paulsen, the new EPR President for the period of 2010-2011, good luck and a successful journey in his mandate. On behalf of the entire EPR membership, I would like to thank him for accepting the challenge, and I am confident he will give a significant contribution to our network and the wider disability sector.



**Jerónimo de Sousa**  
CEO, Centro de Reabilitação Profissional de Gaia (CRPG), Portugal

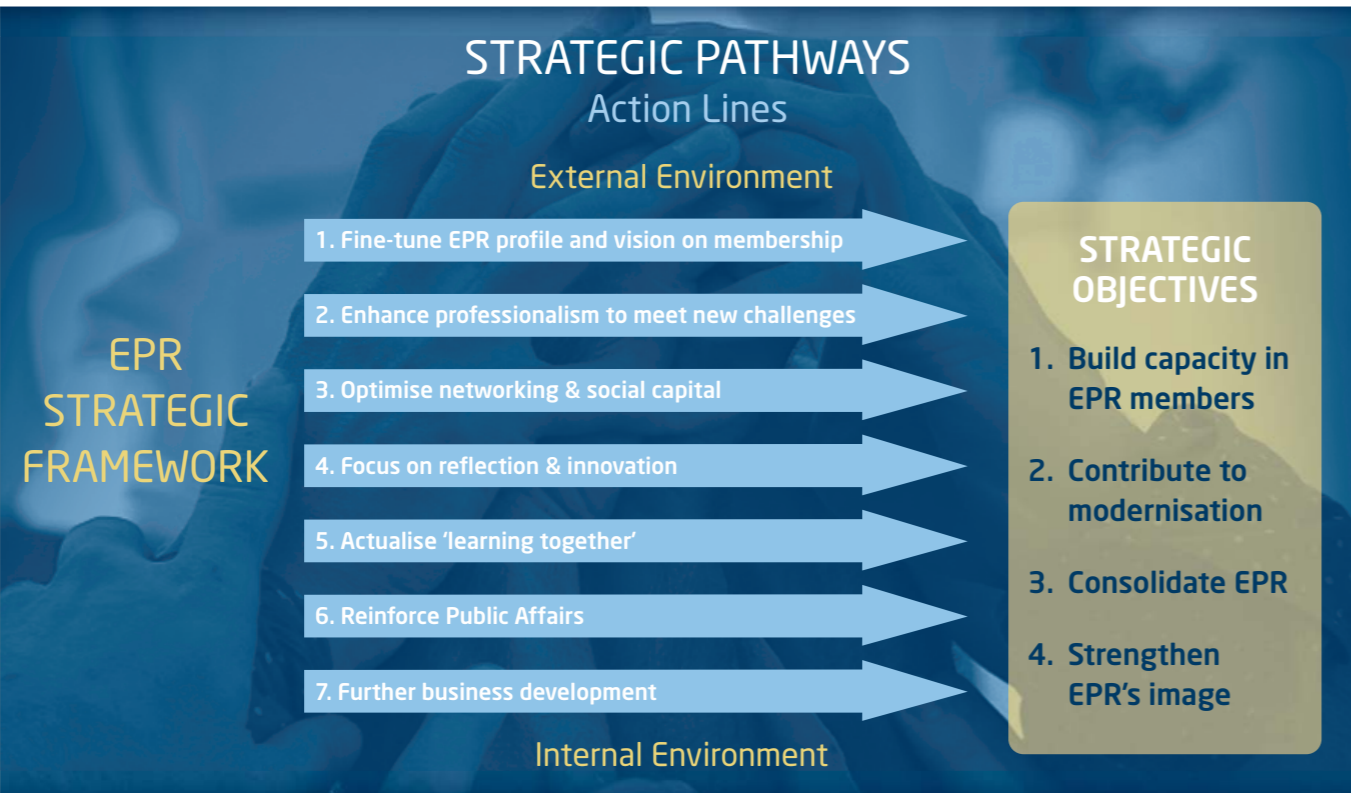
Jerónimo de Sousa has been the Chief Executive Officer of CRPG since its establishment in 1992, and is responsible for the strategic management of the organisation. As such he is in charge of leadership and overall coordination of management. He is also a Board member of the Biomedical Engineering Institute (INEB) (from 1993 onwards).

Jerónimo de Sousa was elected President of the EPR in January 2008, for a period of two years. During his term, he displayed a strategic mindset by laying the foundations for a structured and forward-looking plan for the network. The EPR wishes to thank him for all his invaluable achievements and the deep dedication to the network he showed during his Presidency.

# I. Strategy & Organisational Development

## IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN IN 2009

One year after the launch of the EPR Strategic Plan, the Board of Directors reviewed a set of selected key performance indicators to assess the implementation of the various action lines. These KPIs integrated all aspects of the Strategic Plan and related to membership, finances, internal capacity and progress of the network in terms of learning and development.



During 2009, the EPR membership increased with one full member in Germany, and four associate members in Hungary, Lithuania, Italy and Greece. The Board also developed a 'members' satisfaction questionnaire' and during 2010 will for the first time measure and analyse the overall satisfaction of members in a formal way.

The turnover increased by 8.5% compared to 2008, and already exceeds the three year strategic objective. Membership fees still constitute about 33% of the turnover, which guarantees sustainability as well as independence. In terms of internal capacity, the 8 full time employees in the Secretariat, the selective involvement of external consultants and the great commitment of directors and centre coordinators ensure the quality and smooth implementation of the wide range of activities. With regard to new developments, EPR succeeded in introducing a number of benchmarking exercises between its members, but did not undertake sufficient initiatives to revitalise the European Rehabilitation Academy and to set up joint business activities between its members.

## ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2009: MANAGING TRANSITION IN REHABILITATION



The 16th EPR Annual Conference was organised in collaboration with the National Learning Network (NLN) in the historic city of Waterford, Ireland, on 15 and 16 October 2009. More than 140 participants from 14 countries gathered in Waterford to exchange, debate and learn more about "Managing Transition in Rehabilitation: Supporting successful integration of people with disabilities".

The two days of the Conference kept the participants busy with a mix of keynote speeches and interactive workshops. They gained valuable insight into the main challenges in relation to transition, the practices in various fields, the expectations of service users and the issues for specific client groups.



Annual Conferences are great opportunities for delegates to learn, debate and exchange with service providers, policymakers, academics and service users from all over the world, while bringing life into the EPR with social and networking activities.



Participants expressed their overall satisfaction with most aspects of the EPR Annual Conference 2009, in particular with the organisation, the logistics and the programme. The very convenient and welcoming conference venue, the parallel workshops allowing for interactive and open exchanges between participants and the heart-warming Conference Dinner were among the most appreciated aspects of the event. The famous Irish hospitality lived up to its reputation!

“ Now is the time to increase efficiency in disability services by doing more with less! ”

## OVERVIEW OF THE CAPS ACTIVITIES IN 2009

EPR started its third cycle of Centre Action Plans, a strategy which is still highly appreciated by EPR full members, as a way to provide concrete value for money from EPR membership. Based on an in-house needs assessment with the management of each (full) member organisation, EPR launched fifteen plans in the beginning of 2009 which set out actions, required inputs and expected results for each individual member.

During 2009, 15 joint staff development activities (65%) and 20 out of the 40 individual actions (50%) in the CAPs 2009-2010 have been implemented, and an interim evaluation was conducted with the top management of each member (with many of them participating for the first time via teleconference). The table below provides an overview of the most important joint actions in which professionals from several EPR members participate together.

## CAPS 2009 -2010: OVERVIEW JOINT ACTIVITIES

FORMATS	TOPICS			
Information Seminars	Ageing disability	Challenging behaviour	Quality	EU Funding
	Person Centredness	Ambient assistive technology	UN Convention	
Management Seminars	Marketing	Human Resources Management	Strategy development and implementation	Selfdetermination of clients
Benchmarking Groups	ICF	Quality results in Equass framework	Quality and business excellence (EQUABENCH)	
Bench Learning Groups	Outcome measurement VT/VR	Outcome measurement MR		
Learning Partnerships	Vocational Education & Training	Community-based day care services		
Experimental Learning Groups	Empowerment (Vrijbaan)	Disability Management (Reintegrate)	Decentralisation	EQUASS in practice
Analytical Papers	EU policy	International policy (UN Convention)	Autism	Mental Health recovery

In order to use the strength of the network and stimulate the relationships between members, about 50% of these joint actions were organised in the premises of member organisations, while the others took place in Brussels. Over the last few years we have seen a steady increase in the number of staff development activities and participants whilst at the same time a lower average number of participants per activity. The latter can be explained by the fact that the EPR activities have become more focused, demand-driven and tailor-made.

## KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT: EPR INNOVATION PRIZE

In a sector facing growing competition and rapid changes, service providers must constantly look to innovation to adapt their strategies and practices to the new reality. EPR provides its members with the tools and opportunities to exchange information on innovation and best practice. Only by circulating these types of information will EPR members be able to learn from each other and face the ever increasing challenges of the sector.

“ In a network of excellence, innovation is a core concept. ”

The EPR Innovation Prize was created in this context as a way to reward professionals committed to mutual learning and continuous improvement and to enhance the awareness of best practice within an organization. The contest is open to all professionals working for an EPR member organisation. The Innovation Prize will be granted every year to the best practice inserted in the Knowledge Management Centre, the EPR online database which gathers information on practice from the members.

The winner of the Innovation Prize is selected by Centre Coordinators on pre-defined criteria, judging the innovative aspect of the practice and its added-value to the rehabilitation sector.

For its first edition, the Innovation Prize 2009 was awarded to the project “Getting older together in Olsberg”, developed by Josefsheim Bigge. “Getting older together in Olsberg” aims to “create a mutual social network for elderly people with and without disabilities. It is the first attempt to create a social network with equal participation of these two groups.”



Tanja Schnellenpfeil, the manager of the project, was invited to the Innovation Prize Awarding Ceremony, organised during the EPR Annual Conference 2009 in Waterford, Ireland. The Ceremony was a unique occasion for Tanja to present her project to a wide audience of rehabilitation professionals and top managers, and to receive the 1.000 Euro reward, to be spent on EPR activities. The Innovation Prize proved to be an uplifting event for all the participants, and a prestigious opportunity to promote a project and an EPR member organisation.

“ The prize confirms that we are on the right path with our concept, and encourages us to develop and improve our services for older people with disabilities.”

Hubert Vornholt, Josefsheim Bigge Executive director

## GOVERNANCE MANUAL

The EPR Strategic Plan 2009 – 2011 identified the development of a Governance Model as one of the ways to enhance the capacity and professionalism required to meet the new challenges of the EPR. The Governance Manual contained within the Governance Model is intended to present a comprehensive and coherent overview of EPR policies and procedures - in the first place for (new) EPR members - but also for potential members and external partners.

This document is a compilation of existing policies and the EPR statutes, as well as of informal practices in the EPR. It contains a detailed organisational framework, including a responsibility matrix and decision mechanisms, as well as transparent and equitable procedures. The Governance Manual is the responsibility of the Board of Directors. Consequently, all EPR structures (mainly General Secretary and Executive Committee) have to apply the rules agreed, but the Board of Directors can at any time allow exceptions with a majority and with a motivation/justification. As such, the Governance Manual offers guidelines and a framework for decision-making, while maintaining the flexibility to find pragmatic and argued solutions needed in a voluntary international network.

As the Governance Manual serves as an integrated reference document, it will be accessible to all EPR members as well as external partners via the website.

## ENLARGEMENT OF THE EPR IN 2009

According to its Strategic Plan 2009-2011, EPR has proactively sought to enlarge its membership in 2009. This approach served three main objectives:

- enhance and secure the financial capacity of the platform;
- have access to high-level and diversified expertise in the EPR network in order to stimulate the exchange of knowledge among the members;
- achieve a geographical balance and greater representativeness, which is particularly critical in the framework of international projects.

EPR's approach targeted more leading organisations particularly from Central and Eastern Europe where the Platform is less represented. Transition arrangements for the membership fee were foreseen. These measures resulted in the entrance of four new associate members in the network, including three organisations from Central and Eastern Europe: ALIAS (Italy), Valakupiu Centre (Lithuania), Workchance Association (Hungary) and Panagia Eleousa (Greece). In addition, EPR welcomed the return of SRH learnlife (Germany) after two years of absence in the Platform. EQUASS and European projects are major assets in attracting new members.

By 2011, EPR targets a membership of 18 full members and 13 associate members spread over 20 EU countries.

## II. Professional Development

### AGEING AND DISABILITY: ELDERLY DISABLED IN SOCIETY

2009 started with a training seminar on ageing and disability, which took place on 29 and 30 January 2009 in Mulhouse, France, and was attended by 18 participants.

As host organisation, the CRM contributed to most of the participants and speakers, including some important contributions from external French speakers. 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 a facilitator. The seminar started with general trends and figures about ageing in Europe and in France. Once the context was set, the programme continued with more in-depth issues. The group discussed the need for diverse and multidisciplinary approaches to address the differences in the target groups, the importance of cooperation with other providers to meet the specific demands, the necessity of appropriate technology such as ambient assisted living, which all require a strong coordination. Other specific issues were then discussed, including services for ageing people with intellectual disabilities, the fragmentation of the sector, and the organisational aspects within a centre. Various viewpoints were shared and confronted, all aiming to the autonomy, independence and quality of life of the ageing people.

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 seminar was much appreciated by the participants and set an energetic and productive tone for the EPR's activities in 2009!

### 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 the European Commission to support national authorities.

In an effective combination of professional expertise and practical approaches, the event informed the participants on the various funding programmes, starting with the new EU Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP). The seminar provided 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. The seminar continued with strategies to develop a project idea into a successful project proposal, and tools for proposal writing, including evaluation of budgets and financial reports. Partnership-building, project implementation and management and application and reporting procedures for each funding programme were also on the programme. Finally, the trainers proposed an innovative approach to simulation exercises.



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.

“ I feel more confident in answering calls for proposals now thanks to the acquired information. ”

## STRATEGIC WORKSHOP FOR DIRECTORS

EPR held its fifth strategic workshop for Directors on 11 June 2009 in Bled, Slovenia. The now traditional annual meeting was hosted by the Institute for Rehabilitation of the Republic of Slovenia (IR-RS).

The annual workshop is a key occasion for the Directors to exchange professional good practices in the field of rehabilitation, to strengthen the network and to gain skills in order to address European-wide situations in the sector.



In light of the economic recession, the specific focus this year fell on the response by providers in the social services sector which is, like every sector, facing the current impacts of the recession. The main goal of this event was to offer the participants with an opportunity to discuss in depth the best approaches to tackling the challenges of recession. Identifying the direct and indirect consequences of the recession is the primary challenge facing all services providers.

Crucially, EPR Members reaffirmed their positive approach to these current challenges, and their will to consider them as an opportunity to re-evaluate and re-invent social services delivery, rather than a threat. EPR members share a feeling of optimism, and are confident that appropriate responses to the economic crisis can be formulated. In order to do so, the members call the various sectoral stakeholders, including the Public Authorities, the service providers and the civil society to join their forces and tackle the crisis at their respective levels.

Among the strategies formulated, EPR members recommend building strategic alliances between representative organisations of people with disabilities and service providers, exploring new business models, developing new services and addressing new target groups, adapting the Human Resources policy, financial management, and make more use of cutting edge technologies.

“ The meeting raised most interesting openings for the future. ”

In between the animated debates and intense discussions, the directors had the opportunity to benefit from the magnificent landscape that surrounds Bled. A majestic dinner in Bled castle, a charming boat trip on the lake to Bled Island, a picturesque visit in the village Radovljica, added delight and beauty to the whole stay.



## TRAINING PUTS CLIENT AT HEART OF CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR

On 14-15 May 2009, professionals from four member organisations participated in a training session on Challenging Behaviour, which was led by Peter McGill, Senior Lecturer at the Tizard Centre at the University of Kent, UK. The participants discussed the influence of environmental and individual factors on the occurrence of challenging behaviour, before exploring in-depth professional practices to prevent and reduce it, the aim being to improve the quality of life of the client, notably by designing person-centred services.



For more details on this event please visit [www.epr.eu/index.php/activities/professional-development](http://www.epr.eu/index.php/activities/professional-development) and click 'Challenging Behaviour'.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF QUALITY ASSURANCE IN REHABILITATION SERVICES - INFORMATION SEMINAR

Quality of services has been one of the cornerstones of the EPR policy since its foundation. Quality is a key demand in the national approach of the social sector and in the EU policy by promoting the modernisation of the social sector. The debate on quality at the European and national levels touches all NGOs in the social sector and the Vocational Education and Training sector.

However the quality of the services will not be improved by solely debating and defining policies. Quality systems must be implemented in the organisations of social services providers. As a response to this growing concern EPR offered its members the possibility to attend an information seminar on the implementation of Quality Assurance in Rehabilitation Services.

The Quality Seminar was organised in Brussels on 9 and 10 December 2009, and was attended by 20 participants from all over Europe. The programme featured presentations on quality and workshops with concrete tools to successfully implement quality requirements and quality systems in social services and VET services for people with disabilities.

For more information and to download the presentations given during the Seminar, consult the "Professional Development" section of the EPR website.

“ Structured approaches towards quality like the ones that are being developed at European level can give a good support to desired transformation of Social Services. ”  
 José Figueiredo Soares APQ, Portuguese Association for Quality

“ Quality approach needs a focus on your customers and is synonymous of improvement of the processes. ”  
 Jean-Claude SCHREPFER, Centre de Réadaptation de Mulhouse

## LUOVI AND EU PUBLIC AFFAIRS: A TRIP TO BRUSSELS

From 30 September to 2 October 2009 the International Affairs team of Luovi Vocational College came to Brussels from Finland for a study visit in the capital of the European Union. The participants took the occasion to get acquainted with EU Public Affairs by meeting key stakeholders. The programme, designed in close cooperation between Mari Kuosmanen, Luovi International Manager and Simona Giarratano, EPR Public Affairs Officer, included meetings with the European Disability Forum, the representation of a Finnish regional authority, a Belgium service provider, and the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education. During the three days the participants also had team building activities and strategic planning. It was a great opportunity for both EPR and Luovi to know more about the common priorities and future objectives.



“ The Luovi delegation considered their visit to Brussels to be a very fruitful experience and one they would like to repeat ”

## TRAINING ON HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

For the first time in EPR, professionals from four member organisations gathered for an event on Human Resources management. The group benefited from the expertise of Ria Mooren, from the Dutch Consulting Company Intalent, and was facilitated by Jan Albers, EPR consultant.

The participants started by describing their work and current challenges, which included the adaptation to the changes in the sector (merging, economic crisis, person-centred approach), the setting up of a systematic HR policy and the simplification of the existing system. During the discussions, the participants drafted important statements which led to them realising that the real life situation including financial and time pressure does not reflect the fact that staff are the main assets of each organisation. One key challenge specific to the disability sector is that professionals acquire positions that are very strong and sustainable. It creates some difficulties for the organisation to adapt the services to new content when needed. Various aspects of HR management were then explored.



An important part of the seminar was dedicated to the Competence framework for management development. Ria Mooren explained how a competence framework links organisational strategy and employee development and gave the example of the competence framework development for SRL (now Adelante) for which she was hired as a consultant. The seminar went on with an exchange of practices and discussion around recruitment and selection strategies, the impact of the economic crisis, performance management, leadership and management development, and many other items.

The participants gave an average rate of 8.3/10 for this seminar. They were generally satisfied about the new ideas that they could use for their work and hope that another seminar on the same issue can be organised in 2011 with additional EPR members.

### III. Research & Innovation



#### ÆGIS (OPEN ACCESSIBILITY EVERYWHERE: GROUNDWORK, INFRASTRUCTURE, STANDARDS)

In accordance with the ÆGIS project plan 4 workshops were held during April and May 2009 in Belgium, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom with over 143 participants. Participants included developers of software applications, people with disabilities, user representatives, vendors of assistive technology, personal assistants, and other relevant stakeholders. To serve the purpose of end user and stakeholder involvement, each of the project pilot sites organised a local workshop aimed at presenting the project to all potential users, as well as gathering feedback from end-users and other stakeholders on core use cases that will be used as the basis for designing the main project tools.

ÆGIS' first pan-European User Forum and Workshop took place on 4-5 June 2009 at Research In Motion UK Ltd, Slough, Berkshire, United Kingdom. Key stakeholders from relevant areas were invited (such as end user representatives and organisations, EC representatives, technologies developers, etc). This workshop was an excellent chance to meet experts from relevant fields. Through these events, ÆGIS aimed to place users and their needs at the centre of all its ICT developments.

From 19 to 21 October 2009 the 4th AGIS project meeting was held in Madrid. Among other topics, the organisation of the 1st phase of the pilot trials in Belgium, Spain, Sweden, and the UK was discussed. Moreover, on 16 November 2009, the first annual review of the ÆGIS project took place at the European Commission. During the following day the ÆGIS scientific advisory board met at the EPR secretariat. Throughout the year members of the ÆGIS consortium participated as speakers at many relevant international conferences. For more information please visit:

[www.aegis-project.eu](http://www.aegis-project.eu)

**ÆGIS (Open Accessibility Everywhere: Groundwork, Infrastructure, Standards) is an international project aiming at empowering people with disabilities, the elderly and anyone else experiencing disadvantages when using Internet services, desktop PCs or mobile devices.**

#### REINTEGRATE

The Reintegrate Project set out to build on the outputs of existing projects in the field of disability and employment in order to address the skills and knowledge gaps of employers. In order to achieve this the project designed a number of ICT-based delivery mechanisms which aimed to transfer innovative approaches from the realm of research to employers' practice. The central spine of the project was a web-based self-assessment tool which allows work-based professionals to explore their own levels of knowledge and organisational strategies in relation to good practice in return to work and both e-learning and face- to- face training modules derived from the accumulated results of previous projects and current good practice.

During 2009, six rehabilitation centres were responsible for piloting these tools. In order for this to be carried out effectively the centres organised face to face discussions with HR managers to introduced them to the main instruments developed in the project (face-to-face training course, an e-learning environment, and assessment questionnaires) and invited them to give their honest feedback. The results of these focus groups were exchanged during a project meeting in March, which helped the project partners to finalise the tools which were officially launched during a project conference in November. The project was successful in designing innovative disability management tools to be used by service provides in their relations with employers, and several EPR members will incorporate these tools within their organisation in 2010.



**CEDEFOP**

European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

#### CEDEFOP: RESEARCH ON INNOVATIVE VET PROGRAMMES FOR SOCIAL CARE PROFESSIONALS

The research on innovative VET programmes for Social Care professionals was a project funded by CEDEFOP in which EPR was involved as a partner. The research focused on Quality Approaches for assuring the quality of training and service provision in the social care sector. The project, led by EASPD, involved European organisations as well as national partners specialising in social services. CRPG acted as one national centre and carried out a desk research and focus groups looking at the main challenges faced in the field of health and social care.

The study undertaken by the consortium consisted of three main analyses: the first identified current societal changes, policy trends and challenges of the health and social services as an economic sector; second, a list of six generic competences was identified for different occupational groups of care workers; finally the study identified innovative practices of training and lifelong learning which try to bridge the gaps between the current skills of social care staff and the challenge to render the social care systems more effective, integrated and demand-oriented.

The project ended with a workshop gathering thirty five participants from various partners and external organisations from the social care sector and training institutions which provided feedback on the research findings.

## IV. Benchmarking

### BENCHLEARNING ON OUTCOME MEASUREMENT IN VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

In an effort to help members implement lessons learned and practical knowledge, EPR has launched in 2009 new training methodologies which include the benchlearning groups.

The objective of the benchlearning group in Vocational Rehabilitation is to explore hard and soft indicators of outcomes, and to analyse the barriers and drivers for using these indicators. The group is led by Jan Albers as facilitator and Donal McAnaney as expert. Two meetings took place in 2009, on 22-23 April in Brussels and on 13-14 October in Waterford, Ireland. The group agreed on common indicators and tools for measurement of outcomes. The participants will pilot the tools in their respective organisations for about 6 months and exchange on their experiences and results.



### BENCHLEARNING ON OUTCOME MEASUREMENT IN MEDICAL REHABILITATION

A group of professionals from four EPR member organisations undertook a 3 year exploration journey around measurement of outcomes in Medical Rehabilitation. The group met on 8-10 June 2009 at the National Rehabilitation Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, and on 28-29 September in the Netherlands, hosted by Adelante. The overall objectives are to explore the best use of outcomes, and to design and monitor the implementation of outcomes measurement tools, based on exchanges on respective practices. The progress and results of the implementation will be shared at the occasion of the next meetings in 2010. The group is facilitated by Jan Albers and Donal McAnaney.

### LEARNING GROUP ON INTEGRATED SERVICES AND DECENTRALISATION OF SERVICE PROVISION

The learning group on integrated services and decentralisation of service provision gathered on 12-13 November 2009 to reflect on the challenges that decentralisation implies in terms of management of cooperation networks and of continuity of services. The participants decided to embed the action by developing projects to be implemented in their own organizations on the basis of a methodology provided by Kees Verschure, external consultant.



### LEARNING PARTNERSHIP - VET

A representative of Luovi visited NLN facilities on 19 October 2009 in the margin of the Annual Conference, with the objective to exchange on practices in relation to communication, marketing and strategies in the field of vocational education and training. Her study trip included visits of several training facilities and meetings with relevant managers. A counter visit of a NLN delegation should follow this fruitful bilateral exchange.

### LEARNING PARTNERSHIP - COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES

A delegation from Pluryn visited RehabCare's facilities in the region Limerick on 12, 13 and 14 October, in the framework of a study trip on Community-based day care activities. This exchange with a much experienced organisation has proved to be very beneficial to the delegation from Pluryn, who found inspiration for actual change and improvements in their services. A return visit of a delegation from RehabCare to Pluryn is being planned for 2010.

### EQUABENCH



The "EQUABENCH Benchmarking European Excellence" is a project funded by the Leonardo da Vinci programme of the European Commission. By establishing a network of European Vocational Education and Training (VET)

organisations EQUABENCH aims to facilitate the import and export of best business practice in order to improve the quality of training for people who have a disability or other form of disadvantage.

2009 was a very productive year with the partners proceeding with the exchange and sharing of innovative practices in the implementation of 6 principles of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model. Throughout the year four workshops were held in Slovenia, Germany, The Netherlands and Italy to discuss and benchmark the principles of 'Management by Process and Facts', 'People Development and Involvement', 'Customer Focus', and 'Result Orientation'. In line with the project schedule the four innovative practice guides have been drafted and the project has received a positive and constructive mid-term evaluation. For more information please visit:

[www.equabench.epr.eu](http://www.equabench.epr.eu)



### LIST OF PARTNERS

- The Cedar Foundation, United Kingdom
- Centro de Reabilitação Profissional de Gaia, Portugal
- Centro Studi Opera Don Calabria, Italy
- European Platform for Rehabilitation, Belgium
- University Rehabilitation Institute, Republic of Slovenia
- Josefsheim gGmbH, Germany
- National Learning Network, Ireland
- Pluryn Arbeid, The Netherlands



## V. Public Affairs

### NETWORKING, POSITIONING AND REPRESENTATION

EPR works together with all key stakeholders in the disability field including policy-makers, organisations representing the disability movement, social partners, funders, service providers and other NGOs.



#### European Council and Council of Europe

In 2009 the Platform consolidated its image within the European Institutions that recognised its leading role in the social service sector by inviting EPR to give key note speeches during high level events. On 22-23 April Jan Spooren, EPR General Secretary, gave a keynote speech 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.



On 26-27 October the Council of Europe and the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, organised a conference on "Ageing and Disability - Promoting human rights of persons with disabilities and the elderly" with the aim of raising awareness on the rights of elderly people with disabilities, inviting Jan Spooren to give the perspective of the service providers.



#### European Commission

EPR strengthened its cooperation with the DG Employment and Social Affairs of the European Commission and in particular with the disability unit, by participating in different events including meetings of the EU High Level Group on Disability (HLG) - in which EPR is an observer - representing civil society and by being consulted directly in the development of key political documents.

An example of this cooperation is the interview carried out on 2 December between the consultancy Matrix and Ramboll - the company

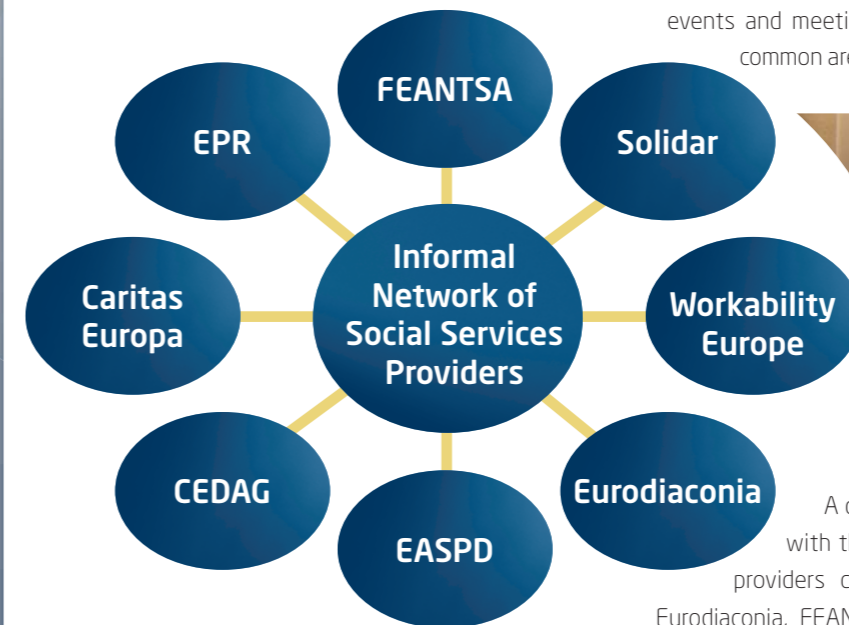
hired by the European Commission to consult with the major stakeholders on the new EU Disability Strategy 2010 – 2020 - and EPR. The interview covered the scope of the next strategy, the tools available for the European Commission, the potential impacts on the policy process and the impacts on people with disabilities.

Moreover, on 3 - 4 December EPR was invited to participate in the two day policy conference for the European Day of People with Disabilities and used the opportunity to strengthen its profile among the member states, high level representatives, representatives of people with disabilities, stakeholders, social partners and policy experts involved in the mainstreaming of disabilities issues in EU policies and activities.



### Social Platform and Informal Network of Social Service Providers

EPR believes that the challenges that the so called modernisation process presents as well as circumstantial threats due to the financial downturn can be faced successfully by working in cooperation with all actors in society. In accordance with this idea EPR has strengthened its position as a full member of the Platform of European Social NGOs – Social Platform. This includes attending the Social Platform working group and Service of General Interest, steering group meeting, general assembly and a study visit in Spain to meet with the representative of the Spanish presidency of the European Union. The participation in these events and meetings helps EPR in setting objectives and identifying common areas of intervention within the civil society.



A deeper level of involvement and cooperation is reached with the partners of the informal network of social service providers composed of Caritas Europa, EASPD, CEDAG, EPR, Eurodiaconia, FEANTSA, Solidar and Workability Europe. 2009 was a productive year for the Network that met several times with relevant actors including representatives of the European Commission. One of the main activities co-organised was the INSSP seminar on 29 September 2009, in Brussels, with the major objective to collect concrete examples of how EU policies and legislation impact on social services at national and local level.

#### INSSP Seminar: How EC Law impacts our daily work?

The seminar focused on procurement rules, services directive and state aid. Members of the various European Networks of social service providers presented and discussed positive and negative impacts in different countries and different social sectors.

Members organisation were called to share their experience in the field of public procurement, internal market and state aid regulations. EPR was represented by Cees Jonkheer and Maarten Boon from Pluryn, who gave the Dutch example.

One of the outcomes of the seminar is a better understanding of the actual impact of EU legislation on the social sector as well as some factual evidence and examples. The results of the seminar will be integrated in a position paper which will strengthen EPR's position during further discussions with the European Commission, the European Parliament and other stakeholders.

### CEDEFOP conference on Matching Skills and Jobs

On 11 and 12 of June, Cedefop organised, with the cooperation of the European Commission, the Agora conference 'Matching skills and jobs: anticipating needs in challenging times'. Simona Giarratano, EPR Public Affairs Officer, attended and participated in the discussion, both in plenary sessions and during parallel workshops, about the supply of skills for the EU labour market in the next ten years. The ultimate aim of the conference was to debate how best to identify skill mismatches, how to achieve the most appropriate partnerships between education and the labour market, and generally to draw attention to the implications of the forecasting exercises for policy-making in several related social fields.



### Not-for-profit services providers around the table

On 3 September Simona Giarratano represented EPR at a round-table discussion on the not-for-profit concept at both the EU and national level, discussing the added value of the non-profit sector in Europe. The event was organised by Cedag – the European Council of Association of General Interest and the think tank Pour la Solidarité. The discussion centered on the European perspective along with other national examples, e.g. Belgium, English and Finnish.

## PROVISION OF INFORMATION AND ADVICE ON FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES, POLICY DEVELOPMENTS AND CONTRIBUTION TO POLICY-MAKING

### eBulletin, Funding Alerts and Analytical Papers

As part of its Standard Menu of Services and Opportunities, EPR issues a monthly targeted Public Affairs e-bulletin for its members, featuring relevant news from the sectors of employment, social affairs, equal opportunities and research. The edition also includes updates on funding opportunities and a calendar of interesting upcoming events from a disability perspective. Additional funding alerts and calls for partners are sent out on a regular basis.

EPR lobbies for the interests of social service providers at the European level. Policy issues are discussed in the EPR Board and the Executive Committee, and at regular Strategic Workshops for Directors. These forums contribute to the formulation of position papers prepared in full consultation with the membership. EPR informed its members about a number of important dossiers including the EU directive on Employment and the issue of equality, the implementation of the Charter on disability-related Health and Social Services and the implications of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and its Optional Protocol for Service Providers.

EPR representatives delivered various trainings and speeches on the impact of EU disability and social policies and instruments in the framework of members' events or as in-house Seminars.

### Discussing modernisation in France – Strengthening a member's profile in its region



On the 27 May 2009, Simona Giarratano, EPR Public Affairs Officer, participated in a round table discussion on the European perspective and the changes occurring in the social sector within the context of the 37th national day of the ADC (Association de Directeurs, Cadres de direction et certifiés de l'E.H.E.S.P.). The discussions focused on education and training, and took place in Nîmes (France). The theme was "Le secteur social et médico-social à l'épreuve de la pensée libérale" (The way the social and health sector face liberalism) and Simona Giarratano gave a presentation on how to face liberal policies following the pathways developed by EPR in its Charter on Modernisation of disability-related Health and Social Services.

The Conference represented a great opportunity to promote EPR and its initiatives, including EQUASS, and to confirm once again that national and European priorities in the sector are becoming more and more compliant.

### Public Affairs Event: Empowerment of People with Disabilities - Impact and Opportunities

On 10 December the annual EPR Public Affairs event took place in the prestigious venue of the Marriott Hotel in Brussels. As hoped the event encouraged a discussion among key European stakeholders about the impact of empowerment for both people with disabilities and service providers, and how to measure and benchmark empowerment at European level.

Thanks to Jan Spooren, who facilitated the debate among key actors on the stage and among the participants, many important points of view were heard, including the users' perspective, as testified by the president of the European Disability Forum, Mr Vardakastanis in his speech, as well as the point of view of the institutions, through representatives of the unit for people with disabilities of the European Commission participating from the audience. Donal McAnaney on behalf of the EPR contributed to the debate on benchmarking the empowerment impact of disability policies and services.





Moreover two national examples were showcased, the Austrian and the Dutch. The first one was showed by Mr. Martin Konrad, who described Nueva, a project funded by the European Union under the PROGRESS programme, and Guus van Beek who on behalf of Tessa Zaeyen explained how to measure empowerment by using REQUEST and VrijBaan, as implemented by Pluryn in the Netherlands.

The event culminated in the European Quality in Social Services (EQUASS) awarding ceremony during which quality was addressed as a fundamental condition to ensure empowerment (see pg 26). Musical accompaniment to the theme of empowerment was offered by 'All the Way Music', a world-renowned Dutch agency for highly talented musicians with disabilities.



Almost 100 participants took part in the event, including EPR members, European NGOs representing both providers and users, and the European Commission. The EPR staff was satisfied with this successful event and felt rewarded by the harmonious atmosphere, the fruitful debates and the positive feedbacks received from the participants.



## VI. Consultancy

### CONSULTANCY SERVICES TO EPR MEMBERS

Throughout 2009 EPR continued to provide one-to-one consultancy activities to its full members. The most popular format was the in-house seminar through which EPR sends experts to its member organisations to train a wider sample of staff, and to link the training to concrete implementation. Such in-house seminars were conducted on following themes:

- Modernisation of social services
- Vocational counselling for people with disabilities
- Self-evaluation as a tool to improve quality
- The International Classification on functioning and health (ICF)
- Rights and Ethics
- Empowerment

EPR also conducted a few more intensive consultancy assignments to assist members to actually set up new instruments or service delivery methods. The most important were:

- Management of services and measurement of outcomes on the basis of the ICF
- Use of the 'Vrijbaan' method to measure the empowerment level of clients, and the use of 'Request' to assess how a service provider could become more empowering
- Disability management and training of employers on disability issues

Finally, some study tours were organised for particular centres, and key EPR experts were asked for representation tasks at national level.

### VIP PROJECT

The VIP project, which started in November 2008, aims to integrate people with disabilities into the labour market through vocational assessment and rehabilitation services. Experts from the National Learning Network, Rehab Enterprises, Pluryn and Adelante were substantially involved in this project, providing international expertise to design new tools and methods of vocational assessment, vocational training, sheltered employment and supported employment, under the supervision of the EPR secretariat.

In 2009, the EPR team of experts did a tremendous job of evaluating the legislation and current services in Romania. The experts delivered an impressive report in November on the review of the Romanian legislation and current services in vocational rehabilitation and on the development of vocational assessment tools. This report followed field visits of EPR experts in Romania in September, which included consultations with the Romanian local partners, with the view to verify research findings and determine future training needs.

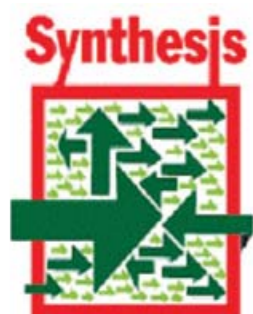


The evaluation was used as the basis on which to draft methodology for training and implementation of new services. The experts then focused on the design of new service specifications and training of Romanian professionals. These training sessions will take place throughout the beginning of 2010 and for which over 80 participating professionals are expected. The training will allow the international team to hand over knowledge and know-how to the professionals for them to implement the services.

VIP represents the first project of its kind in which EPR is involved for consultancy. The involvement of the experts is more intense than in the usual EPR projects. On the other hand, the financial benefits are more substantial for EPR members.

## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE 'SITUATION OF DISABLED PERSONS IN EUROPE: CHANGES AND SOLUTIONS'

Vilnius, Lithuania, was the scene of the international conference on the 'Situation of Disabled people in Europe: changes and Solutions', organised on 7 May 2009.



The event was part of a set of conferences organised in the context of a European project: "SYNTHESIS – Health and Social Services integration for the most vulnerable groups" lead by the Romanian Ministry of Labour, Family and Equal Opportunity.

EPR, represented by Simona Giarratano, was called to provide the viewpoint of the service providers, giving a sector specific overview of the socio-economic challenges at EU level and making propositions on how to tackle them. Representatives of public authorities as well as user organisations attended the conference, discussing the problems of a modern society and providing samples of good practices in different European countries, including Finland, France, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Romania, and Spain.

“ EQUASS:  
Enhancing performance and meeting  
needs in social service provision ”

## VII. European Quality in Social Services



The European Quality in Social Services (EQUASS) is an initiative of EPR, and provides comprehensive services of certification, training and consultancy in the area of quality. With its multi-stakeholder approach, EQUASS aims to enhance the social service sector by engaging social service providers in quality and continuous improvement and by guaranteeing service-users quality of services throughout Europe. Since its creation, EQUASS has successfully found its place in the European market and is certifying more and more organisations every year.

EQUASS certified service providers gain an invaluable competitive advantage and are able to distinguish themselves from other service providers with their proven quality of service provision. Through its work, EQUASS contributes to the modernisation of the social sector.

### IMPACT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EQUASS CRITERIA

The implementation of the EQUASS criteria intends to have an impact on the internal development of certified organisations. According to the results of a survey undertaken in 2009, more than 70% of all EQUASS certified organisations (both at Excellence and Assurance level) perceived a substantial impact on their internal organisation (including an awareness of the rights of the persons served, efficiency, transparency of services, satisfaction of persons served, staff and process management) and an improvement of their strategic position in the market.

### OVERVIEW OF NON-FINANCIAL RESULTS

Certifications	2009	Countries
Organisations	57	10
Sites	118	10
Auditors	75	15
Consultants	57	13



### Evaluation of EQUASS certification audit process

Criteria	Overall	Assurance	Excellence
Overall quality of the site visit	4.6	4.5	5.0
Communication about the programme of the site visit	4.4	4.4	4.0
Relevance of the interviews with stakeholders	4.3	4.4	4.0
Performance of the auditor(s)	4.4	4.4	4.0
Site-visit preparation form	4.1	4.2	4.0
Content (feedback) of the audit report	4.4	4.3	5.0
Information about the EQUASS audit procedure	4.2	4.2	4.0
Communication with the Local Licence Holder	4.5	4.5	-
Communication with the EQUASS unit in Brussels	4.5	4.4	5.0
Were there issues that should have been included in the site visit?	NO	NO	NO

1 = very poor, 2 = poor, 3 = satisfactory, 4 = good, 5 = excellent  
 Results based on evaluation forms completed by certified organisations on the quality of the EQUASS external audit.

### EQUASS CERTIFIED ORGANISATIONS IN 2009

#### EQUASS Assurance Certified Organisations – 2009 Overview

Forty organisations have been awarded with EQUASS Assurance in 2009

Aksis, Ankerløyken AS, AS Rehabil, Astero AS, AVIGO, BFW HAMM, Deltagruppen AS, Follo Futura, Fønix Kompetansenett AS, Forus Industri AS, Fredrikstad Attføringssenter, Fretex, Grønnevikken, Hurum Produkter, iFokus AS, Industri Lambertseter, Inko AS, Jæren Industripartner, Jobblntro as, Krapfoss Industrier AS, Lødingen Arbeidssenter, Masvo, Menova, Næringstjenester AS, National Learning Network, Nittedal ASVO, Nopro AS, Noransonde AS, Nor-Pro A.S, Norservice as, OrbitArena AS, Prima AS, Reko as, Sens, Solis Trust, Stavne Gård KF, Svanem AS, Tunet, Unikum AS, Vinn AS Hallingdal

## EQUASS Excellence Certified Organisations – 2009 Overview

In 2009, 3 organisations achieved the status of Excellence in Social Services (EQUASS Excellence). EQUASS Excellence has been set up to identify and to encourage excellence and best practice in the social sector. The results of the EQUASS Excellence organisations are published and disseminated in order to stimulate benchmarking and benchlearning.



Centro de Reabilitação Profissional de Gaia, Portugal



Durapart AS, Norway



Josefsheim gGmbH, Germany



## EQUASS AWARDING CEREMONY

The EQUASS Awarding Ceremony ended the year with a flourish for all those organisations who had striven to achieve EQUASS certification in 2009. Certified organisations from all over Europe gathered in Brussels on 10 December 2009 to attend to this prestigious ceremony, organised during the EPR Public Affairs event. Mr. Frank Flannery, Chairman of the EQUASS Awarding Committee, presented the EQUASS Assurance and EQUASS Excellence certified organisations to the public, and members of the EQUASS Awarding Committee – Mr Nick Bason from the Employers' Forum on Disability and Mr Luk Zelderloo, from the EASPD – handed out the EQUASS certificates to those who were present.



The Ceremony was attended by members of the EQUASS Awarding Committee and the EQUASS unit, as well as by key European stakeholders of the social sector.

Photos of the event can be downloaded on the EPR website, under "Public Affairs". Just click "Public Affairs event" to access the photo gallery.

The following organisations were present at the 2009 EQUASS Awarding event:

### EQUASS Excellence:

- Centro de Reabilitação Profissional de Gaia, Portugal
- Durapart AS, Norway
- Josefsheim gGmbH, Germany

### EQUASS Assurance:






- Ankerløykken as, Norway
- Astero AS, Norway
- Avigo AS, Norway
- BFW Hamm, Germany
- Fretex, Norway
- Fønix Kompetansenett AS, Norway
- Follo Futura AS, Norway
- iFokus AS, Norway
- National Learning Network, Ireland
- OrbitArena AS, Norway
- Stavne Gård KF, Norway



## LOCAL LICENCE HOLDERS

EQUASS Local Licence Holders are essential in the dissemination of the EQUASS concept on Quality. The EQUASS Licence Holders are responsible for marketing and promoting the EQUASS concept on quality and for operating the EQUASS Assurance certification programme at the national level.

As of January 2010, EQUASS functions with five Local Licence Holders. Each Licence Holder comes from a different country, and has a specific profile:

Licence Holder	Profile	Country
 Attføringsbedriftene	National network of service providers in vocational rehabilitation	Norway
 Kvalitetssekretariatet - for Akkreditering Danmark® og EQUASS-Assurance®	National network of social service providers	Denmark
 Excellence Ireland Quality Association (EIQA)	Association of organisations working in the field of Quality Management and Consultancy	Ireland
 Associação Portuguesa para a Qualidade (APQ)	Non-profit organisation working in the field of Quality Management	Portugal
 Brüsseler Kreis	Consortium of leading social service providers	Germany

**FOCUS:**

2009 was a fruitful year for the identification and implementation of EQUASS Local Licence Holders, as two new licence agreements were signed in Portugal and Germany.

In May 2009, the Associação Portuguesa para a Qualidade (APQ) started to operate the EQUASS Assurance certification programme in Portugal, in the national language. APQ is a membership based non-profit organisation whose purpose is to promote and spread knowledge in the field of quality organisational excellence and to encourage best practice in order to improve the productivity between organisations. Consultancy and auditor training were organised in Lisbon in order to build up a pool of Portuguese EQUASS experts and support the implementation and auditing of EQUASS Assurance in Portugal.

In December 2009, the Brüsseler Kreis became the EQUASS Local Licence Holder for Germany. The Brüsseler Kreis (Brussels Circle) is a collaboration of the major Protestant and Catholic social organisations in Germany. Member organisations of the Brüsseler Kreis are regarded as active partners in the European social market with their innovative social services. The Brüsseler Kreis is active in providing care for people with disabilities, the elderly, youth and in education. This new partnership is a great opportunity for EQUASS to consolidate its influence in the German market.

Local Licence Holders have been identified in Slovenia and Lithuania; licence agreements are expected to be signed in 2010.

**EQUASS TRAININGS IN 2009**

EQUASS regularly organises different types of training and seminars to support the EQUASS approach on quality and the implementation of the certification programmes. In total, 6 training events took place in 2009, in various European locations:

Training	Date, Location	Attendance
EQUASS Assurance auditor training	March 09, Oslo Norway	7
EQUASS Consultancy training	April 09, Lisbon Portugal	20
EQUASS Excellence auditor training	June 09, Brussels Belgium	5
EQUASS Information Seminar	September 09, Bigge Germany	25
EQUASS Consultancy training	October 09, Lisbon Portugal	13
EQUASS Assurance auditor training	November 09, Lisbon Portugal	16

The EQUASS training events were very positively perceived by the participants, whose feedback reflected their appreciation of the quality and relevance of the training sessions.

Criteria	Auditor trainings	Consultancy trainings	General EQUASS trainings
1 Overall quality of the training	4.3	4.2	4.2
2 Content of the training	4.3	4.0	4.1
3 Relevance of the training to your job	4.6	4.5	3.9
4 Quality of the trainer / facilitator	4.9	4.8	4.7
5 Supporting material (documents, PowerPoint presentations etc...)	4.3	4.5	4.2
6 Location of the EQUASS training	4.2	-	3.8
7 Organisation of the training	-	4.8	-
8 Information about the EQUASS procedures	4.4	-	-

1 = very poor, 2 = poor, 3 = satisfactory, 4 = good, 5 = excellent

## TOWARDS A EUROPEAN DEFINITION OF QUALITY IN SOCIAL SERVICES

### Common Quality Framework in Social Services of General Interest (CQF in SSGI)



The promotion of quality in Social Services of General Interest has become one of EPR's priorities. But defining a European and cross-cultural concept of quality in social services is not an easy process. With its involvement in the Prometheus project, supported by the European Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity 2007-2013 (PROGRESS), and managed by the Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities of the European Commission, EPR directly addresses the need to find a common framework for quality in SSGI.

One of the Prometheus project's objectives is indeed to reach an agreement between stakeholders about the definition of quality in SSGI, and the criteria for assuring quality. The CQF aims at becoming a non-compulsory framework for quality in SSGI, a flexible definition of quality applicable to the national context of all EU member states.

The CQF is being developed with the consultation of a variety of stakeholders, to ensure that the final text will take into account the diversity of concepts and perspectives of quality. The consultation started in February 2009 in the framework of a CEN Workshop with a series of meetings attended by representatives of partner organisations. Stakeholders were invited to discuss and comment on the



subsequent drafts of the CQF. 23 European NGOs and 20 national organisations working in the social sector representing service users, service providers, funders, quality organisations, universities and policy makers contributed to the CQF for SSGI.

The 7th draft is currently under public consultation until 28 May 2010. The CEN Workshop Agreement is expected to be reached in September 2010, and will without a doubt be a huge step forward towards a common understanding of quality in SSGI.

### Prometheus pilot sites

In order to meet the objectives of the Prometheus project the processes, procedures, instruments for quality measurement and the implementation strategy are to be tested in pilot sites. Pilot sites have been identified in 7 European countries and span a wide range of social sectors. They will test the Common Quality Framework and its core criteria for Quality Assurance in the framework of the Prometheus project. Each site is expected to carry out a systematic self-evaluation, which will become the base to implement the core criteria for quality assurance of the CQF.

### PROMETHEUS PILOT SITES:

- Casa Ioana in Bucharest, Romania (services for homeless people)
- Caritas Accueil et Solidarité asbl, Luxembourg (services for homeless people)
- Municipality of Almios in Athens, Greece (child care services)
- Municipality of Belluno- Regione del Veneto, Italy (child care services)
- Grepp, Norway (child care services)
- Sattellitten, Denmark (long-term services for people with psychiatric diagnoses)
- Dorthe Marie Hjemmet, Denmark (long-term services for elderly people)
- ASSOL - Associação de Solidariedade Social de Lafões, Portugal (services for people with intellectual disabilities)

### Self-assessment process

The self-assessment process is meant to include various perspectives on the performance of social service providers against the criteria for quality assurance and to find consensus on the answers of specific questions of the self-assessment instrument. This instrument has been developed in the framework of the Prometheus project and has been translated in the national languages of the pilot sites.

The expected outputs of the self-assessment are:

- **a profile of performance of the organisation against the criteria for quality assurance**
- **recommendations for implementing the criteria of quality assurance**

In order to achieve these results, social service providers are asked to adhere to a standardised procedure. All pilot sites will carry out a self-assessment process and develop an implementation plan based on the recommendations.

For more information on the Prometheus project and its results visit: [www.prometheus.epr.eu](http://www.prometheus.epr.eu)

## SHARING BEST PRACTICES TO IMPLEMENT EQUASS ASSURANCE

EPR, along with 5 other European organisations working within the field of vocational rehabilitation, engaged in a two-year project to make the EQUASS Assurance certification system more easily available to all Vocational, Education and Training providers. This project, "EQUASS in Practice", aims to develop and share best practices of how VET service providers may work to implement the EQUASS Assurance criteria and improve the quality of their services while achieving sustainable working practice and routines. EQUASS in Practice is carried out under the framework of the Leonardo da Vinci programme.

The project partners met three times in 2009 to discuss the national implementation strategies of EQUASS Assurance in the various partner countries, and to develop methods, guidelines and strategies which can be used to produce an EQUASS manual. Intended as a practical tool, the manual will coach the VET-providers through their Quality Assurance work and help them to become certified.

EQUASS in Practice is led by AVRE (Norwegian Association of Vocational Rehabilitation Enterprises), and involves the Valakupiai Rehabilitation Centre (Lithuania), the Rehab Group (Ireland), IRRS (Slovenia) and CRPG (Portugal) and EPR.

Visit [www.equassinpractice.epr.eu](http://www.equassinpractice.epr.eu) for more information.



## VIII. Governance & Management

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors is the decision-making body of EPR. Its main task is to supervise all EPR activities and to set the strategic, financial and organisational framework of EPR. The three pillars report on their activities to the Board of Directors and work within the framework that has previously been decided upon. The Board consists of the Chief Executives/Directors of all full members.

In 2009 the Board held four meetings in Slovenia, Ireland and Belgium to discuss and approve EPR policies and activities.

The Board was composed of the following persons:

Centro de Reabilitação Profissional de Gaia	Jerónimo de Sousa, EPR President
A2G	Sigurd Gjertsen
Adelante	Jean-Paul Essers
Centre de Réadaptation de Mulhouse	André Lefèvre
Durapart AS	Bjørn Paulsen
Fretex AS	Thor Fjellvang
Fundación ONCE	Josefa Torres
Heliomare	Frits Wichers
University Rehabilitation Institute, Republic of Slovenia	Robert Cugelj
Josefs-Gesellschaft	Fritz Krueger
Luovi Vocational College	Jussi Kempainen
National Learning Network	Frank Flannery
Opera Don Calabria	Alessandro Galvani
Pluryn	Tessa Zaeyen
RehabCare	Angela Kerins
Stiftung Rehabilitation Heidelberg	Jörg Porath

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee is a sub-group of the Board of Directors whose main responsibilities are to prepare policy decisions for the Board and to oversee the activities of the secretariat. Board members are also welcome to attend meetings of the Executive Committee.

The 2009 Executive Committee was composed of the following individuals: Jerónimo de Sousa as the President, Fritz Krueger as the incoming Vice-President and Angela Kerins, Bjørn Paulsen and Frank Flannery.

At its meeting in December in Brussels, the Board elected a new Executive Committee for the period 2010-2011 composed of the following individuals: Bjørn Paulsen as the incoming President, Angela Kerins as the incoming Vice-President and Jean-Paul Essers, Frank Flannery and Jerónimo de Sousa as additional members.

### CENTRE COORDINATORS

Centre coordinators are the direct link between EPR and its member organisations (both full and associate). Their role is to disseminate information about EPR within their organisations and to contribute in the implementation of the decisions taken by the Board of Directors. Their mission is two-fold: to generate inputs from the centre in EPR initiatives on the one hand, and to ensure maximum return on investment via dissemination of EPR results and products on the other hand. Centre coordinators have the following responsibilities:

- Managing contacts and exchange of information
- Implementing at centre level decisions taken by the Board of Directors
- Generating ideas and fostering a proactive attitude within the EPR
- Coordinating the organisation of meetings hosted in their centre
- Composing the programme of the Annual Conference

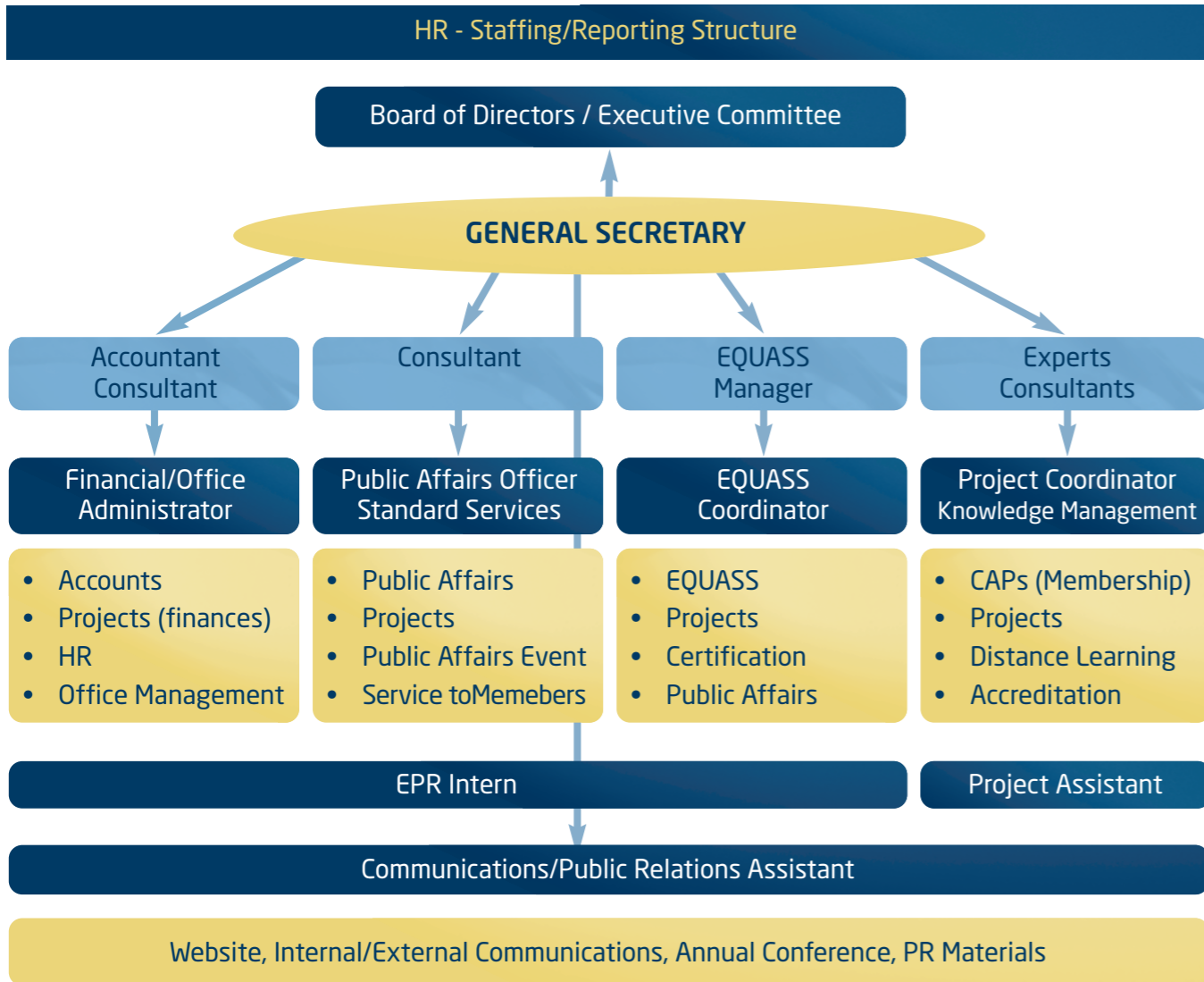
The EPR coordinators met twice in 2009, in April and December. The meetings were hosted by the Brussels secretariat and offered the coordinators the opportunity to discuss ongoing and forthcoming activities in EPR, as well as to address the internal functioning of the network. Most of the EPR coordinators also participated in the training seminar on EU-funding and in the Quality Seminar.

ORGANISATION	COORDINATOR
A2G	Wenche Iren Warberg
Adelante	Paul Kurvers
Association of Vocational Rehabilitation Enterprises	Paal Haavorsen
Astangu	Marika Haas
Centre de Réadaptation de Mulhouse	Jean-Claude Schrepfer
Centro de Reabilitação Profissional de Gaia	Andreia Mota
Chaseley Trust	Amanda Rae
Comitato Regionale Lombardo AIAS	Miriam Apostolo
Durapart AS	Grete Kristiansen
Fretex AS	Trine Gjermundbo
Fundación ONCE	Alberto Rossi
Heliomare	Frank't Hart
Inspire	Nathan Farrugia
University Rehabilitation Institute, Republic of Slovenia	Jurij Svajger
Josefs-Gesellschaft	Nina Louis
LOS	Geert Joergensen
Luovi Vocational College	Mari Kuosmanen
Momentum	Nicky Nielson
National Learning Network	David Muldoon
Opera Don Calabria	Valentina Danese
Panagia Eleousa	Mina Kyziridi
Pluryn	Cees Jonkheer
RehabCare	Laura Keane
Stiftung Rehabilitation Heidelberg	Friedrich Landes
Technischer Jugendfreizeit- und Bildungsverein e.V.	Susanne Böhmig
Theotokos	Penny Papanikolopoulos
Valakupiu Rehabilitation Centre	Rasa Noreikytė
Workchance Association	Zoltan Bodnar

## EPR SECRETARIAT

The EPR secretariat is the main unit responsible for the development and implementation of the network's activities. Based in Brussels, it acts as the interface with EPR member organisations and with external stakeholders. The secretariat is composed of a core team of staff members and benefits from the additional expertise of external consultants. The members of the EPR secretariat speak most major European languages: English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Dutch and Greek, as well as Russian and Catalan.

During 2009, the Board of Directors approved the new EPR Human Resources Manual, a compilation of existing and new EPR human resources policies, supported by Belgian legal regulations as applies to the EPR secretariat. The HR Manual is one of three parts of the EPR Governance Model (together with the Remuneration Policy and Governance Manual – see Section I), which was compiled in 2009 after being set as a key objective in the EPR Strategic Plan 2009-2011. The HR Manual is updated biennially by the General Secretary in consultation with the Financial/Office Administrator, and is then re-submitted to the Executive Committee for approval.



## EPR SECRETARIAT

**Jan Spooren**  
General Secretary



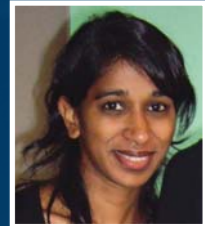
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**Sarah De Roeck**  
Financial and Office Administrator



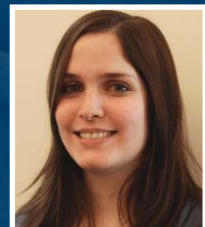
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**Guus van Beek**  
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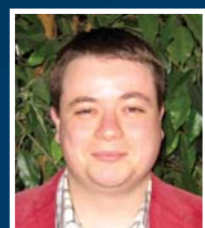
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## IX. Financial Information


ITEM	BUDGET	RESULTS (IN EURO)
<b>Revenues</b>	<b>1005521</b>	<b>1090813</b>
membership fees	340000	350000
consultancy activities & other reimbursables	281590	165313
projects	378931	566930
interests	5000	2220
extraordinary income	0	4961
staff tax refund	0	1389
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>1005521</b>	<b>1096210</b>
staff costs	333026	325769
EPR office costs	110500	96846
EPR operationsI costs	539086	649965
depreciations	3629	13286
contingencies	19280	6149
provision vacation salary 2009	0	4195
<b>BALANCE</b>		<b>-5397</b>


## X. Membership


### DESCRIPTION OF MEMBERS


#### Full members


 **A2G** (formally known as ÅstvedtGroup) is a Norwegian group of vocational rehabilitation enterprises. It provides on-the-job training in its own business units, but the external non-center-based training represents 25% of its vocational rehabilitation capacity. A2G is a leader in the use of new technology for around 1,200 vocationally disabled people, persons with vocational disabilities.


 **Adelante** (formally known as Rehabilitation Foundation Limburg) aims at (re)integrating into the society (potentially) disabled persons through high-quality co-ordinated health care provision. Adelante acts as an umbrella organisation for a number of institutes which, both individually and collectively, make their own specific contribution to the aim of Adelante. Adelante is also involved in scientific research and educational and retraining programmes for professionals within rehabilitation in the broadest sense of the word.


 **Centre de Réadaptation de Mulhouse** is one of the largest centres in France for vocational rehabilitation. It provides functional and professional rehabilitation mainly for adults with spinal cord injuries, brain injuries, hemiplegics, orthopaedic and rheumatological diseases.


 **Centro de Reabilitação Profissional de Gaia** in Portugal strives for excellence in service provision, aiming to fulfill the needs and expectations of clients and other stakeholders, through continuous innovation and improvement. It provides a comprehensive range of services, namely: rehabilitation and reintegration of people with acquired disabilities; technical support to employers; support in the youngsters' transition from school to professional life; and consultancy to national authorities, employers, and other disability-related social services providers.

 **Durapart AS** was founded in 1971 and is located in the city of Arendal and Risør in the southern part of Norway. The company is a non profit organisation and is owned by the nearby municipalities to which it provides a spectrum of rehabilitation services. Durapart's vision is to be the first choice for people who want to return to the worklife. Durapart is a member of AVRE in Norway.

 **Fretex Norge AS**, established in 1905 and member of the Norwegian Association of Vocational Rehabilitation Enterprises (AVRE), is a social enterprise providing vocational services to unemployed people, socially disadvantaged such as immigrants, prisoners, elderly, and people with disabilities. Through its activities, Fretex is a major contributor in the field of recycling in Norway.

 **Fundación ONCE** (21 companies in 70 centres) was set up to improve the conditions of people with disabilities in the Spanish society. The fundamental aims of Fundación ONCE are training and job creation for people with disabilities, the elimination of architectural and communication barriers, and cooperation with other institutions.

 **Heliomare** has more than 30 locations throughout the province of Noord-Holland in the Netherlands. Heliomare supports clients with a physical or multiple disability, TBI or autism. Heliomare offers programmes of medical and vocational rehabilitation, special education independent living programmes and training, daily occupation and sports.

 The **University Rehabilitation Institute, Republic of Slovenia**, is the main national health institution offering comprehensive rehabilitation services to persons with disabilities of motor functions and work abilities. The Institute carries out rehabilitation programmes and cares for the balanced development of all health and other professional branches related to the issue of rehabilitation at the national level.



**Josefs-Gesellschaft**, established in 1904, is a large Catholic society running 24 centres nationwide. It offers a wide range of rehabilitation services and facilities to around 6,000 people with disabilities, patients in hospitals and the elderly. Josefs-Gesellschaft has approximately 4,600 employees who provide educational and vocational training and ensure suitable occupation and daily care of people with disabilities.



**Luovi Vocational College** is Finland's largest vocational special education institution. It offers vocational qualifications, preparatory and rehabilitative training and guidance, vocational adult education and training and liberal adult education. Luovi acts also as a development and service centre for special needs education and plays an active role in shaping attitudes and taking initiatives in society. Luovi is a part of the Pulmonary Association Heli, which is the largest non-profit organisation for people with disabilities in Finland.



**National Learning Network** is Ireland's largest non-governmental training organisation with more than 50 locations nationwide catering to over 4,500 learners each year. The organisation offers more than 40 different training programmes which carry nationally and internationally recognised certification and are designed to lead directly to jobs or progression to further education.



Founded in Verona, Italy, soon after World War II, the **Opera Don Calabria Centre** is one of the many enterprises implemented by the Opera Don Calabria. The Don Calabria Centre works mainly with disadvantaged and disabled people, with a particular attention to the situation of the so-called "new poverty" social areas. The activities of the Centre are in the fields of rehabilitation, vocational training and re-training, social promotion and inclusion.



**Pluryn** is a Dutch organisation that provides care and support to approximately 2,000 people with physical, cognitive, intellectual or multiple limitations. It offers support in all aspects of daily life, including education and training, in job- (re)integration, housing, domestic affairs, and personal care as well as leisure time. Pluryn has a strong focus on the self-determination of its clients.



**RehabCare** provides health and social care services to people with disabilities and the older person throughout Ireland. Underpinned by the values of person centredness and quality, RehabCare provides these services through a range of service models, which are Resource Centres, Respite Services, Residential and supported living services, home support and outreach. Rehabcare currently provide services to 2,600 people.



The Berufsbildungswerk Neckargemünd (subsidiary of the **Stiftung Rehabilitation Heidelberg - SRH**), established in 1974, is a company offering off-the-job vocational training for young people who need special support. The services it provides include a broad range of in-patient and out-patient measures of vocational rehabilitation, youth welfare and job placement. These services are rounded off by medical, therapeutic and psychological care.

## Associate members



The **Association of Vocational Rehabilitation Enterprises (AVRE)** is an employer and interest organisation in the field of vocational rehabilitation. AVRE represents 110 non-profit enterprises spread across Norway. These enterprises provide various types of vocational rehabilitation programmes to approximately 30,000 disadvantaged persons yearly.



The **Astangu Vocational Rehabilitation Centre** is the only public centre in Estonia providing social and vocational rehabilitation to persons with disabilities. The main goal of the Astangu Rehabilitation Centre and its 116 employees is to support social and vocational integration of people with disabilities.



**Chaseley Trust** in UK is a Registered Charity and Incorporated Company, housed in what used to be the Hospital for paralysed former servicemen. The organisation seeks to provide a premium value specialist service making provision for the continuity, stability, progressive evolution and expansion of its operations. Chaseley became a member of the Rehab Group in 2001.



**Comitato Regionale Lombardia A.I.A.S.**, in Italy, has for mission to provide rehabilitation services to people with neurological disabilities. The A.I.A.S. group has been active in the rehabilitation and social inclusion field for the last 50 years and operates in 110 departments, ten of which are in Lombardy. Comitato Regionale Lombardo cares for about 3000 clients in their physiotherapy, logotherapy, and occupational therapy facilities



**Inspire**, the Foundation for Inclusion, is the creation of two leading NGOs working in the disability sector in Malta. The Eden Foundation and the Razzett tal-Hbiberija have recently joined forces to help over 1,000 children and adults with learning and physical disabilities across their 6 centres in Malta and Gozo. Their services and programmes address the educational, therapeutic, social and recreational needs of the people served, with a focus on ability and potential. Inspire's vision is to see complete inclusion of people with disabilities living in the community, in schools, the workplace and in recreation. Through its range of services, most of which are free or at minimal charge, Inspire aims to understand the needs of the individual and maximize participation and quality of life in everyone.



**Momentum** is a non-profit organisation which works to enable and empower disabled and socially excluded people across the UK to identify and achieve their goals. Momentum's programmes promote equal choices and chances for around 2,300 service users every year in the areas of brain injury, spinal injury, mental health, physical disability, learning disability, employment, care and supported living, social enterprise and community rehabilitation.



The **National Organisation of Residential Homes and Special Schools in Denmark (LOS)** counts about 600 member centres that provide services to approximately 4,000 people. The education and other services offered by LOS are addressed to children at risk, drug abuse victims, people with various psychiatric and psychological problems, as well as to the mentally disabled.



In late 2009 the **Technische Jugendfreizeit- und Bildungsgesellschaft (tjfbg) gGmbH** emerged from the 'Technische Jugendfreizeit- und Bildungsverein e.V.', which was established in 1991. The 'tjfbg gGmbH' is a not-for-profit organisation which focuses on ICT applications for people with disabilities and at linking science and technical contents with educational work. About 160 people are employed, Germany-wide.



**Theotokos Foundation** is a private, non-profit organisation based in Athens Greece. It offers comprehensive services to children and young adults with learning and other developmental disabilities. Theotokos was established in 1954 and is partially funded by the local authority of Attica and supervised by the Greek Ministry of Health and Solidarity. Theotokos serves over 600 clients and families yearly.



The **Valakupiai Rehabilitation Centre (VRC)** was established as a public organisation in 2000 in Lithuania. The mission of VRC is to provide, constantly improve and develop complex rehabilitation services for persons with a physical disability in order to develop their self-sufficiency, full-fledged participation in public life, full self-realisation and better quality of life. VRC's main services include vocational rehabilitation, medical rehabilitation, job search and employment services. Its residential sector is adapted for 49 residents and 80 out-patients.



The **Workchance Labour Market Service Providers' Association (LFSM)** was established by 11 Hungarian organisations. It is a public benefit organisation with legal entity. Its core objective is to help and, through the development of labour force services, raise the level of employment of people with disabilities. Furthermore, it aims at making employers recognise the benefits and social importance of employing people with disabilities.



The **Workshop "Panagia Eleousa"**, founded in 1990, is a Greek private-law legal entity, a non-for-profit organisation of social and public interest, and is supervised by the Ministry of Health and Social Solidarity and by the Prefecture of Etoloakarnania. It provides vocational training, counseling, psychological support, lifelong education and care to people aged over fifteen years with mild or severe intellectual disability and related disabilities, in two Education Centres in Messolonghi and in Agrinio. The Messolonghi centre also operates a Nautical Sports-Environmental Centre/Summer Camps.

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## Full members

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## Full members

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-  Centre de Réadaptation de Mulhouse (CRM), France
-  Centro de Reabilitação Profissional de Gaia (CRPG), Portugal
-  Durapart, Norway
-  Fretex Norge, Norway
-  Fundación ONCE, Spain
-  Heliomare, the Netherlands
-  University Rehabilitation Institute, Republic of Slovenia
-  Josefs-Gesellschaft (JG), Germany
-  Luovi Vocational College, Finland
-  National Learning Network, Ireland
-  Opera Don Calabria (ODC), Italy
-  Pluryn, the Netherlands
-  RehabCare, Ireland
-  Stiftung Rehabilitation Heidelberg (SRH), Germany

## Associate members

-  Association of Vocational Rehabilitation Enterprises (AVRE), Norway
-  Astangu Rehabilitation Centre, Estonia
-  Chaseley Trust, United Kingdom
-  Comitato Regionale Lombardia A.I.A.S., Italy
-  Inspire, Malta
-  Momentum, United Kingdom
-  National Organisations of Residential Homes and Special Schools (LOS), Denmark
-  Technischer Jugendfreizeit- und Bildungsverein (tjfbv), Germany
-  Theotokos Foundation, Greece
-  Valakupiai Rehabilitation Centre (VRC), Lithuania
-  Workchance Labour Market Service Providers' Association, Hungary
-  Workshop "Panagia Eleousa", Greece



“ learning, developing and producing together in facing sectoral challenges ”

# What is EPR?

## European Platform for Rehabilitation

### MISSION

Drawing strength from global diversity, EPR is an innovative force and generator of expertise increasing the quality of rehabilitation services. Recognised as the outstanding and influential forum of service providers in Europe and in cooperation with people with disabilities, the EPR realises continuous improvement and lasting change.

The European Platform for Rehabilitation (EPR) is a network of leading European providers of rehabilitation services to people with disabilities and other groups experiencing disadvantage. These services include vocational education training and reintegration in the open labour market, as well as medical rehabilitation and social care. All members are committed to the values of equality, equal opportunities and human rights for their clients.

Under the motto "learning, developing and producing together", the EPR membership has continued to grow and today numbers over 25 organisations from 16 European countries. Professional development, quality, a holistic, multi-disciplinary view, and international cooperation remain the foundation stones on which EPR is built.



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