

epr newsletter

June 2007

FULL MEMBERS



ASSOCIATE MEMBERS



Editorial

Dear EPR members,

Looking back over the last few busy and fruitful months of EPR activities, I am pleased to give you a few words that highlight some of the important steps forward we have taken.

EPR is making a strong contribution to European policy, expressing an increasingly powerful voice in the field. The EU Institutions themselves are recognising EPR as a network of leading service providers and a valuable organisation to have a dialogue with on disability issues at the European level. For instance, on 30 March 2007, EPR addressed a position paper to the European Commission in which we focus on the (new) priority areas for the Commission in the next two years.

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A question from the audience at the EPR Annual Conference in Mulhouse in May – see the enclosed Report from the event

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Moreover, the growing power and visibility of EPR can be confirmed by two important meetings which took place recently. First, we met with Belinda Pyke and Wallis Goelen – high-positioned figures in the European Commission disability services. Then, on 30 May, we met with Vladimír Špidla - European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities.

In this way, thanks to its initiatives in the sphere of Quality in Service Provision, EPR is giving added value to EU policies. Quality is becoming a crucial issue on which the European Commission itself has taken a clear position, asking to Member States to now define criteria in this respect. The Commission itself observes that Member States have embarked upon modernisation of their social services to tackle the tensions between universality, quality and financial sustainability. Therefore, EPR should play a leading role in the modernisation of the whole rehabilitation sector. Redefining the value of rehabilitation in an inclusive society as well innovating service-design and service-delivery are some of the key challenges for the coming years. These challenges are also the central themes that will be debated in Nijmegen, in the Netherlands, during the Workshop for Directors that will take place on 20 September 2007 on the topic of “Not-for-profit social service providers in a competitive environment.”

After the very intensive yet productive months we had at the beginning of the year, culminating in the General Seminar in Mulhouse, France, on “Enhancing the European Dimension of Rehabilitation”, the EPR agenda will again be full of important meetings from September 2007 onwards. Here we have to mention not only the Workshop for Directors in the Netherlands, but also the Opti-Work Final Conference in Brussels on 10 October 2007 in Brussels. Then, the conference on “A European approach to quality of disability-related social services”, linked to the EQUAVET project, will take place on 22-23 November 2007 in Verona, Italy, where I look forward to personally welcome you all.

Best wishes for a restful summer holiday,

Stefano Schena
EPR President

Upcoming EPR events & meetings* July – December 2007

July

- EPR Executive Committee meeting, *23 July, Brussels*

September

- EQUASS Auditor Training, *3-4 September, Porto*
- Strategies for a decentralised and mainstreamed service-delivery, *6-7 September, Brussels*
- PROVET Training Seminar: Increasing the recognition of skills and competences in VET, *11-12 September, Olsberg*
- EPR Workshop for Directors: Not-for-profit social service providers in a competitive environment, *20 September, Nijmegen*
- EPR Board of Directors Meeting, *21 September, Nijmegen*

October

- Opti-Work Final Conference, Optimising strategies for integrating people with disabilities into work, *10 October, Brussels*
- EPR Executive Committee meeting, *25 October, Brussels*
- EPR Centre Coordinators' meeting, *26 October, Brussels*

November

- Sustainable partnerships between service providers and employers, *14-15 November, Brussels*
- EQUAVET Final Conference: European quality framework for social services, *22-23 November, Verona*
- EQRM Awarding Committee, *21 November, Verona*
- EPR Board of Directors meeting, *21 November, Verona*
- Outcome Measurement as way to demonstrate added value of services, *date/location tbc*

December

- Aging and Disability Seminar, *date/location (tbc)*
- ICF Learning Group, *11-12 December, Brussels*

** List of meetings and events as known at the moment. In the case of any changes you will be duly informed. It is advised to always confirm details of meetings/events with the Secretariat prior to attending.*

News from the members



Back to the Labour Market with Josefsheim Bigge's „Job Net Pro“ Project

A new project called “Job Net Pro” gives a fresh chance to long-term unemployed disabled people in the district of Hochsauerland. Josefsheim Bigge and the Diakonie

Hochsauerland-Soest created this project together in order to enable 40 participants (between 25 and 55 years old) to find their way back into the job market. During the first 8 weeks of the project, trainers, social workers and psychologists make an assessment and then work out a practical vocational perspective together with the participants, considering their education, their vocational experience and their personal situation. Subsequently the participants attend a practical training, first in the different departments of JB, and later on in industrial enterprises. Each of the participants receives individual support, depending on their personal needs. The Diakonie Hochsauerland-Soest is responsible for the placement of the participants. It is assumed that all of them will be qualified according to their individual needs and that about 50% of them will be placed into jobs which are subject to social insurance contribution. The Job Net Pro project is funded by the European Social Fund and the Federal State of North Rhine-Westphalia.



The people responsible for starting the Job Net Pro project: K.-P. Körner, D. Römer, H. Vornholt (Josefsheim Bigge), J. Schäfer, K. Lutterbeck and V. Westdickenberg (Diakonie)

Contact: d.roemer@josefsheim-bigge.de

Chaseley Trust Launches Major Fundraising Campaign

Last year Chaseley Trust launched its Diamond Jubilee Appeal, which aims to raise £500,000 to make significant improvements to the residential, respite and day care home for people with severe physical disabilities. Chaseley is now well over half way towards this target, and phase one of the project will commence later this year. Key areas to benefit will be the occupational and physiotherapy department, computer centre and day care facilities. To assist with the fundraising for this appeal, a garden party will take place on 30 June 2007. It will be a real family day, with many activities ranging from live snakes, Eastbourne's silver band, Tai chi demonstrations and a balloon race with a prize of £100 for the winner, plus much more.

Contact: amandar@chaseleytrust.org



The Indicator Project in Norway

The *Indicator Project* strives to find common, measurable quality indicators within the vocational rehabilitation sector of Norway. The project began in 2005 with an invitation from the Quality Manager of Durapart - Karl Wiggo Jensen - to the members of AVRE south, to participate in a project to find indicators for best practice in vocational rehabilitation. Durapart took the initiative for this project as a part of the EQRM process. The aim is to find indicators that indicate organisational performance, achieve recognition amongst the stakeholders and create an environment for

benchmarking and bench learning through a web-based measurement tool. So far, 25 indicators have been selected in a process driven by 4 organizations in 2006, and are now being tested in 28 organisations within the AVRE umbrella. More information can be found on www.indikator.no

Contact: grete.kristiansen@durapart.no



The new Independent Assessment of Need Process

In 2005, the Disability Act was enacted with many provisions for improving services for people with disabilities in Ireland. On 1 June 2007, the Irish Department of Health implemented the first steps towards providing an Independent Assessment of Need to all people with disabilities in Ireland, under the new act. At first, children under 5 will be entitled to apply for an assessment of need. Children with disabilities now have the right to an independent assessment of their health and educational needs arising from their disability, an assessment report, a statement of the services they will receive, and advice on how to make a complaint if they are unhappy with any part of the process. Over the next 4 years educational assessments will be rolled out for children aged over five, and by 2011 the Independent Assessment of Need Process, under the Disability Act, will be extended to all adults with disabilities living in Ireland. All assessments are carried out independently and without regard for the cost or availability of services.

Contact: collette.fox@rehab.ie



News from Don Calabria

- **ODC launched its new logo:** in April this year, ODC officially launched its new logo, which represents the dynamic mix and combination of the five different areas of work of ODC, and has been further developed in five different colours, one for each area.
- **Visit to Germany:** From 3- 6 June 2007, a delegation of 12 ODC managers visited several rehabilitation centres in Germany, thanks to the hospitality of the JG partners: the Evangelische Stiftung Alsterdorf in Hamburg, the JG Centre in Bigge Olsberg, the Berufshilfswerk in Hamm, and the JG headquarter in Cologne. See a photo of the Group on the River Rhine on the right.
- **Visit from the United States:** Dr Samuel Castiglione from the Workforce & Technology Center of the Maryland State Department of Education – Division of Rehabilitation services, in Baltimore, United States, recently visited Centro Polifunzionale don Calabria, opening the door to further opportunities for cooperation.
- **A new model of legal protection:** Following the Italian law which entered into force in 2004, establishing a new model of legal protection for people with disabilities, ODC, via its new "After us Foundation" organised 2 training courses in 2006/2007. The last course ended in May 2007, with the successful participation of about 40 people.



Contact: valentina.danese@centrodoncalabria.it



CRPG Contributes to the Design of Rehabilitation Policies in Portugal

On 17-18 April in Lisbon, the first of a cycle of workshops that CRPG is promoting on the design of rehabilitation policies in Portugal took place. As part of the study on Modelling of Policies and

Practices for Social Inclusion of People with Disabilities in Portugal, the workshop occurred in collaboration with the European Platform for Rehabilitation. Jan Spooren and Donal McAnaney were the speakers, focusing on issues like the identification of responsibilities in the promotion of quality of life of people with disabilities and the role of the rehabilitation organizations. About 20 members of governmental agencies, organisations of people with disabilities, Portuguese experts on the disability subject participated in this workshop. The next workshop, in which Jan Spooren and Donal McAnaney will also participate as experts, will take place on 27 and 28 June, in Lisbon, and will focus on the various mechanisms, processes and measuring structures which are needed to implement policies related to disability.



Contact: andreia.mota@crpg.pt



Momentum news

- **Haven Ticks the Right Boxes – Again!**

Our social enterprise Haven Products has been re-accredited with a 2007 Big Tick, awarded by Scottish Business in the Community, for the third consecutive year. The Big Tick is given to companies that can demonstrate the positive impact of their responsible business behaviour on society as well as on the company itself. Haven also previously won the Impact on Society Award (2005) and SME of the Year (2006) as well as a Social Firms UK Star Award (2007), so they're clearly doing something right! For further information on Haven go to the Haven Products section of our website at www.momentumscotland.org/web/OurServices/HavenProducts



- **The next edition of Momentum's Impact magazine** is out now. Impact is Momentum's key publication, featuring a range of news and features from across the whole of the Momentum Group. If you want to find out more about us, or keep in touch with our latest developments you can download a copy of Impact from the publications section of our website www.momentumscotland.org

Contact: nicky.neilson@momentumscotland.org

Specialised article: professional in focus

Interview with Andreja Svaiger

Occupational therapist at the Institute for Rehabilitation, Republic of Slovenia



- **Andreja, tell us something about yourself – what are your duties in the IRRS?**

I have been working as an occupational therapist in a team for vocational rehabilitation in The Institute for



Rehabilitation - the Ljubljana service - for 24 years. Except for 2 years during my Master study, I was also a team leader of the vocational training programme over the last 8 years, called "The New Way". As an occupational therapist I am involved in assessment and interventions that address problems in performing work-related occupations as well as other relevant life areas, i.e. self-care and leisure. I am also involved in activities in the work environment, like workplace analysis and adaptation, placement or follow-up. As a team leader, I am responsible for co-coordinating the vocational rehabilitation process inside the team, communicating with the employment service and reporting. I have been also involved in the field-work education for occupational students in Slovenia and was recently also a supervisor for the final theses of occupational therapy students from Hogeschool van

Amsterdam.

- **Which are the most important qualities for a professional in your job?**

The most important qualities are a combination of continuous education and ability to learn from experience. It is also important to stay open for new ideas and look for a professional challenge in every client. In rehabilitation, which is always interdisciplinary, the ability to work in a team is also crucial.

- **How do you assess the progress a person makes in your centre?**

Evaluation is a crucial part of the rehabilitation process. It is made on a short-time basis - weekly in team meetings or in monthly reports to the employment service. More long-term evaluations include annual reports. Short-term evaluations include following the progress in terms of work-related behaviour and productivity for individual clients. The annual reports relate more to the assessment of vocational rehabilitation outcomes for the whole group.

- **Is it important in your profession to update your skills and competences all the time? How do you try to achieve this?**

Working in vocational rehabilitation, which is very much influenced by the ever changing labour market requires that every professional continuously upgrades and adapts his or her knowledge to new demands. I try to achieve this thorough independent study and attending course or seminars. Participating in national or international projects also brings new knowledge and perspectives.

- **How well acquainted are you with EPR's activities? Which was the last event you attended and what were your impressions?**

My knowledge about EPR comes mostly from participating in two projects – Opti-Work and Increasing Initial Job Retention Learning Group. The last event I attended was the final meeting of the latter in Dublin. My experience from participating in the group was that it stimulated interdisciplinary discussion about strategies for increasing job retention of our clients. Experience from different countries also provided broader basis of reference and sources for developing interventions.

- **Do you interact with other colleagues in the EPR network? What can be done to facilitate such contacts?**

My contacts with colleagues from EPR are mostly limited to participating in the same projects. Contacts could also be facilitated through courses or education organised by ERA, for example.

- **Tell us briefly what is the current situation of the rehabilitation sector in Slovenia?**

I can mostly speak about the situation in vocational rehabilitation in Slovenia. Since January 2006, we have been providing vocational rehabilitation services inside a new Act for vocational rehabilitation and employment of disabled persons. Our first hand experience from applying it with clients and employers is that it brings big progress in this area. The combination of subsidies for employers, the quota system, low unemployment rate and wide range of vocational rehabilitation services brings good results. What we as a team perceive as positive is that employers have started to change their attitude towards employing persons with disabilities. They now contact our team quite often, offering a person with a disability a job. Of course, there are still some difficulties, especially in relation to the sometimes very complicated administration procedures, but in general, I would assess the current situation in vocational rehabilitation in Slovenia as promising. I hope that the effects of this new legislation will last.

Thank you for your time and all the best.

EPR Centre Coordinators Meeting

A meeting of the EPR Coordinators was held on 19 April 2007. The first part of the meeting featured information from the Secretariat, mostly focusing on running EPR projects such as PROVET and EQUAVET, and discussion about ideas for future projects. During the second part of the meeting, representatives from two EPR members - Eden Foundation in Malta and CRPG in Portugal – presented best practices from their centres. CRPG's presentation described an *Integrated System of Staff Management* they use. Eden Foundation's presentation was about *Employment Training and Support Model & Latest Developments in Job-Creating Ventures*. An innovative element of this, the first EPR Centre Coordinators' meeting of the year, was the inclusion of a Training Seminar on *Marketing and External Communication Strategies in the Rehabilitation Sector* conducted by Harm Beijer, an expert from a consultancy firm in the Netherlands, specialising in the health and social field.



Comments from Coordinators about the meeting:

"The Training Seminar was very useful and relevant to the sector with a lot of new information."

"I felt we made an efficient use of our time. It was good to combine our traditional Coordinators meeting with a Training Seminar. We should use this format again in the future."

"Meeting's agenda was well structured, comprehensive and well-explained and provided interesting information on EPR's projects."

Knowledge Management Centre

Following the encouragements by the EPR Board of Directors to go ahead with the KMC, the EPR Secretariat and KMC administrators, in their last meeting in Mulhouse, focused on two critical factors for the success of the KMC: fine-tuning the dissemination strategy and upgrading the database with advanced and dynamic features. In line with these two objectives, the EPR Secretariat submitted a project proposal to the European Commission for the development of an online knowledge-sharing scheme for rehabilitation professionals (the project's acronym is *Mercurio*). This project idea was presented and discussed during the KMC meeting as well as the possibilities for implementation without the EC funding. We expect a reply from the European Commission on our project application in September.

Visit the KMC from the protected section of the EPR website www.epr.eu

EQRM & EQUASS



EQRM's Principles of Excellence gain recognition with European policy makers

The EU High Level Group on Disability (HLGD) made a significant step in approving a document providing recommendations and inspiration on how to promote quality social services addressing the particular needs of people with disabilities. The High Level Group on Disability consists of senior officials from each EU Member State and from civil society representatives (EPR has one of the NGO seats). The Group meets on a regular basis to exchange information with each other and the Commission on various disability matters. The High Level Group on Disability has drawn up, in collaboration with organisations representing people with disabilities, providers of services to people with disabilities and other stakeholders in the field, a document on the "Quality of the Social Services of General Interest (SSGI)" from the viewpoint of disability.

This paper proposes common features and corresponding criteria for the quality provision of social services to people with disabilities. The proposed common features are reflected in the Nine Principles of Excellence, on which the European Quality in Rehabilitation Mark (EQRM) and the European Quality Assurance for Social Services (EQUASS) are based. The paper is accepted by all members of the HLGD, which implies recognition of the Principles of Excellence. This development will facilitate the promotion of EQRM and EQUASS in all European countries.



EQUASS going strong in Norway

EQUASS has now been accepted by the Directorate of Labour in the Norwegian Ministry of Employment, as a credible quality assurance system in the vocational rehabilitation sector in Norway. Norwegian EPR member AVRE has received a licence to run EQUASS and is carrying out the dissemination and administration of EQUASS in Norway. EPR is supporting

AVRE in the implementation and in capacity building. An EQUASS auditor training has been carried out and 6 people have been qualified and nominated as EQUASS auditors in the first quarter of 2007. Other accomplishments of EQUASS include the awarding of Nopro AS with this accreditation. Nopro AS is the first organisation in Europe (and Norway) to receive this certificate of quality assurance. The certificate was awarded to Nopro AS at the annual conference of AVRE in Oslo, by the Minister of Employment. The EQUASS system will also be implemented by LOS (National Network of Service providers) in Denmark, to adopt and adapt EQUASS as their national quality system. A discussion and a common project has been set up with the Hand in Hand Foundation in Hungary to test EQUASS in community-based activities for people with a disability. At the European level, the Platform of European Social NGOs (Social Platform) has also expressed interest in EQUASS. At a meeting of the Social Platform in April 2007, members were informed about the Principles of Excellence and the EQUASS system and asked to offer non-disability related social service test sites for EQUASS to assess its application in the broader social services sector.

Nopro AS receives the first EQUASS Award from the Norwegian Minister

The vocational rehabilitation enterprise, Nopro AS in Notodden, Norway, is the first organisation in Europe to implement EQUASS. The Norwegian Minister of Labour and Social Inclusion, Bjarne Haakon Hanssen, awarded Nopro AS with the EQUASS at AVRE's Conference in June. "As a politician, I am very pleased with AVRE implementing EQUASS. It seems to be a useful system ensuring quality in the services provided by the members of AVRE," Mr Hanssen said. He added: "It would be a great pleasure for me awarding EQUASS again to other enterprises". Nopro clearly displayed a systematic approach in implementing EQUASS criteria.

Key concepts in this implementation have been: 1. Communication with all stakeholders: staff, client, purchases and funders; 2. Results-oriented in carrying out improvement actions; 3. Commitment to quality in all levels of the organisation; 4. Very good and systematic approach in preparation of the external audit; Nopro showed to be a model (good example of best practice) in the implementation strategy for the EQUASS criteria.



In the picture from left: Minister Bjarne Haakon Hanssen, director Arne Sukke at NOPRO with EQUASS certificate, Marit Kasin, Arne Mathias at Nopro, and Paal Kristiansen (Chairman of the Board)

For more information on EQRM and EQUASS contact Guus van Beek, EQRM Manager at eqrm@xs4all.nl or visit www.epr.eu

EPR Projects

PROVET Training Seminar coming up!



After 9 months of pilot phase, during which the project partners implemented European instruments, the project has entered into a dissemination phase which aims at presenting the results of the piloting, explaining the added-value of the tested instruments, and raising the awareness about the Copenhagen process and its impact in the VET and rehabilitation sector. In order to do so, the partners ran workshops during the International Conference on 10-11 May in Mulhouse, and are presently busy with the organisation of international Training Seminars:

- **“European Quality Models and Tools”, 5-6 June 2007, Dublin**

This event aimed at delivering to professionals the latest information related to quality systems, CQAF, EQUASS, benchmarking and quality initiatives during the PROVET project. The Seminar proved to be very successful and informative for the 23 participants who attended this event.

- **“Instruments to improve access to guidance services”, 14-15 June 2007, Maribor**

This seminar focused on practices related to the well-being of people with disabilities, rehabilitation tools and methodologies developed for specific target groups, person-centeredness and PROVET initiatives. Participants took a great deal of knowledge and ideas home with them to implement in their centres.

- **“Recognition of skills and competences”, 11-12 September 2007, Bigge**

During this seminar, the professionals from EPR centres will be invited to discover different job application methodologies used by the partners and the European instruments developed to increase the transparency and recognition of skills and competences.

See the reports on the past events and the programme of the upcoming events at:
<http://www.epr.eu/members/Projects/provet.htm>

For more information about PROVET contact the Project Coordinator Nadège Jibassia: Tel. +32 2 736 54 44 ;
Email: nadege.jibassia@epr.eu or visit <http://www.epr.eu/members/Projects/provet.htm>



End of Opti-Work project in sight

After more than two years of project activities during which time many EPR members have been actively involved as National Contact Centres (NCCs), the Opti-Work researchers have worked intensively on the data collected by the NCCs in order to develop analytical tools for integrating people with disabilities into work. These tools must be finalised by the end of the project in December 2007. Following the decision by the project consortium to implement quality assurance tools in the Opti-Work project, external reviewers have recently analysed the draft versions of the tools to help the researchers improving the outcomes of the project.

The second main focus of the current project phase is the dissemination activities. Among the actions carried out, the partners are working on the publication of national reports and above all, on the preparation of the Final Conference which will take place on 10 October 2007 in Brussels. The Conference will bring together about 120 key actors in the disability sector and will present the results of the project. All EPR members that participated in the project are expected to attend.

For more information about Opti-Work contact the Project Coordinator Nadège Jibassia: Tel. +32 2 736 54 44;
Email: nadege.jibassia@epr.eu or visit www.optiwork.org



EQUAVET project well under way

The project “**Implementing Quality Assurance and Strengthening cooperation in Vocational Education and training**” (EQUAVET) is coordinated by EPR and is funded by the European Commission, under the Leonardo Da Vinci programme of DG Education and Culture. EQUAVET aims

to improve quality assurance of Vocational Education and Training (VET) providers for people with disabilities. In order to do so, the partners will fine-tune and implement a Quality Assurance system in VET, raise sustainable cooperation among VET stakeholders and promote the Common Quality Assurance Framework (CQAF) across Europe as a model of reference developed by the European Commission. The project started in January with Development and Research activities consisting in an analytical comparison of National and International Quality Assurance systems against the Common Quality Assurance Framework. The aim was to identify what concrete system best matches the principles conveyed by CQAF and could be considered as an embodiment of it. The partners concluded that EQUASS matches 100% with the core criteria of CQAF. This exercise also allowed recommendations to be made to the European Commission, to adapt CQAF to the VET and rehabilitation sector. In addition to this, the partners are developing a tool of self-assessment that VET service providers will be able to use online. The next events that will be organised in the framework of EQUAVET are as follows:

- **EQUASS Auditors Training, 3-4 September, Porto**

The objective is to train Quality experts from all over Europe in order to establish a European network of competent auditors able to provide consultancy services to VET institutions in their country and to perform EQUASS audits; and thereby, expanding Quality Assurance in the VET sector.

- **EQUAVET Final Conference “A European Approach to Quality of Disability-related social services”, 22-23 November, Verona**

The Conference will explore the various quality assurance systems, present the view of the various stakeholders in terms of quality for VET and other social services to people with disabilities and will present the results of the project. The programme will include information on Quality strategies and policy which will be delivered by the highest levels of national and international authorities in this field, but will also deal with good practices and concrete experience on Quality Assurance implementation by the EQUAVET partners and other Quality experts.

For more information contact about EQUAVET contact Guus van Beek, EQRM Manager at eqrm@xs4all.nl

EPR organises Study Tour for Russian Social NGOs

From 20-27 May, a group of 10 professionals from several Russian social NGOs took part in an empowerment study tour in Belgium, organised by EPR. The main objective of this tour was to learn about European disability policies and practices, exchange information about good practices at a national and European level, to promote cooperation between Russian NGOs and European NGOs and institutions, and to strengthen networking between Russian NGOs themselves. This tour was organised within the framework of the EU-Russia Cooperation Programme, implemented by a consortium headed by EPR's partner consultancy BBI. The project itself aims to advance the social integration of disabled people in the Privolzhsky Federal Okrug region on the basis of best European and Russian practices and the Social Model. Over the week-long tour, the participants had the opportunity to visit various regional, national and European NGOs and EU institutions, and this was supplemented by a number of social activities. The group was enthusiastic and engaged; keen to absorb as much as possible during the week's programme. Jan Spooren, EPR General Secretary, said: “Organising such a study tour is also a learning experience for the EPR and a nice opportunity to actually activate our extensive contact network in Brussels.” James O'Brien of BBI, who accompanied the group added: “Every participant reported learning something from the programme, which they would use to improve their work in Russia. We really enjoyed our week in Brussels and will remember this visit for a long time.”



Public Affairs

EPR signs Memorandum of Understanding with Partner Social Service Providers

For some time, European networks of social service providers have been gathering around the table in an informal way to coordinate their efforts on the future of social services in Europe. EPR is one of the key partners at this forum. The other partner organisations include: Caritas Europa, Eurodiaconia, European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD), European Council for Non-profit Organisations (CEDAG), European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless (FEANTSA), Social Platform and Solidar. Earlier this year, **the Social Service Providers agreed on a Memorandum of Understanding** in order to define the framework of their cooperation. The latest activity of the partners was a Seminar on “The Added Value of Social Service Providers”, which took place on 13 June 2007 in Brussels, led by EPR.

EPR supports EDF's campaign “One million for Disability”

The European Disability Forum (EDF) has asked disability organisations, activists and the general public to support the **campaign “One million for Disability”**. The signature campaign aims to collect at least 1,000,000 citizens' signatures to combat discrimination in all aspects of the lives of disabled citizens in Europe. According to the Draft European Union Constitutional Treaty, the EU must respond to any call of at least 1 million citizens. Therefore, the European disability movement feels that this opportunity to take collective action must not be missed. Over 90,000 signatures have been collected so far.

The campaign “One million for Disability” runs from **23 January to 3 October 2007**. On 4 October 2007, the signatures will be officially handed out to the European Commission and the European Parliament. At the same time, a gathering of disabled persons, their families, friends and allies will take place in Brussels, in the heart of the European Institutions area. EPR has had a long-standing and fruitful cooperation with EDF. Also, the new EPR “Strategic Framework” emphasises the participation of service users as a priority for the near future.



That is why **EPR urges all its members to support the campaign** by signing for a European Union in which disabled people's rights are protected through effective legislation, combating all forms of discrimination and guaranteeing the full inclusion of 50 million citizens with disabilities in the European society. In addition to disseminating and relaying the campaign information to your partners and contacts, you can **collect signatures of professionals and users/workers in your centre**. This will be a great way to support the campaign and to demonstrate the capacity of the EPR network to mobilise and act.

TAKE A STEP, MAKE A CHANGE
One minute of your time can change the lives of more than 50 million persons
SIGN at www.1million4disability.eu

To learn more about the campaign visit the multilingual website <http://www.1million4disability.eu> or contact valerie.asselberghs@edf-feph.org

EPR organises successful Training Seminar on Funding Opportunities

On 1 March 2007, EPR and Workability Europe jointly organised a full day Training Seminar entitled *A New Cycle of Funding Opportunities for the Disability Sector (2007-2013)*. The event took place in the pleasant atmosphere of the Leopold Hotel in Brussels.

The new financial framework of the EU recently entered into force, opening up a fresh generation of funding opportunities that will cover the period 2007-2013. They have replaced the previous cycle of funding programmes, and will offer the disability sector another wide range of opportunities to finance training, development and dissemination activities at both national and European level.

In this respect, the Seminar was a timely occasion to acquire an insight into the new streams of funding that will soon be available for the disability sector, and to understand how an organisation might benefit from them.

The Seminar - which was also held last year under a slightly different format - was again well attended attracting 24 persons from 14 European countries. Participants came from member organisations of the EPR and the Workability Europe (WE) networks as well as from external organisations.

The trainer of the Seminar was Jan Dröge - a top consultant in the field of funding opportunities. He was assisted by Jan Spooren, EPR General Secretary and Martin Ohridski, EPR/WE Public Affairs Officer, who contributed with their specific experience and knowledge of the disability sector.

Overall, the Seminar balanced professional expertise with theoretical and practical approaches, allowing participants to become familiar with the main upcoming funding opportunities under different programmes such as PROGRESS, the ESF and the Lifelong Learning and 7th Research Framework, including the specific actions and activities they can fund.



The Seminar covered:

- The application procedures for each funding programme as well as the framework for implementation and reporting
- Evaluating budgets and financial reports
- Strategies to transform a project idea into the a decision to submit a project proposal, and tools for proposal writing
- Best practice in partner search and partnership-building
- Project implementation and project management

The specific funding related services which EPR and WE offer to their members, such as funding alerts, searches for partners, and advice and training, were also described, and a Training Pack was given to participants. Judging from the evaluation forms collected, the Funding Seminar was very well received, scoring about 8 out of 10.

For more information on the Seminar or to request the training materials contact Martin Ohridski at martin.ohridski@epr.eu

"The trainer was great! His presentations were clear and I found his practical examples very helpful. He also welcomed questions and this created a positive atmosphere."

A participant

New emails addresses of EPR staff

Please note that following the change of our website address to www.epr.eu all emails addresses of EPR's staff have changed to .eu from .be Thus our new email addresses are as follows:

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Whilst the old email addresses will still remain valid for some time and we receive emails sent to them, it is recommended that you make the switch in your databases.

EPR website: what's new?

PROVET Links

Several new links have been added to the PROVET project page, which now provides a thorough review of all the project meetings and activities so far, including presentations, reports and photos from the Evaluation meetings in Verona and Porto held earlier this year. You will also find a link to register for the next PROVET International Training Seminar on Europass, to be held on 11-12 September in Olsberg, Germany: <http://www.epr.eu/members/Projects/provet.htm>

Reviews of the PROVET International Training Seminars, held in June, in Dublin and Maribor are also now available, and these pages include all the photos, reports, speeches and presentations.

- > Maribor: http://www.epr.eu/members/Projects/provet_mariborseminar.html
- > Dublin: http://www.epr.eu/members/Projects/provet_dublinseminar.html

EPR International Conference Page

The report, presentations, speeches and photos from the EPR International Conference, held in Mulhouse, France and organised within the framework of the PROVET project, can be found at: http://www.epr.eu/members/ic_cover_page.html

EQUASS Links

Register for the EQUASS Auditor Training, 3 – 4 September in Porto, Portugal at: http://www.epr.eu/members/MainActivitiesNew/auditortrainingequass_members.html

Additions have also been made to the EQUASS page, which now provides a clearer and more comprehensive overview of this accreditation mark for social services: http://www.epr.eu/members/MainActivitiesNew/equasspage_members.html

Public Affairs Links

The 2006 EPR Annual Report is also available online at: <http://www.epr.eu/downloads/annualreports/annualreport2006.pdf>

The latest edition of the EPR e-bulletin, May 2007, can be found at: <http://www.epr.eu/members/ebulletin.htm>

In the next edition

In the next edition of the EPR Newsletter coming up in the autumn you can find:

- The Report from the EPR Discussion Group on Relations with Service Users (7-8 June 2007)
- The Report from the Seminar co-organised by EPR on "The Added Value of Social Service Providers" (13 June 2007)
- The Report from the currently ongoing EPR English Language Course for Rehabilitation Professionals in Malta (18 June – 1 July 2007)
- And more....!

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