

FULL MEMBERS

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS









































Editorial

Dear EPR members,

'Rehabilitation is probably the most Europeanised market in the social sector and international cooperation is a very suitable way to face the increasingly competitive environment of social service provision. These were two major conclusions from the Workshop for Directors in Wolfheze, Netherlands, the which also demonstrated the relevance and importance of a network such as EPR. These considerations also challenged the Directors to start thinking about the EPR as a forum for transnational joint business development in addition to its role as a 'learning platform'. The next day, the Board decided to form a Committee to further explore this idea in the coming months.

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Participants in the EPR Workshop for Directors hosted in September by Pluryn Werkenrode Groep in the Dutch city of Wolfheze

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Competition and cross-border service provision reinforce the demand for a European approach to quality in our sector, and as such push the core of EPR activities higher on the agenda. The EPR was confirmed as leader in this field by the adoption of a position paper by the Disability High Level Group, which is to a large extend based on the approach developed by our experts over the last years, and which explicitly refers to EQRM and EQUASS as systems to verify compliance with Principles of Excellence.

To respond to these developments, the Board of Directors approved a Business Plan 2008-2010 that integrates all EPR products (EQRM, EQUASS) and actions in this field under one umbrella: the European Quality Initiative for Personal Services of General Interest (EQUIP). During 2008, the EPR will invest substantially in additional capacity to disseminate EQUASS and EQRM throughout Europe on a wider scale and at a faster speed. At the same time, several EQRM assessments are taking place during the last months of 2007 and EPR will have the opportunity to present its quality initiatives to a wide range of European stakeholders the International at Conference on Quality in Verona (22-23 November 2007).

The simultaneous implementation of various international projects constitutes a major challenge for the EPR during 2007, and it looks like we will pass this test successfully, mainly due to the professional contributions from our members. Despite the complexity and absorption of human resources, we can already conclude that PROVET, EQUAVET, Opti-Work and some smaller consultancy projects raised the profile of EPR on both the European and national scenes, and boosted enthusiasm and dynamism amongst our members.

Looking forward to the last months of 2007, much attention will be given to the interim evaluation of the Centre Action Plans 2007-2008. To this aim, centre visits to all full members are being scheduled. In addition to reviewing the tangible results of the various actions at the centre level, the face-to-face interviews with various professionals involved offer a good opportunity to fine-tune the match between the centres' needs and EPR activities in the coming year.

I look forward to meeting you in Verona next month and we will be back with more news and planning for 2008 in the next edition of the Newsletter.

Jan Spooren EPR General Secretary

<u>Upcoming EPR events & meetings*</u> October – December 2007

October

- EPR Executive Committee meeting, 25 October, Brussels
- EPR Centre Coordinators' meeting, *26 October, Brussels*

November

- 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

December

- ICF Learning Group, 11-12 December, Brussels
- Centre visits for CAP interim evaluation, *November-December*, various locations
- Kick-off meeting Return to Work Project, 6 December, Brussels (tbc)
- Opti-Work Project Coordination Committee, 12 November, Hoensbroeck (tbc)

^{*} 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



New Labour and Welfare Organisation (NAV) in Norway

On 1 July 2006, *NAV was established as a merger of three former organisations*: the National Insurance Organisation (state), the National Employment Service (state) and the Social Welfare System (municipal). A NAV office will be established in every municipality by the end of 2009. The objectives of the reform are to have more people at work and in activity and thus fewer on benefits; a

user friendly, user oriented system and finally, coordinated, efficient employment and welfare administration.

For Durapart as a service provider to NAV, this reform means that we have to care for a larger amount of customers and service users. In this context, we have challenges and opportunities in developing new programmes for different kinds of user groups embarking on a real holistic approach. Our experience with NAV so far is that they use a lot of resources on internal organisation and competence enhancement.

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News from Opera Don Calabria

New methodology on the prevention of road accidents

During the school year 2006-2007 the ODC, within the *Mosaico project for the completion and innovation of services in favour of people with severe acquired brain injury*, held a Training

Course for a group of around 40 students of different High Schools of the city of Verona. The course, based on the peer education methodology, aimed to make them sensitive and aware about safe behaviour in driving on the read, about the potential risks of an unsafe attitude and about the concept of inclusion of people with disability, particularly after a TBI. According to the *peer education* methodology, they were stimulated and support to transfer what they have experimented and felt during the course, both among their schoolmate and friends. En extensive report on the results of the project (Italian

language) is currently available.



A special experience "on board" for special people

One week spent on board of a big sailing ship of the "Tender To" Foundation of Genua, Italy, was an extraordinary experience of a group of 18 users of the ODC medical and rehabilitation centre, together with seamen of the Italian Navy. The experience turned out to be extremely important from a rehabilitation and educational point of view, since it was addressed to young people from 12 to 16 years old, with neuropsychic pathologies (syndromes, mild and medium mental retardation and psycho-movement retardation) but good functional and communicational abilities. The experience was based on the *concept of ecological rehabilitation* that focuses on the importance of the exchange between the person and the social and physical environment that is surrounding him/her.



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News from Heli

• Finland needs all hands

The lack of workforce and the increasing amount of young people in danger of being excluded from society will be real challenges for Finland in the near future. At the same time, there are a lot of people with disabilities who are motivated to work, but face difficulties in integration into work without support. Finland needs all working hands. In this context, Luovi Vocational Institute organised a *Seminar entitled "Especially Good Life"* to raise the issue of employment of people with disabilities. The presentations were made by the speakers representing the state and working life. The European perspective was introduced by Jan Spooren, EPR General Secretary. The feedback from the Seminar was very positive.

• Heli launches new Vocational Institute

Heli launched Luovi Vocational Institute in the beginning of August 2007 by *reorganising the education and training activities of Heli into one vocational institute.* Luovi is the biggest service provider in the field of special needs education in Finland. Over 600 professionals work for Luovi in 18 different locations all over the country.

Contact: mari.kuosmanen@luovi.fi

News from Eden

• 2007 – Year of transitions

THE EDEN FOUNDATION For us at The Eden Foundation, 2007 will remain known as the year of big transitions. Being 14 years old now, like any teenager, we begin to need to adapt ourselves to a new emerging world. Starting off with the resignation of our Founder and President, Dr. Josie Muscat, M.D., in order to enter the political arena, we have welcomed Bro. Martin Borg f.s.c. M.Ed as the newly appointed President and a newly appointed Board of Trustees, made up solely of parents of children or youths with mental disabilities attending The Eden Foundation. Immediately, the financial situation, that was always giving us big headaches, but more so in the last couple of years, was taken seriously by the horns by the able hands of our Executive Secretary of the Board of Trustees, Mr. Philip Rizzo, who is himself an Auditor by profession. Together with the Board of Trustees and the Management Board, serious corrective measures and cost-cutting exercises were put in place, new approaches were made with government for the improvement of subsidies and an **SOS campaign** was launched (Save Our Success) as a temporary initiative to help fill up the serious shortfall in cash flow. Those interested in pursuing this may log in at www.soseden.com and I am positive that you will find the site interesting. The government budget will be presented to Parliament today, although we are far from being completely out of the woods, our financial situation is looking better.

ADOS

Our biggest dream has been now for a number of years to create a **Research Centre in Disabilities** in conjunction with Cambridge University for the training of persons from overseas who want to see best practice and get training. Part of the ground preparation for this is training professionals in ADOS. The first ADOS training was held in late 2005. Following are the dates of the upcoming training: 14-20 October 2007 and 11-17 November 2007. ADOS is a standardised method of **diagnosing autism**. It is important for doctors and other professionals to have consistent understanding for research purposes, especially when deciding on the evaluation of treatment. By promoting the use of ADOS, more professionals will be using a uniform method of assessment thus refining the recognition of autism.

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News from Theotokos

- A new publication came out entitled "The Effectiveness of the Supported Employment Model" by the authors Penny Papanikolopoulou and Chrysoula Karakitsou. The publication is about a ten year follow-up study of the effectiveness of Supported Employment and work for the intellectually impaired. The project has been financed by Johnson & Johnson Hellas.
- On 24 October 2007 a one-day event on the topic "Holistic Interventions for persons with disabilities" will take
 place at Theotokos Foundation completing the ESF programme for VET which has been financed by the Greek
 Ministry of Employment with the EU.
- A four-day experiential Workshop will be organised between 18-21October 2007 on the theme "Mastering Life and Setting Goals" Leading speakers include Penny Papanikolopoulos, Director of Theotokos Foundation, and Robert Rhodes, training consultant. The event will be held in Athens by TACT HELLAS (Training and Consultation Today) which is partner of Theotokos Foundation.

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Change in the management of Astangu Vocational Rehabilitation Centre

In July 2007 Mrs Maret Maripuu, the Minister of Social Affairs authorised Mrs Mari Rull as Director of Astangu Vocational Rehabilitation Centre. Mrs Mari Rull was selected to fill the position after an open application procedure.

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Strengthening International cooperation with AVRE Enterprises

Eight enterprises from the Norwegian network have decided to join an "AVRE International Group", a forum where the centres can discuss the opportunities for enhanced international cooperation. The centres are eager to strengthen their links with other EPR members to exchange experience, find new ideas and anticipate future challenges. In August 2007, EPR joined the meeting to inform about activities and services that AVRE centres can benefit from. A representative from a local Ministry, presented PROGRESS, the EU programme for employment and social solidarity. Research and innovation, funding opportunities and the KMC are key issues for these vocational enterprises.

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EPR Workshop for Directors

On 20 September 2007, EPR organised its third annual Strategic Workshop for Directors. The high-level Workshop has become a traditional item on the EPR agenda. Hosted by Pluryn Werkenrode Groep (PWG) in the Dutch city of Wolfheze, the event gathered about 25 participants from 13 EPR members. This year the Workshop was built around the theme of competition. It dealt with subjects such as tendering, financing mechanisms and identifying the added value of not-for-profits in social service delivery.

The opening set the scene by presenting the European policy context and its impact at the national level. It described the EU regulatory and policy framework for health and social services and the new challenges for national actors in the sector. Another session focused on the impact of competition on funders and funding mechanisms. During

the lunch break, participants visited an industrial site where they had the chance to witness some work-based training activities and to have lunch prepared by clients of PWG. The afternoon part analysed different business strategies to handle competition. It compared "organisational focusing" as a strategic choice versus "organisational

enlargement." During the final session, participants worked in smaller groups to discuss and identify the added value of not-for-profit providers vis-à-vis for-profits. The rapporteurs presented the conclusions of the different groups in plenary. The outcomes from the Workshop will now feed into an EPR position paper to be drafted later this year.

"You have to be big to compete successfully but you have to think very small to serve each individual client."

Eric Demandt welcoming participants

Rob de Jong, CEO of PWG

Summarising the outcomes of the Workshop, EPR President Stefano Schena said, "For me this Workshop showed once again that despite our diverse national contexts, the challenges we all face are very similar. As the rehabilitation market becomes increasingly 'Europeanised' the value of EPR to look for common solutions and a common direction is more evident than ever. At the same time, we have to continue to work hard to reaffirm public trust in what we do. Investment in consumer satisfaction and quality standards will be key factors in our daily work."



Having tested the strategic skills of the Directors during the day, the evening tested their...cooking skills! The EPR group went to a cooking school where they had to prepare and serve their own 3-course dinner whilst socialising. "We get many groups every week but this was our best group ever", said the professional chef in presence, clearly appreciating the effort put in by everyone. Judging by the delicious dishes prepared and the empty plates we are keen to believe him!

Centre Action Plans

In June and in September, EPR organised two Discussion Groups in the framework of the Centre Action Plans:

- The Discussion Group on **Decentralised Services** took place on 6-7 September 2007 in Brussels. The Discussion Group was facilitated by Jan Albers and assisted by Martin Ohridski. It featured presentations from EPR members and an input from an external consultant. The Group developed a set of recommendations of good practice. The collected evaluation forms indicate high satisfaction with this activity.
- The Discussion Group on *Relations with Service Users* took place on 7-8 June 2007 in Brussels. The Discussion Group was facilitated by Jan Albers and supported by Martin Ohridski. It featured presentations from EPR members and contributions from three representative organisations of disabled people including EDF. The Group developed a set of recommendations of good practice. The collected evaluation forms indicate high satisfaction with this activity.
- > To read the Reports from both Discussion Groups please visit http://www.epr.eu/members/Membershome.htm
- The PowerPoint presentations from the meetings have been circulated to participants and are available upon request from Martin Ohridski at martin.ohridski@epr.eu

Professional Development



EPR organises English Language Course for Rehabilitation Professionals (18 June – 1 July 2007)

EPR and partners organised a two-week *English Language Course for professionals working in the disability sector.* The Course took place on the island of Malta and was attended by 10 participants from Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway and Poland. The tailor-made programme combined study of general and specialised rehabilitation English as well as exciting social, cultural and learning activities.

The interactive programme featured plenty of discussions and practical exercises. Professionals also had the chance to talk about their daily work and to

exchange experiences.

Participant Annette Nilsen from Norway said: "I really enjoyed Malta and our stay at the Language Plus School. We had two pleasant and interesting weeks. The course participants also got along very well. We want to keep in touch in future."

Given this successful experience, EPR will consider organising the Course again in 2008. EPR members are requested to indicate their interest in attending such a Course next year.

EQRM & EQUASS



EQRM & EQUASS come under EQUIP umbrella

The Board of Directors of the EPR has taken the initiative to support and to combine all quality activities in a Business Unit within the framework of the EPR network. The Business Unit is called 'EQUIP' and stands for 'European Quality Initiatives for Personal Services

of General Interest'. The decision has been taken due to the growing interest in EPR's quality services, the revised EPR strategy and the possible business opportunities.

EQUIP aims to enhance the personal services sector by engaging service providers in quality and continuous improvement, and by guaranteeing service-users quality of services throughout Europe. EQUIP wants to contribute to the creation of a European market and the modernisation of personal services of general interest where service providers can distinguish themselves and use the quality of their service provision as a competitive advantage.

The EQUIP Business Unit will work with annual objectives (operational plan) and an allocated budget. A Management Committee, composed of EPR Board Members, will steer the business Unit. The strategic decisions remain in the hands of the EPR Board of Directors.

Services

EQUIP services are divided into three categories:

- 1. Certification of the service provision on three levels
 - a. Level 1: Quality Assurance in service provision: European Quality Assurance for Social Services (EQUASS)
 - b. Level 2: Excellence in service provision: European Quality in Rehabilitation Mark (EQRM)
 - c. Level 3: Outstanding Performance in service provision: European Quality Award (EQA) (in 2008)

2. Training

- a. Information seminars
- b. Induction seminars
- c. Initiation programme (incl. Quick Scan)
- d. Auditor training (EQRM and EQUASS)
- e. In-depth-training

3. Consultancy services

- a. Advice
- b. Support
- c. Internal reviews
- d. Information / lecturing

EQUIP customers include business units of larger organisations or dynamic, small organisations operating core business in social service provision. The organisation may be from the public, private, profit and not-for-profit sectors.

Marketing

EQUIP strives to operate the EQUASS system at the national level. The EQUASS processes and procedures are standardised throughout Europe. EQUASS awarding and recognition of quality assurance will be at the European level.

The EQUIP strategy approach for the EQUASS system is to identify and allocate 'national agents' in each country (region) that could operate EQUASS. Therefore, EQUIP will work with so-called EQUIP representatives at the national level. This EQUIP representative will identify an EQUASS local License Holder, carry out a detailed market analysis and do some initial lobbying and public relations at the national level. EQUASS Licence Holders are now operational in Norway (AVRE) and will be operational in 2008 in Denmark (LOS). EQUIP operates a system that monitors and controls the national operating systems. In those countries where there is no National EQUASS Licence Holder, EQUASS applications can be submitted via the EQUIP office in Brussels.

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

Projects



PROVET organises three successful Seminars!

In order to share experience and expertise acquired during the project, the PROVET partners organised several International Seminars during the last months. Each event focused on a specific dimension of Vocational Education

and Training (VET): Quality Assurance, Access to Guidance Services, and Recognition of Skills and Competences.

• "Quality in Vocational Education and Training services to people with disabilities" (5-6 June 2007, National Learning Network, Dublin)



This event was addressed to the VET and Rehabilitation professionals who have an interest in the field of Quality Assurance. The training aimed to deliver to the professionals the latest information related to quality systems, the Common Quality Assurance Framework, EQUASS, benchmarking and other quality initiatives.

"Access to guidance services for specific target groups" (14-15 June 2007, Slovenian Institute for Rehabilitation, Maribor)

The main objectives of the Training Seminar were to inform professionals in EPR members throughout Europe about the 'Self-Evaluation of Well-being' (SEW) and about person-centered approaches that can facilitate access to VET services for people with mental health problems and other complex target groups.



 "Increasing the recognition of skills and competences in VET" (11-12 September 2007, Josefsheim-Bigge, Olsberg)



The main focus of the Seminar were the European tools and policies related to the recognition of skills and competences of people with disabilities and the possible adaptations of rehabilitation and VET programmes to the European and National strategy on this issue. The Europass, the European Qualifications Framework, Job application training and modularisation were some of the main topics covered.

The programmes of these events were drafted in the light of the guiding principles of the Copenhagen Declaration - shared learning and

exchange of best practices and transferability of common practices. The Seminars combined presentations of knowledge, interactive discussions, and practical implementations via demonstrations and site visits which were particularly appreciated by all. These PROVET Seminars were conceived by all participants as fruitful events and as a good practice in international cooperation.

> Report, pictures and presentations from the Seminars are available 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

EQUAVET completes crucial phase



After intense research and development activities, the project has completed its capacity building phase. The

objective of this phase was to inform and train VET services providers on the Common Quality Assurance Framework (CQAF), the quality approach launched by the European Commission, and the European Quality Assurance for Social Service providers (EQUASS).



EQUASS, we are pleased to report, has been fully adapted to the VET sector and is now recognised as 100 % compliant with the CQAF methodology. This result was attained through the organisation of various activities, including an International Auditors Training (3-4 September 2007, Porto). This Training was conducted by Guus van Beek, EQUAVET Project Manager, and was attended by 17 quality experts from all over Europe. The participants were taught how to implement the CQAF criteria in their centre and how to use EQUASS in order to assess the VET providers performance in terms of quality assurance. This aside, each partner established contacts with other service providers in their country in order to promote CQAF and EQUASS and encourage them to implement this European approach. The partners are currently working on the implementation of the CQAF criteria in their own centre. After the field testing, the main highlight of the project will be its final Conference "A European approach to quality of disability-related social services" (22-23 November 2007, Verona). This Conference will present the project results to a large audience of VET stakeholders.

> For information about the EQUAVET Conference visit http://www.epr.eu/members/Projects/equavet_final_conference.html

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

Opti-Work project ends in style

During the three years of the project, the Opti-Work project partners joined their efforts to collect information in 15 European countries and to develop instruments for increasing the possibilities of employment for people with disabilities. The designed instruments are the first of this kind, since they aim to provide guidance to policy makers, employers and job seekers when taking decisions related to the employment of people with disabilities.

On 10 October 2007, the partners finally presented the results of this ambitious research project. The project consortium offered an exceptional event in the Solvay Library of Brussels, one of Belgium's finest examples of the Art Nouveau style. In addition to the magnificent premises, the prestige of this event also lies in the high level of the speakers' panel. The



viewpoints of the European Commission, researchers, employers, service providers and people with disabilities were presented. Thanks to a well-balanced programme, time was also dedicated to discussion and debate with the participants, especially with the 15 National Contact Centres who were an integral part of this project.

> The full report as well as pictures from the Conference can be found at http://www.epr.eu/members/Projects/optiwork conference.html

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

Public Affairs

EPR co-organises Seminar "The Added Value of Social Service Provides" (13 June 2007)



On 13 June 2007 seven European networks – Caritas Europa, EASPD, CEDAG, FEANTSA, EPR, Solidar and Workability Europe – organised a Seminar on the topic *The Added Value of Social Service Providers*. The event took place in Brussels and gathered about 20 participants. It represented another successful joint initiative of the partner organisations.

The morning part of the Seminar concentrated on understanding what is the added value of social services. The macro-economic impact of social service providers was explained and various instruments, methodologies and indicators concerning how to measure and prove added value were presented. During the afternoon session,

representatives from the different networks described case studies from the European and national level showcasing (i) how to demonstrate the added value of social services and (ii) how to use the added value argument in relations with policy-makers and funders. Overall, the organisers had managed to find a good balance between academic presentations, contributions from the partners plus inputs from the Social Platform and the European Commission.

Jan Spooren, General Secretary of EPR, a lead co-organiser of the event, stated: "The subject remains very topical and I feel we advanced our understanding of the various dynamics at play in the provision of social services. Hopefully this will put us both collectively and individually in a stronger position towards the targets of our lobbying efforts."

News from the secretariat



New intern joins the EPR secretariat

A new intern - Eva Novacean - joined the EPR secretariat at the end of September 2007 for the period of five months.

Eva Novacean graduated from the Faculty of Political Sciences, Philosophy and Communication Science in Romania, with a major in Journalism and a minor in French language and literature. Her final Bachelor thesis, entitled "Les réglementations du paysage audiovisual européen" explores the insights of policy setting in the media field. She spent the two years prior to graduation in Brussels as an exchange student, following courses in European

studies and political communication. Eva's field of interest cover a particular mix of communication sciences, languages, and European studies.

Eva's main tasks in EPR include event and meetings planning, organising of Conferences and assisting in the designing of a new internal communication strategy for EPR. She will also assist with various administrative and office management duties, attend meetings and events and take minutes.

> Eva Novacean can be contacted at intern@epr.eu and at the general EPR telephone numbers.

EPR website: what's new?

PROVET Links

- Presentation of the PROVET project, including its summary, useful documents, presentation of partners, as well as reports from the meeting and its Training Seminars are available at: http://epr.eu/members/Projects/provet.htm
- Training Seminar, Dublin: the new section contains a report about the Seminar, including a summary of the meeting and pictures of the event. The full documentation is available at http://epr.eu/members/Projects/provet_dublinseminar.html
- Training Seminar, Maribor: see the reports and photos at http://epr.eu/members/Projects/provet_mariborseminar.html
- Training Seminar, Olsberg: see the reports, photos and presentations at http://epr.eu/members/Projects/provet_olsbergseminar.html

EQUASS Links

The presentation of EQUASS with a full description of the EQUAVET project, the activities around it, as well as other useful information are available at:

http://epr.eu/MainActivitiesNew/equasspage.html

EPR Workshop for Directors

The programme (including links to all presentations), a Workshop summary, the list of participants and a selection of pictures can be found at: http://epr.eu/members/MainActivitiesNew/2NDLEVEL/wolfhezeworkshop.html

AVRE International Group

A summary, a presentation about EPR, the Knowledge Management Centre, the Progress programme, as well as the presentations of AVRE centres and some pictures from the meeting in Oslo on Strengthening International Cooperation with AVRE Enterprises are available at: http://epr.eu/members/avregroup.html

Publications

- 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, October 2007, can be found at: http://www.epr.eu/members/ebulletin.htm
- The Reports from recent Discussion Groups held http://www.epr.eu/members/Membershome.htm

In the next edition

Planned highlights in the next edition of the EPR Newsletter coming up in December include:

- > The Report from the EQUAVET Conference in November in Verona
- > A summary of the Coordinators meeting in October
- > A member in focus
- And more....!

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