

EUROPEAN PLATFORM FOR REHABILITATION
The network of leading service providers to people with disabilities

NEWSLETTER

Special:

- **Calendar of EPR Activities in 2011**
- **EPR Annual Conference 2011**
- **European Assistive Technology Information Network**
- **Innovation Prize**

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Editorial



Dear EPR members,

Re-thinking established concepts and formats in international co-operation are necessary for continuous improvement.

This was once again confirmed by the success of the EPR annual workshop for directors, which was structured around one single strategic theme ('Leadership') with emphasis on the exchange of 'real case' scenarios between the EPR directors. The evaluation revealed that participants greatly valued the feedback and advice provided by the directors as many often struggle to find the right balance between value-driven and result-driven management.

Looking back over the past few months, one of the most significant achievements that has stood out has been the finalisation of a revised EQUASS system. The quality principles, criteria and indicators were reviewed in light of the recently launched European Quality Framework for Social Services, as the two quality levels (EQUASS Assurance and Excellence) work better when integrated into one approach. The European Awarding Committee formally approved the new EQUASS system on 17 May, where the task of adapting all the relevant documents and procedures still continues. The revised EQUASS system will be officially launched on 1 January 2012, and will encompass a significant expansion in opportunities, standing out as an exclusive system that can verify European quality requirements as

defined by Member States and the sectoral stakeholders.

Glancing through the contents of this newsletter, it becomes clear that assistive technology has become a new priority area for EPR and its members. The on-going involvement of the EPR in the Aegis project on accessibility of ICTs and the Thematic Network on assistive technologies (ATIS4all) has connected us with the major players and the latest expertise in this field. Assistive Technologies are increasingly used in all domains of rehabilitation (medical, vocational, social care), and is therefore of relevance for professionals amongst all the EPR members.

As usual, the latter part of the year incorporates the most intensive activities for the EPR. The Annual Conference in Athens (10-11 November) and the international AEGIS conference in Brussels (28-30 November) should be the highlights in our annual work plan, while the finalisation of the EPR strategic plan 2012-2014 will shape the future of our network. Furthermore, the immediate future requires us to actively look for new projects to replace those ending this year, and to consciously search for new members to add value in the exchange of good practice.

I am confident we will be able to report positively on the results of all the plans and events the have mentioned in the December edition of the EPR Newsletter, and I look forward to meeting many of you in person at our Annual Conference in Athens.

Bjørn Paulsen
President EPR

Calendar of EPR events 2011

September

- Services to people with mental health problems, *Training seminar, 21-22 September, Valladolid, Spain*
- Engagement of staff in internal change processes, *Training seminar, 26-27 September, Brussels, Belgium*

October

- Benchmarking on quality within the EQUASS framework, *4-5 October, Dublin, Ireland*
- Research & Development forum, *Meeting, 12-13 October, Brussels, Belgium*
- Services to people with Traumatic Brain Injury, *Benchlearning group, 25-27 October, The Netherlands*
- VIP Project Final Conference, *25-26 October, Bucharest, Romania*

November

- Outcome measurement in medical rehabilitation, *Benchlearning group, 10 November, Athens, Greece*
- Board of Directors meeting, *10 November, Athens, Greece*
- EPR Annual Conference, *10-11 November, Athens, Greece*
- Multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approach in medical rehabilitation, *Action learning, 24-25 November, Mulhouse, France*
- AEGIS Second International Conference, *28-30 November, Brussels, Belgium*

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

For further information or registration, contact the EPR Secretariat:

Tel: +32 2 736 54 44, E-mail: claude.delfosse@epr.eu, Website: www.epr.eu

News from the members

Durapart AS celebrates 40 years anniversary

Durapart



Almost 170 people took part in the celebration on the 30 May, two-thirds of whom were company employees and the rest foreign guests. The celebration took place at the exemplary Strand

Hotel which allowed everyone to enjoy the beautiful surroundings.

Among the foreign guests were representatives from the owners, the Norwegian Labor and Welfare organisation – NAV, the Standing Committee on Labour and Social Affairs, the county Governor of Aust – Agder and a lot of other stakeholders.

Jan Spooren, Secretary General of EPR, was the first among many to deliver a speech. All speakers spoke of what a wonderful achievement it is for

Durapart to have reached the forty year mile stone and commended the great work being done by the staff in all departments. The representative of the board of employees addressed this in a meaningful manner.

Durapart's first CEO gave a historical account of the company's first years which prepared the ground for the company Durapart is today.

All the guests were given a water carafe with Durapart's logo on leaving in celebration of this momentous occasion.

An innovative training in CRM will start in October 2011

CRM - Centre de Réadaptation de Mulhouse

The CRM will set up, from the 17th October 2011, a new, national level computer based training programme for disabled people. This shall be achieved through a partnership with the CNAM (National Conservatory of Arts and Crafts) and the company LOGICA. CNAM has previously been an actor in the training of software engineers in continued education in France, while LOGICA is an IT service company with an international dimension.

Along with these two partners, the CRM has created a programme for continued education leading to an engineering degree in computer information systems. This training is offered to 14 disabled professional workers and is recognised as part of a professional two year contract. This vocational training is highly advantageous because it offers a direct link to a regular job application in a company while



also outlining a project that could become the basis for an engineering thesis.

The main objectives of this innovative training are :

- To develop the skills of people with disabilities and allow them to gain access to a high level qualification;
- To acquire experience in a company and so increase the

chances of return to work in the IT sector;

- To meet the growing needs of recruitment of IT companies;
- To help the employers to meet the law requirements for the employment of disabled people (6% of the workforce in France for companies with more than 20 employees) and diminish the mentality that it is better to simply pay the penalties;
- To enhance and complete the CRM training offer by integrating a dynamic partnership and by increasing the level of skills in the IT sector;



Norwegian study focused on the large number of participants in vocational rehabilitation who experience difficulties in reading, writing and mathematics

AVRE - Association of Vocational Rehabilitation Enterprises

AVRE established 'The Learning Network' in 2007 following many years of working alongside people with disabilities in reading, writing and mathematics.

The Learning Network is a network of companies within the AVRE organisation which specialises in working with participants with basic-skills deficiencies. Since 2007 almost 50 of our companies have established a special-pedagogic-department to provide individually tailored programmes to assist participants in this area. The reason for this focus comes from the fact that many

of the participants have experienced deficiencies in this area.

AVRE has learned, through experience, that it is more beneficial to provide vocational rehabilitation after having first provided aid within the area of basic-competence.

A recent AVRE study, funded by the Ministry of Labour, shows that as many as 33% of all participants within the field of vocational rehabilitation have deficiencies in the area of reading and writing, and 32% in mathematics. In total 46% of all our participants have reading, writing, and/or mathematical deficiencies

to such a degree that it limits their possibilities in gaining employment or succeeding in education.

The Learning Network has, for a number of years, been involved in several projects regarding early student leavers as research in this area has proven that one of the major reasons for leaving education early is a lack of basic competences.

The "basic competencies-study" was, even before the report was published, being commended and placed within the public eye by Norway's most significant newspaper, *Aftenposten*.

Annual Conference to close on a cultural note

Workshop "Panagia Eleousa"

The 2011 EPR Annual Conference will be jointly hosted by the "PANAGIA ELEOUSA" workshop and the "THEOTOKOS" Foundation on the 10 and 11 November in Athens.

As part of the EPR Annual conference PANAGIA will also put on a performance of their well received and thought provoking theatrical piece, "Mythical Greek Routes: The return of Odysseus to Ithaca", which was previously performed on 20 December 2010 in Messologhi and on 12 January 2011 in Agrinio to great enthusiasm. The play will be performed on the night of the 11 November to conclude the 2011 EPR Annual Conference.

The workshop "PANAGIA ELEOUSA", through its continual effort to upgrade the qualitative and spherical services and the lifelong education that it has offered for 20 years to people with intellectual disability and related disabilities, has created a new educational section for their trainees on computers. The workshop allocates a fully-equipped room of computers to facilitate this new section. Moreover, there has



been a new section created concentrating on elements of environmental education that aims to encourage the participation of their youth to social life.

The athletic team which consists of 6 young trainees from the workshop "PANAGIA ELEOUSA" took part in the International contest of SPECIAL OLYMPICS which took place from 25 June to 4 July 2011, in Athens and they excelled with 2 gold, 1 silver and 3 bronze medals.

Luovi Awarded by the Supported Employment Association

Luovi

Luovi was awarded a challenge prize by the Supported employment association. Luovi received recognition for the long co-operation with the association and for the work done under the framework of the theme "Finland Needs All Hands" launched by Luovi. According to this theme, Luovi wants to actively contribute to the promotion of employment opportunities to those partially capable of working and also to influence attitudes.

The mission of the Supported Employment Association is to promote the employment of disabled people in the open labour market through supported employment. The Association provides education for the different customer groups but also works as a regional developer on supported employment.

The EPR welcomes a new associate member

Berufsbildungswerk Südhessen



EPR is delighted to announce the successful application of bbw and welcome them as our latest associate member. The focus of bbw's work is aimed at the training and integration of disabled and disadvantaged young people and preparing them for society and to lead a normal working life.

The company boasts a workforce of almost 200 employees and an extremely high success rate in its user group in passing state recognised exams whilst ensuring they are well prepared for the transition into working life. This important end goal is achieved by a dedicated team of pedagogues, psychologists, trainers and specialised medical personnel who help to align internal workshops with external internships and intensive training phases in private industry. Throughout this process bbw South Hessen actively and successfully supports the trainees in their transition to working life. EPR and its members look forward to working with bbw to shape and benefit the social service sector.

Nomination Heliomare

Heliomare



Every year over 300.000 Dutch employees judge their own organisation in the Netherlands' most reliable survey rating the social service sector. Effectively, the company that offers employee surveys has nominated 100 organisations for the Best Employer 2011 award. There are two categories, each with 50 nominees. The first

category consists of organisations with less than 1000 employees and one for organisations with over 1000 employees. There are three prizes in each category based on the overall employee satisfaction figure: gold, silver and bronze. The Award winning ceremony will take place on September 28 in Amsterdam.

In 2009 the Education department of Heliomare 'Helioskoop' was nominated for the silver prize within the category of organisations consisting of over 1000 people. EPR and all its members are keeping their fingers crossed that Heliomare will go one step further and win the award.

How golf can improve life for those with disabilities

AIAS

The EPR member AIAS has recently become heavily involved in the use of golf as a rehabilitation tool for people with disabilities.

In order to improve upon their expertise in this area, AIAS would appreciate sharing information and good practices with other EPR members.

Interested? Contact Gaetano Santonocito at

santonocito@aiasmonza.it

Trainees from Vienna visit the bbw Südhesse as part of the European International Vocational Training (IVT) exchange programme



Bbw along with a partner institution, Wien Work, from Austria has begun organising exchange programmes for trainees with special needs in order to promote mobility and international occupational competence whilst giving participants a helping hand towards developing the skills needed for entering today's labour market.

This programme is sponsored under the IVT, EU Leonardo di Vinci programme and is designed to give young individuals with disabilities the opportunity to live and work in another European country. International professional skills have become increasingly important in today's international labour market, but these skills are especially difficult to acquire for people with disabilities.

This exchange programme however offers the people with disabilities the chance, motivation and support to take the initial steps toward working in a different country, culture and environment.

One of the participants of the programme, Nicole Enne, commented positively that: "It is really interesting to see how work is being done here. Many things are similar but there are also some differences – for example how pancakes are made and that they are called differently here". The participants were also delighted with the reception they received and as well as attending courses and going to public vocational school they also enjoyed going on field trips.

Due to the initial success of the programme bbw now wishes to firmly establish this practice within its institution and offer this fantastic



experience to many more individuals who have disabilities .

At the end of the programme participants received a certificate from Wien Work containing information about the duration of their stay and competencies they have gained, giving each individual a valuable tool that can be used to gain future employment and help them to maintain an active role in an inclusive society.

"We've been received really well here"
Nicole Enne

"The youngsters acquired technical knowledge as well as a noticeable increase of self-esteem"

Anette Simonsmeier,
bbw trainee teacher

Members meet in Leuven for the Coordinators' meeting

Centre Coordinators from all EPR member organisations were invited to Leuven on 14 September for their regular meeting to update themselves, contribute to EPR activities and developments and to reflect on relevant issues affecting the network.

During the meeting, participants suggested ideas to improve the exchange of practices and knowledge between professionals of the network, and to enhance the integration of new member organisations and professionals newly involved in the activities of EPR.

The agenda also allowed for a discussion on the EPR Innovation Prize contest, the upcoming major events in the EPR calendar for the end of 2011, and a quick update on the EPR Annual Conference 2011.

The meeting was followed by a guided tour of the historical city of Leuven happily interrupted by tasty stops in carefully selected restaurants to try out traditional Flemish food.

Once again the coordinators' meeting was the golden opportunity for members to exchange, socialise and strengthen the network.



Centre Action Plans (CAPs)

The application of ICF to rehabilitation services

Three EPR member organisations (CRPG, URI, JG) undertook a three day mission to Belgium in May on the application of ICF (International Classification of Functioning) to rehabilitation services. The aim was to benchmark between EPR members and to receive detailed and tailor-made advices in a “problem-solving session” facilitated by Donal McAnaney. The participants to the mission also had the opportunity to visit Flemish services.

Tendering of social services

In May Johan Visser (Dutch consultant) and Jan Spooren conducted in Dublin a training seminar on tendering of rehabilitation services for a group of 21 managers from National Learning Network and RehabCare. The seminar was complemented by a workshop in which the situation of NLN in relation to tendering was analysed, and an action plan was drafted.

Learning partnership between EPR members

A small RehabCare delegation visited Pluryn, in the Netherlands, from 30 May to 1 June. This event was the second meeting between key staff of the two organisations active in social care. Both delegations exchanged knowledge and information in an intensive and focused manner, and exchanged views on the position of clients, participation and inclusion strategies.

Survey on Tele-assistance services

The EPR Secretariat developed an overview of existing practices and methodologies on tele-assistance, in particular to people with mental health problems. It turned out that none of the EPR members was offering this kind of service via tele-assistance, but some interesting models were identified in various countries. The paper is published on the EPR website.

Leadership in social services



On the 16-17 June 2011, EPR organised its seventh Strategic Workshop for Directors in Sicily, Italy, in the beautiful resort of Taormina. 27 CEOs and top managers of EPR member organisations were present at this workshop to reflect and exchange experiences on Leadership in the rehabilitation sector. Participants paid particular attention to the various difficult situations which can arise.

The second day of the Workshop was dedicated to the future EPR Strategic Framework 2012-2014, and participants actively shared their views on the scope and the membership of EPR, the type and fields of activities, the internal organisation and processes, and the external profiling and positioning of the network. A guided tour of the city of Taormina entertained the group who explored the charming and magical atmosphere of this city dominating the Mediterranean Sea.

Active Inclusion of young people with disabilities

EPR held on 30 and 31 May a seminar on Active Inclusion for young people built on research carried out on behalf of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions into Active Inclusion approaches in 6 EU Member States. Donal McAnaney was involved as trainer in this event that gathered 7 EPR member organisations to learn and reflect on the meaning of Active Inclusion, and to analyse the extent to which the practice meets the criteria for good practice. Participants could identify challenges and successful strategies to improve joined-up services to young people towards a more affective active inclusion in their own centre.

The benchlearning group does it again: Outcome measurement in vocational rehabilitation



The benchlearning group, which started its work in 2009, has reaffirmed its interest by continuing its collaboration to develop and pilot an outcome measurement tool.

The meeting on 31 May – 1 June was successful with 10 organisations represented, including one new centre which recently committed to the group. The work will focus this year on a second and more systematic piloting phase allowing the tool to be improved and to give it a more comprehensive scope.

Training Seminar on EU-funding opportunities

On 15 September 2011, 19 professionals from 15 EPR member organisations participated in the training seminar on EU-Funding opportunities, organised in the city of Leuven, Belgium. This seminar is organised by EPR every 2 years, allowing participants to update themselves on the latest developments of relevant funding programmes.

Kerstin Weertz, a long time collaborator with EPR, provided her expertise as trainer for this seminar where she concentrated her main focus on points of interest for providers of services to persons with disabilities. Participants updated themselves notably on PROGRESS, Lifelong Learning, Youth programmes, and on the 7th Research Framework Programme, on their requirements, objectives and procedures.

Knowledge Management Centre

EPR Innovation Prize 2011 looking for the winner

The EPR Innovation Prize competition is now closed, and the winner will be selected in the coming weeks.

After only existing for 3 years, the Innovation Prize has already become a tradition within the network due to its ongoing success. This year again, many organisations entered the competition with a wide range of practices, covering areas ranging from brain injury to on-the-job training and assistive technologies.

The Prize winner will be selected by the EPR Centre Coordinators based on a series of pre-defined criteria on the quality and innovative aspects of the practice. The winning

organisation will be given the opportunity to present its best practice during the Innovation Prize Awarding Ceremony, at the upcoming EPR Annual Conference, on 11 November 2011 in Athens, Greece. The EPR Innovation Prize Awarding Ceremony is a great way to exchange good practice with fellow EPR members, as well as to promote a project and an organisation.

To learn more about the Prize and the selection procedure, and to discover the latest services and documents inserted in the KMC, visit the “**Knowledge Management**” section of the EPR website. The KMC is accessible at <http://epr.eu/kmc>.

Good luck to all of you who entered the competition!



Recent additions to the KMC include:

New services and methodology:

- * Assessment of clinical lumbal instability
- * Methodical Centre
- * Chaseley Bungalows

New Documents/tools

- * ICF core set for vocational rehabilitation
- * RehabCare Goes Green
- * Pain and Brain: Neurological reorganisation

Projects

Latest developments in the AEGIS project

AEGIS Open Accessibility Everywhere: Groundwork, Infrastructure, Standards



The **10th AEGIS plenary meeting** took place from 7 to 9 September 2011 in Crete, Greece. EPR updated the project consortium on the latest developments in the organisation of the 2nd International Conference and AEGIS Workshop. EPR also presented a short update on the overall dissemination status and on the user forum and concertation activities.

The organisation of the **2nd AEGIS International Conference**, scheduled to take place in Brussels from 28 to 30 November 2011, is being managed by the EPR Secretariat. Registrations are now closed, and interest for the events have surpassed expectations, with a very high number of participants' registrations.

The Conference is shaping up to be a key event in the field of accessibility, and we encourage all the EPR network to follow the conference proceedings via the AEGIS Conference website (www.epr.eu/aegis/).



AEGIS Quick Facts

Objectives

The AEGIS Consortium has been developing an Open Accessibility Framework – comprising open accessibility interfaces, user interface components, developer tools, end-user applications and prototype accessibility solutions for desktops, rich Internet applications and mobile devices.

Target groups

Blind and low-vision users
Motor impairment users
Cognitive impairment users
Hearing impairment users
Speech impairment users

Results

AEGIS will allow people with disabilities to have free, open-source access to technologies for mobile devices (mobile phones, desktops, rich internet applications).

The European Assistive Technology Information Network

ATIS4All



The **second ATIS4All partners meeting** took place on 8-9 September in Prague, Czech Republic and EPR participated with a presentation on the use of assistive technologies in rehabilitation services.

The meeting also provided the occasion to focus on the next work package: compilation of information and categorisation for the joint portal "EASTIN 2.0". This portal will be one of

the major outcomes of the project, and is based on the existing resources of the European Assistive Technology Information Network (EASTIN).

EASTIN is a comprehensive **European search engine on Assistive Technology**, working in all languages of the European Union, and is an essential tool for EPR members wishing to gain further knowledge and familiarity with guidance tools concerning assistive technology.

The EASTIN search engine includes information on almost 70.000 assistive technology products available on the

European market and over 5.000 manufacturers or suppliers; it also includes related info such as fact sheets and suggestions on assistive solutions for daily living problems.



The search engine is easily accessible on the EASTIN website: www.eastin.eu.

For more information about the ATIS4All project, contact julie.buttier@epr.eu or visit the project's website: <http://www.atis4all.eu/>

Active Inclusion for Young People with Disabilities

EPR hosted on 20 July the briefing meeting of the researchers involved in the tender on Active Inclusion of Young People with disabilities, in which CRPG is notably a partner. Two representatives of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, as funding authority, were also present. This meeting allowed all partners to agree on the tasks, on their scope and on the methodology to be used. The important milestones of the project, which will run until January 2012, were also set.

Project on Vocational Integration of People with Disabilities in Romania

In the last two weeks of June, 4 EPR experts delivered the last trainings of Romanian professionals from all pilot sites in vocational preparation and training, employment enterprise and supported employment.

Following the success of the first study visit to Ireland and the Netherlands in

2010, Rehab also hosted this year in June a visit for senior management from the partner organisations and senior representatives of the Romanian Ministry for Labour, Family and Social Protection.

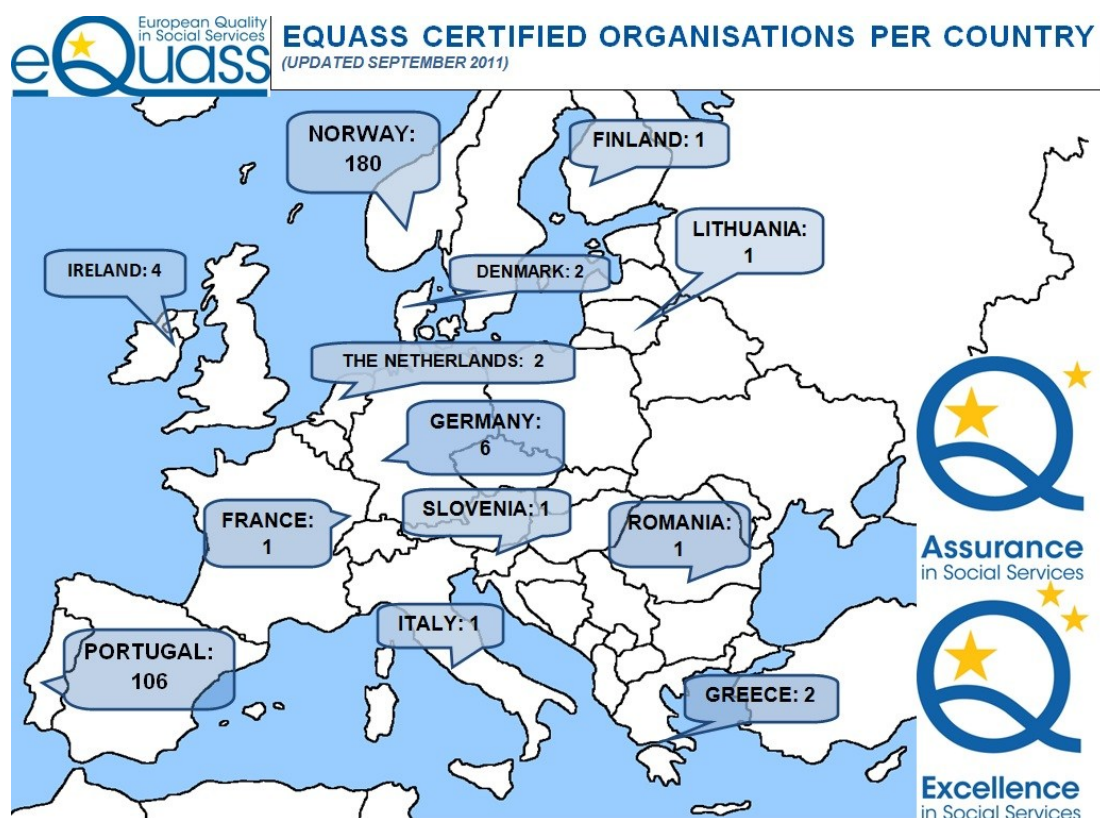
This trip provided an opportunity to visit services on the ground in Ireland

and to meet with frontline staff and management in Rehab responsible for training services and employment opportunities for people with disabilities, and to meet with employees and beneficiaries with disabilities.



EQUASS

EQUASS certifications dissemination overview



Capacity building: EQUASS auditor trainings



EQUASS Assurance Auditor training in Oslo

Between 27 – 29 June 2011, 14 participants were trained in auditing organisations on the EQUASS Assurance criteria. The training was offered following the new training format of three days training and took place at the conference facilities of the Norwegian License Holder (AVRE). During the training the participants were informed and worked with the EQUASS Assurance 2012 standard which will be operational from 1 January 2012.

EQUASS Excellence Auditor training in Lisbon

During 26 - 28 April 2011, 14 participants have been trained in auditing organisations on the EQUASS Excellence criteria. The training was offered in the format of a three day training period with presentations, discussions, case studies and workshops.

Two EQUASS auditor trainings recently took place. Both of these trainings highlighted the forthcoming changes to the EQUASS system. During the training in Oslo participants were, for the first time, trained directly to follow the new EQUASS Assurance certification programme (to be launched in 2012).

By building up its auditor capacity, EQUASS hopes to make a smooth transition to the newly improved system in 2012.

The feedback from the trainings was very positive whilst also giving suggestions for improving the format for initial auditor training and calibration of auditors.

EQUASS approach to quality - FEANTSA



Guus van Beek presented the results of the Prometheus project at a workshop for the FEANTSA board members of FEANTSA on 18 May 2011. In this Prometheus projects, two FEANTSA members participated as pilot sites and have implemented the EQUASS Assurance criteria.

The experience of this project and the opportunities to adapt the EQUASS Assurance certification programme for the homeless sector by developing sector specific indicators has been presented and discussed in a workshop.

EQUASS upcoming events for 2011

3 October 2011: Core Group Meeting, Dublin, Ireland

4-5 October 2011: EPR joint activity: EQUASS Benchmarking, Dublin, Ireland

10 November 2011: Annual EQUASS Awarding ceremony, Athens, Greece

28-30 November 2011: EQUASS Assurance training, Brussels, Belgium

19-21 December 2011: EQUASS Excellence training, Brussels, Belgium

PANAGIA ELEOUSA and CRM UEROS obtain EQUASS Excellence award



The **Workshop "PANAGIA ELEOUSA"**, from Greece, was awarded with EQUASS Excellence in May 2011. The certificate recognises the excellence in the provision of services of the centres in Messolonghi-Agrinio, Prefecture of Etoloakarnania.

Panagia Eleousa provides vocational training, counseling, psychological support, lifelong education and care to 120 people, with mild or severe intellectual disability and related disabilities.



The **CRM - Centre de Réadaptation de Mulhouse**, from France, was awarded with the Excellence recognition for its Evaluation, Rehabilitation and Socio-Professionnal Unit (UEROS - Unité d'Evaluation, de Réentraînement et d'Orientation Sociale et professionnelle).

The unit is dedicated to the rehabilitation of people with Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBIs) and provides them with a vast range of services to help in their transition back into active life.

EQUASS Information event organised by Qualitividade



On 4 July 2011, Guus van Beek presented the upcoming changes of the EQUASS Assurance 2012 at a one day seminar organised by Qualitividade, a Portuguese Consulting Agency which has been very successful in supporting social service providers in the implementation of EQUASS Assurance. The seminar took place at the Mundial Hotel in Lisbon.

The participants (service providers and quality consultants) have been informed about the upcoming changes of the EQUASS Assurance certification program in 2012: the principles, the criteria the indicators and the upcoming changes in procedures.

News from the Secretariat

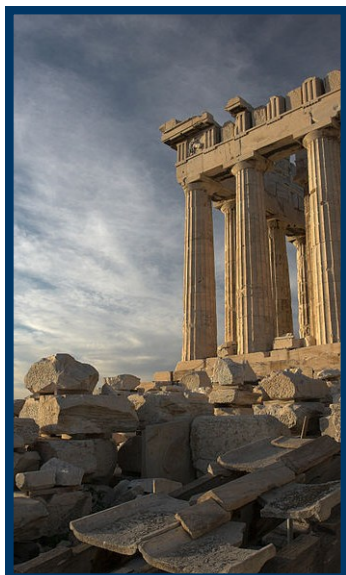
Farewell Sarah, Welcome Laurence

Sarah De Roeck left the EPR Secretariat last June after more than 5 years as a Financial/Office Administrator to pursue a career as a bookkeeper in a Belgium accounting company. She will be remembered as one of the driving force of the EPR Secretariat, and is missed by all her colleagues, who wish her the best of luck in her new adventure.



Part of the EPR Financial Management has been transferred to an external company, and the office management and human resources administration is now under the responsibility of **Laurence Meuret**, who joined the EPR in August 2011. She also provides financial support to the accountant and is working closely with the different project coordinators. With her substantial experience working at an international law firm, Laurence is sure to greatly contribute to the EPR Secretariat.

EPR Annual Conference 2011



The EPR Annual Conference 2011 is now only a couple of months away, and preparations are well under way to welcome you to the beautiful city of **Athens, Greece**, on **10 and 11 November 2011**. This year, the conference is organised in cooperation with EPR's two Greek members: the Theotokos Foundation and the Workshop Panagia Eleousa.

The Conference will highlight two main issues at stake for providers of services to persons with disabilities: the **reintegration of youngsters** and **the role of human resources in relation to the quality of rehabilitation services** (see below summary programme). In addition, EPR is organising a few professional development activities around the conference: the EPR Board of Directors, Benchlearning groups on vocational and medical rehabilitation and a special information seminar on EQUASS. They will take place in the same conference venue, on 9 and 10 November.

EPR centres have until **Friday 7 October** to register. For more information, consult the **EPR website** (www.epr.eu), "Upcoming events" section.

Annual Conference Programme Highlights

Day 1 - Thursday 10 November 2011

- *The Greek context*, by representatives of the Greek Ministries of Health and Social Solidarity and of Labour and Social Security
- *Reintegration of youngsters with mental health problems*, by Robert Anderson from Eurofound
- *Supporting youngsters with disabilities in the transition from education to employment*, by Metka Teržan from the University Rehabilitation Institute of Slovenia
- *The role of families in rehabilitation of young people with disabilities*, by Gaetano Santonocito from COFACE, representing A.I.A.S.
- *Parallel Workshops*: Rehabilitation programmes for children with specific disorders; Employment of youngsters; Early intervention for children with intellectual disabilities; Emerging school drop-outs
- *The international policy framework* by Jan Spooren, EPR Secretary General

The first day will be concluded by the traditional **Annual Conference dinner** and the **2011 EQUASS Awarding Ceremony**.

Day 2 - Friday 11 November 2011

- *The Illusion of Quality Management in Social Service: the role of staff in delivering quality in social services*, by Guus van Beek from EQUASS
- *The role of professionals in empowering clients*, by Yannis Vardakastanis, President of the European Disability Forum
- *Enhancing the empowering qualities of professionals*, by Grete Kristiansen from Durapart
- *Parallel Workshops*: Measuring satisfaction of employees; New approaches to recruitment and the involvement of volunteers; Staff Supervision; Upcoming changes in the EQUASS system 2012
- *Staff selection, retention and growth*, by Fred McFarlane from the San Diego State University
- Round-table discussions on well-being of staff
- EPR Innovation Prize Awarding Ceremony
- Theatrical performance: "Mythical Greek routes. The return of Odysseus to Ithaca", by Panagia Eleousa



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

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

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

EPR on the web!

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

www.epr.eu

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EUROPEAN PLATFORM FOR REHABILITATION

The network of leading service providers to people with disabilities

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