

# EUROPEAN PLATFORM FOR REHABILITATION

*Building capacity for excellence in service provision for people with disabilities*



## ANNUAL REPORT 2015

# The network of service providers to people with disabilities committed to excellence and innovation through mutual learning

*EPR and its members contribute to a society where every person with a disability and persons in other vulnerable situations have access to the highest quality services that create equal opportunities for all and independent participation in society. EPR activities go beyond traditional mutual learning exchanges. EPR members co-create and pilot innovative products, tools and methods to better meet the needs of clients, employers and funders. EPR offers numerous opportunities to network with leading service providers from across Europe. EPR members are committed to high quality service delivery in the fields of vocational education and training, employment reintegration, medical rehabilitation and social care. Through its public affairs activities, EPR enables service providers to contribute to the social and disability debate and to the strengthening of the social service sector. In addition, EPR facilitates access to EU funding through project development support, partner matching and training sessions.*

## Content

	A Word from the President	3
<b>I</b>	Our Strategy 2015 - 2017 – Making it happen	4
<b>II</b>	2015 in Brief	5
<b>III</b>	Key Events	6
<b>IV</b>	Our Professional Development Activities	12
<b>V</b>	EU level partnerships	14
<b>VI</b>	Our Innovation Prize	16
<b>VII</b>	EQUASS	17
<b>VIII</b>	Certification System	18
<b>IX</b>	EPR Structures	22
<b>X</b>	Financial Information	23
<b>XI</b>	Membership	24

## A word from the President



Another year gone and I'm proud that I can present you the annual report of the year 2015 of the European Platform for Rehabilitation.

At the end of 2014 the EPR strategy for the coming years was approved by the General Assembly, and 2015 has been the year in which we made the first steps in implementing the new strategy. Considering our four strategic objectives, we were able to welcome two experienced new members. We have developed our menus of services and activities, initiated the product

mapping and further enhanced our profile as a leading network of services providers during our Presidency of Social Services Europe. In addition to progressing our strategy, EPR managed to end 2015 with a positive financial result. For this I want to thank members but especially the staff of the secretariat.

2015 was also the year in which Laura Jones started as Secretary General of EPR. Coming from EPR partner Eurodiaconia she already had the opportunity to work with our Platform. Her first job as Secretary General was organizing the Annual Conference, together with the secretariat and ONCE Foundation. It proved to be a very well-organized and successful event. One interesting element of the Annual Conference was the film summarizing the event. Made by a photographer in a wheelchair it helped all participants to keep the client's perspective in mind. After the summer Laura and the staff moved the office from the Rue de Spa to Avenue des Arts, where we benefit from a range of support services, whilst maintaining a strategic location.

We are operating in a quickly changing world and have to adapt to these changes. This is not only something we as EPR have to do on the European level, but it is also a challenge for all our members on the national level. Some of the changes can be seen as a threat for EPR and its members but it is exactly in

these times that we have to stand together and use each other's strengths as individual service providers, and as a platform to cope with these situations. The strongest point of EPR and its members is their excellent level of service provision to those in need of their services. In order to keep this high level, organizations need to be innovative and stay ahead of the competition, and knowledge is the key to be able to do so. EPR and its members consider sharing their knowledge and best practices as the core business of the platform.

Working together in a platform at the European level is not always easy, and we need to stay focused on the added value of the platform for the core business of our centres. Further developing and implementing our strategy will help us with this. Broadening the scope of our activities will make the added value of EPR more visible and make it an interesting platform to attract new members.

I want to thank all members for your contribution to the EPR activities in 2015 and trust that we can also count on you in 2016, in order to further develop EPR as a platform which enhances the capacity of its members to be provide sustainable, high quality services to the broad range of clients they care for.

**Jean-Paul Essers**  
*EPR President*

# Our Strategy 2015-2017

## Strategic Objective 1

Expanded and more balanced membership base

In 2015 EPR welcomed two new members, the Social Integration State Agency (SIVA) from Latvia, and Fondazione Don Carlo Gnocchi from Italy. SIVA is the first EPR member in Latvia and the Fondazione Don Gnocchi brings vast expertise in the medical rehabilitation sector. The EPR secretariat developed many new contacts across Europe, informing them of the expertise of the network and the opportunities for partnerships in the framework of a network development strategy.

## Strategic Objective 2

Developing the menu of services and activities

A new membership fee system and membership packages were approved by EPR directors in 2015. Key features of the new packages include differentiated fees based on GDP, more accessible full membership and a clear explanation of the services provided by the secretariat. An online consultation with members provided input into the 2016 work programme, ensuring activities for members in all four domains of service provision and all seven transversal areas of work.

Making  
it  
Happen

## Strategic Objective 3

Towards a more product oriented approach

EPR launched a mapping of innovative products and methodologies in the membership. The mapping will identify “products” that could benefit from further development, such as being adapted for cross border transferability or developed in a different field. The mapping database will help EPR members to increase, share and transfer their expertise within the network and with identified relevant partners.

## Strategic Objective 4

A leading network of service providers

EPR successfully held the Presidency of the Social Services Europe network in the second half of 2015, chairing meetings and leading the common work. EPR Secretary General Laura Jones spoke at various seminars with representatives from the EU institutions, including a hearing on unlocking the job creation potential of the social services sector in the European Parliament and a seminar on supporting investment in social services.



# 2015 in Brief



**1 Annual Conference**

**1 Strategic Workshop for Directors**

**5 National awareness-raising events**



**2 Training seminars**

**1 Webinar (online seminar)**



**2 Meetings for the benchlearning group on cooperation with employers**

**4 Meetings for the benchmarking groups on Outcome Measurement in Vocational Rehabilitation**



**2 Site visits**



**1 e-learning module on mental well-being**



**1 Study of services to support the inclusion of persons with disability in mainstream environments**

## **5 Policy Papers**

- Briefing on Vocational Education and Training initiatives at European level
- Analytical paper on “The impact of the European Semester and the UNCRPD on the right to work of people with disabilities”
- Analytical paper on “European employment policies and initiatives”
- Analytical paper on “Mainstreamed and community-based services”
- Analytical paper on “ICT in rehabilitation of people with disabilities”



**3 Newsletter issue (April, September, December)**

**10 monthly e-bulletins on European affairs**



**23 Funding Alerts**



**1 Innovation Prize Contest**

# Key Events



## Annual Conference 2015

The EPR Annual Conference 2015 was hosted by the ONCE Foundation in Valencia, Spain on 28-29 May. Over 120 delegates, including experts from Denmark, Norway, Spain and the Netherlands attended the event.

The conference focused on collaboration with employers as a key factor to boost the inclusion of people with disabilities in the labour market. In the current context of global crisis and lack of economic resources, social service providers have to be able to understand and meet the needs of businesses so that inclusion can be perceived as mutually beneficial by employers and people with disabilities.

The programme of the conference both reflected the needs of the labour market by including employers' representatives and explored innovative projects that have been successfully implemented by EPR Members to tackle the current low rates of employment of people with disabilities through close cooperation with employers. The conference gave participants the opportunity to discuss proposals and solutions to better match services to persons with disabilities with labour market needs.



122 participants



1 panel debate



5 speed presentations and 3 plenary speeches



1 group discussion



5 parallel ateliers



1 video summary



Satisfaction rate 4.2/5 (on average)

# Public Affairs Event 2015

## “Supporting community inclusion of people with disabilities: challenges and opportunities”

On 18 November 2015, EPR organised a Public Affairs event which gathered European stakeholders in order to explore how specialised service providers can best promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the workplace and community and design effective support in the mainstream environment. Interventions from stakeholders considered future steps and responses to the report's findings; how such services are or can be supported and promoted by public authorities, the EU and other actors.

The event showcased good practices from EPR membership and launched the EPR Study on the delivery of services in the mainstream environment published by Paula Campos Pinto, Assistant Professor of Sociology and Social Work, Coordinator of the Observatory on Disability and Human Rights, University of Lisbon in Portugal, with the contribution of EPR members. The objective of the study was to identify and describe common patterns, themes, challenges and opportunities that service providers are facing when supporting the inclusion of people with disabilities in a mainstreamed environment, drawing from good practice examples.



### Interventions:

- Suzanne McCarthy, Educational Psychologist from National Learning Network, Ireland and Luc Hénau, Director of GTB, Belgium
- Dr Israel Butler, Independent analyst on fundamental rights and EU affairs and author of the report Community, Not Confinement - The role of the European Union in promoting and protecting the right of people with disabilities to live in the community.
- Jan Jařab, Regional Representative for Europe of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Brigitte Plumet, Directrice Coordination générale of Walloon Agency for the integration of people with disabilities (AWIPH)
- Sif Holst, Vice chairperson of the Disabled Peoples Organisation Denmark and Alternate member of the EESC
- Frank Sioen, advocacy and communication officer at European Network for Independent Living (ENIL)

# National Awareness-Raising Events 2015

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## ***Agrinio, Greece***

**“Community-based living services for people with intellectual disabilities - Concern about Elderly People with Disabilities. The significant contribution of the European Union for the service providers to people with disabilities”**

The Workshop “PANAGIA ELEOUSA” in collaboration with EPR, and the Municipality of Agrinio, organised an awareness-raising and training event on 14 October 2015, in the Chamber of Commerce in Agrinio on Community-based supported living services for people with intellectual disabilities in Greece. EPR and EU activities in the relevant fields were promoted and EPR member AFID presented their experiences.

The challenges of ensuring dignified independent lives and avoiding exclusion were discussed as a key future challenge for older people. The contribution of “PANAGIA ELEOUSA” to the community was highlighted by the public authority and the event successfully raised awareness of the importance of quality services, including an introduction to the EQUASS system.

## ***Dublin, Ireland***

**“Mental Health Recovery in Action”**

Recovery has emerged as a central focus of mental health service policy internationally. EPR organised a conference jointly with RehabCare and National Learning Network in Dublin on 5 November 2015. More than 80 participants from all over Ireland attended this high-quality event, and were invited to explore ways in which the values underpinning mental health recovery have been translated into personally empowering, partnership-based services in Ireland and the wider European community.

The programme featured key note speeches from Mental Health Europe, Mental Health Reform, Advancing Recovery in Ireland next to presentations from the Health Service Executive of Ireland, and advocacy testimonies from Rona McBrierty, Advanced WRAP Facilitator and Ron Coleman. Break-out sessions allowed participants to get a concrete insight into Irish and international projects of peer support, in community-based, recovery-oriented services.



***“A ‘recovery’ approach should inform every level of the service provision so service users learn to understand and cope with their mental health difficulties, build on their inherent strengths and resourcefulness, establish supportive networks, and pursue dreams and goals that are important to them and to which they are entitled as citizens.”***

**A Vision for Change**



## **Zagreb, Croatia**

### **“Education and employment as pathways to the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the community”**

On 10 November EPR co-organised an event in Zagreb with SOIH, the Croatian Union of Associations of Persons with Disabilities, entitled Education and Employment as Pathways to the Inclusion of Persons with Disability in the Community. Around 90 participants from across Croatia engaged in the event, which was held after the XX National symposium of SOIH.

The Croatian service provision context was examined and EU activities to promote employment of persons with disabilities were discussed. Good practice from EPR member URI on work-based training and supported employment was introduced. Alice Trindade, Associate professor and Vice-Dean, Institute of Social and Political Sciences at the Universidade de Lisboa presented Overcoming disability: How ISCSP is learning to educate and research inclusively and Disabled people's changing role in the Portuguese public sphere.

In the round table with the audience the importance of hearing examples of countries who have further developed, and to learn about good practice is important for the disability movement. Participants appreciated the activities that EPR is doing to promote inclusive employment.

## **Warsaw, Poland**

### **“Introduction to European Quality concept for Social Services”**

On 17 November 2015, EPR in collaboration with the EKON Association in Warsaw organised a seminar and workshop for social service providers and social enterprises on the use of quality instruments in the sector. About 40 stakeholders in the social sector attended.

The seminar explained how business management and quality management approaches can be coupled with rights-based approaches to allow service providers and social enterprises to comply with the spirit of the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities, in the way that they design and deliver their services.

The traditional approaches of quality towards ensuring good governance, measuring results for continuous improvement were also explored as another key component of a performant social service in today's environment.

The afternoon session was a practical workshop focused on one of the core dimensions of the rights-based approach: Person centred services.

## Vilnius, Lithuania

### “Corporate Social Responsibility: a frame for supporting employment of people with disabilities”

On 29 October, EPR and Valakupiai Rehabilitation Centre co-organised this event gathering together employers, vocational rehabilitation service providers, researchers and people with disabilities who shared experiences and exchanged visions on the topic.

The concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) from a European perspective was addressed, and good practice examples from the corporate sector and the provider side were presented.

The win-win situation when companies employ people with disabilities was highlighted as well as the added value of vocational rehabilitation services for employers.

Participants welcomed the practical application of the conference, particularly the involvement of service users.



*“To understand why companies invest to be truly socially responsible, it is important to reflect on the fact that the most successful and sustainable businesses are those who have not only monetary goals, but also social goals, such as creating jobs, providing services, working in and for the community”*

**Guus van Beek**

# Strategic Workshop for Directors 2015

## “How to promote our services and products in a changing market”

Market getting’ (or marketing) is about addressing customer, or client, needs, within the boundaries of professional, ethical and financial limitations.

Expert consultant Huub Raemakers led the workshop by introducing EPR Directors and Professionals to the field of marketing for the rehabilitation sector. Participants applied the theory on a real-life cases and discussed developing marketing strategies for situations as diverse as working with public funding authorities and promoting an app for job coaches and service users. The workshop for Directors, co-organised with the Dutch member Adelante, took place in Maastricht on 1-2 October 2015.

Participants expressed their great satisfaction with the methodology and the opportunity to discuss common challenges with colleagues and develop concrete solutions with the tools provided.



*“Marketing is so basic that it cannot be considered a separate function. It is the whole business seen from the point of view of its final result, that is, from the customer’s point of view. Business success is not determined by the producer but by the customer”*

**(Drucker 1999)**

# Our Professional Development Activities Overview

## Benchmarking group on cooperation with employers:

➤ *Adapting vocational rehabilitation curricula to the needs of the labour market (Seminar on 27 May, Valencia, Spain)*

**Focus:** discuss practices to closely collaborate with labour market actors and ensure quality vocational education and training programmes for their clients.

➤ *The Employers' Charter (Online meeting on 21 December)*

**What:** A tool to strengthen collaboration with employers and encourage their engagement for the employment of people with disabilities.

**Focus:** development of possible contents and potentials of such Charter; how it can complement an Employer Engagement strategy, and how it could be presented to Employers.

## Online Training Sessions (Webinars)

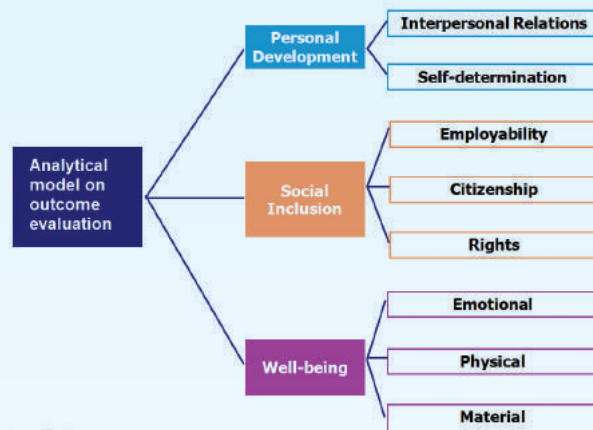
*The impact of the European Semester and the UNCRPD on the right to work of people with disabilities (4 November)*

**Focus:** the use of the European Semester and the Country Specific Recommendations to implement the Article 27 of the UNCRPD on the right of people with disabilities to work, and to promote positive changes in service provision. The importance of investing in social services to enhance the integration of people with disabilities into labour market, and improve the health and the well-being of individuals, their families and the whole society.

## Benchmarking group on Outcome Measurement in Vocational Rehabilitation

**Focus:** implementation of a methodology to measure outcomes of services in vocational rehabilitation, education and training services, based on the client's perceptions, and integrating a comprehensive approach of Quality of Life.

The tools developed by the EPR working group are referred to as QOLIS: Quality of Life Impact of Services. Beside a benchmark of several years allowing participating organisations to improve their respective services, new versions for people with intellectual disabilities and for persons with dyslexia notably have been developed. (The groups work from distance as it involves homework, and met online in June, as well as physically in November).



I. Quality of Life's dimension selected in QOLIS



## Training seminars:

### ➤ *Understanding and assessing organisational and quality culture (4 March, Leuven, Belgium)*

**Focus:** examine different existing organisational culture models instruments and methodologies available to assess the organisational culture. During the seminar participants had the opportunity to reflect and assess the organizational culture in their own centres and discuss on strategies and opportunities for desirable cultural changes.

### ➤ *EU funding opportunities (18 November, Brussels, Belgium)*

**Focus:** understand the state of play and the funding possibilities for European projects in the framework of the EaSI/PROGRESS programme and the ERASMUS+ strategic partnerships, as well as the strand “Promote rights of persons with disabilities” of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme. Hear the evaluator’s view on an applications with the aim of deepening participants’ ability to deal dimensions such as objective rationale, added value, sustainability, dissemination, work plan aspects, partnerships aspects and the application process.

## E-learning module on mental well-being

The 2015 module features a 5 minute video presenting an introduction to mental health and highlighting the holistic approach to human health, the interactions between physical and psychological well-being. It raises awareness of the internal and external factors affecting mental well-being.

## Site visits:

### ➤ *GTB Flanders (4 March, Leuven, Belgium)*

EPR Centre Coordinators visited GTB Flanders, recognised by the mainstream Flemish Labour Office (VDAB) as the specialised partner for guidance and professional integration for persons with a vocational disability. They have about 10.000 clients every year who pass the mainstream and inclusive entrance of the local job shop to find their way as a jobseeker with disability.

**Focus:** GTB functioning and their collaboration with the Labour Office in providing employment services.

### ➤ *LifeTOOL: Computer-aided communication for people with disabilities (29-30 October, Linz, Austria)*

At LifeTOOL a team of educational, psychological, social and integrative staff work together with technical, electronic and programming researchers and developers to develop Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), accessible software, apps as well as computer input devices, such as the multiple award-winning IntegraMouse Plus.

**Focus:** test the programmes and devices and discuss the features with the developers. Live demonstrations were made of AsTeRICS - a flexible and affordable construction set for assistive technologies, and the world’s first 4D-Joystick that operates remote controlled gadgets with the mouth, aiming to bring more accessible toys to the market.



# EU Level Partnership



## EPR six-month rotating Presidency



On 1 July, EPR assumed the Social Services Europe Presidency and led the network until the end of the 2015. Social Services Europe brings together eight Europe-wide networks of not-for-profit providers of social and health care services.

The network aims to strengthen the profile and position of social services, and promote the role of not-for-profit social service providers in Europe. Social Services Europe member organisations intend to reinforce their activities on the impact of EU legislation on SSGI; the staff and human resources issues; social innovation; structural funds and contribution of social services to overall EU Policy.

Each member organisation is part of selected task forces established around specific themes and composed of staff or other identified experts from among the members. EPR is actively involved in the task forces on job creation potential in the health and social services sector and on European Semester process. During its presidency, EPR hosted and chaired meetings of the working group and board; supported the task forces in delivering outcomes and continues to build a close cooperation with EU Institutions, Civil Society Organisations and other relevant stakeholders in the social services sector.

[www.socialserviceseurope.eu](http://www.socialserviceseurope.eu)

## Social Platform

EPR has been a member of the Social Platform, the largest civil society alliance fighting for social justice and participatory democracy in Europe, for a number of years.

Consisting of 48 pan-European networks of NGOs, Social Platform campaigns to ensure that EU policies are developed in partnership with the people they affect, respecting fundamental rights, promoting solidarity and improving lives. In 2015 EPR contributed to “Public Procurement for Social Progress – A Social Platform guide to the EU Public Procurement Directive”.

The guide puts forward recommendations and outlines opportunities to help Member States and contracting authorities to embrace the full social potential of the EU’s Public Procurement Directive that came into force in April 2014.

### Key messages are:

- Encourage the evaluation of bids on the basis of the Best Price-Quality Ratio, in particular those concerning social and health services
- Member States should include the provision on reserved contracts (article 20) in national legislation, to support persons with disabilities and disadvantaged persons in accessing employment opportunities
- Allow reserved contracts for social services provided by social economy operators
- Develop support mechanisms for contracting authorities, social economy enterprises and businesses
- Contracting authorities, where feasible, should award contracts in the form of separate lots



European Commission

## European Commission

EPR signed a 4-year partnership agreement with the European Commission (DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion) for the period 2014 – 2017.

This agreement confirms the recognition that EPR has at European level in supporting its members in creating a more social and inclusive Europe and the funding received enabled EPR’s public affairs work to be strengthened both at EU and national levels. The acquisition of the grant and the execution of the proposed annual work plans for 2014 and 2015 was

a significant support for EPR in strengthening its capacity to assist its member organisations to achieve continuous professional improvement and sustainable growth in every aspect of service delivery for people with disabilities and with other disadvantages. EPR offered a diversity of activity formats to reach specific objectives; training sessions, pilots, conferences and events, which provided professionals with updated and innovative knowledge and skills to face new challenges in the sector.

# Our Innovation Prize

## RehabCare Dundalk FC Supporters' Club Project won the 2015 Contest



The Winner of the 2015 Innovation Prize Contest is the Irish organisation RehabCare with “Dundalk FC Supporters’ Club Project”. Stephen Caraher, Programme Supervisor in RehabCare presented the project to the conference delegates and explained why the initiative has been such a success.“

The project began in 2008 when RehabCare, which provides services for people with disabilities in Dundalk, approached Dundalk Football Club as some of the men in RehabCare with an interest in football, wanted to join the Supporters Club.

From day one, they were made to feel very welcome by the supporters.

They became well known in the football grounds around the country as they travelled to all the away games supporting Dundalk FC.

The initiative between RehabCare and Dundalk FC Supporters Club has been an outstanding success and has made a big difference to the lives of those involved.

For those involved in the Supporters Club, it’s not just about being fans of football, it’s also about the friendships they make, being part of a club, the social life, and being part of the community. Darren Belton says, “I love going to the away games. It’s brought me to places I’ve never been like Limerick, Longford, Athlone, Derry and Cork. There is always good craic on the bus. You can chat to people. I’ve made new friends through the club. One of my goals was to see Manchester United play. Because of being more confident now after a few years in the Supporters’ Club, I’m going to go Old Trafford in a few weeks. It’ll be my first time out of the country.”

The practice was selected amongst 15 candidates as the most innovative project.



# European Quality in Social Services



The European Quality in Social Services (EQUASS) is an initiative of EPR and it aims to enhance the personal services sector by engaging service providers in quality, continuous improvement and by guaranteeing quality of services to service-users throughout Europe.

[www.equass.be](http://www.equass.be)

# Certification system

**EQUASS Assurance** is a certification programme for quality assurance and quality control in social services. It enables social service providers to engage in an external independent certification process at European level by which they assure quality of their services to service users and other stakeholders.

**EQUASS Excellence** identifies and encourages excellence and best practice in the social sector. It is the second level of the EQUASS certification in Social Services. The EQUASS Excellence certification programme requires a social service provider to carry out a self-evaluation on the performance on the EQUASS criteria via a self-evaluation report.

## National Learning Network certified with EQUASS Excellence

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On 31 August 2015 the EQUASS Awarding committee awarded the National Learning Network (NLN) in Ireland. The National Learning Network was established in 1995, and serves 2,500 persons, providing Supported Vocational Training and Rehabilitative Training.

This is the 3rd re-certification for the NLN, which was first certified with the EQRM (European Quality in Rehabilitation Mark) in 2004 for its services in Tallaght, Limerick, Sligo and Wexford. In 2015 NLN extended the audit to 27 locations and 20 satellite services, with a total score of 67,1.

## APPACDM Viana de Castelo certified with EQUASS Excellence

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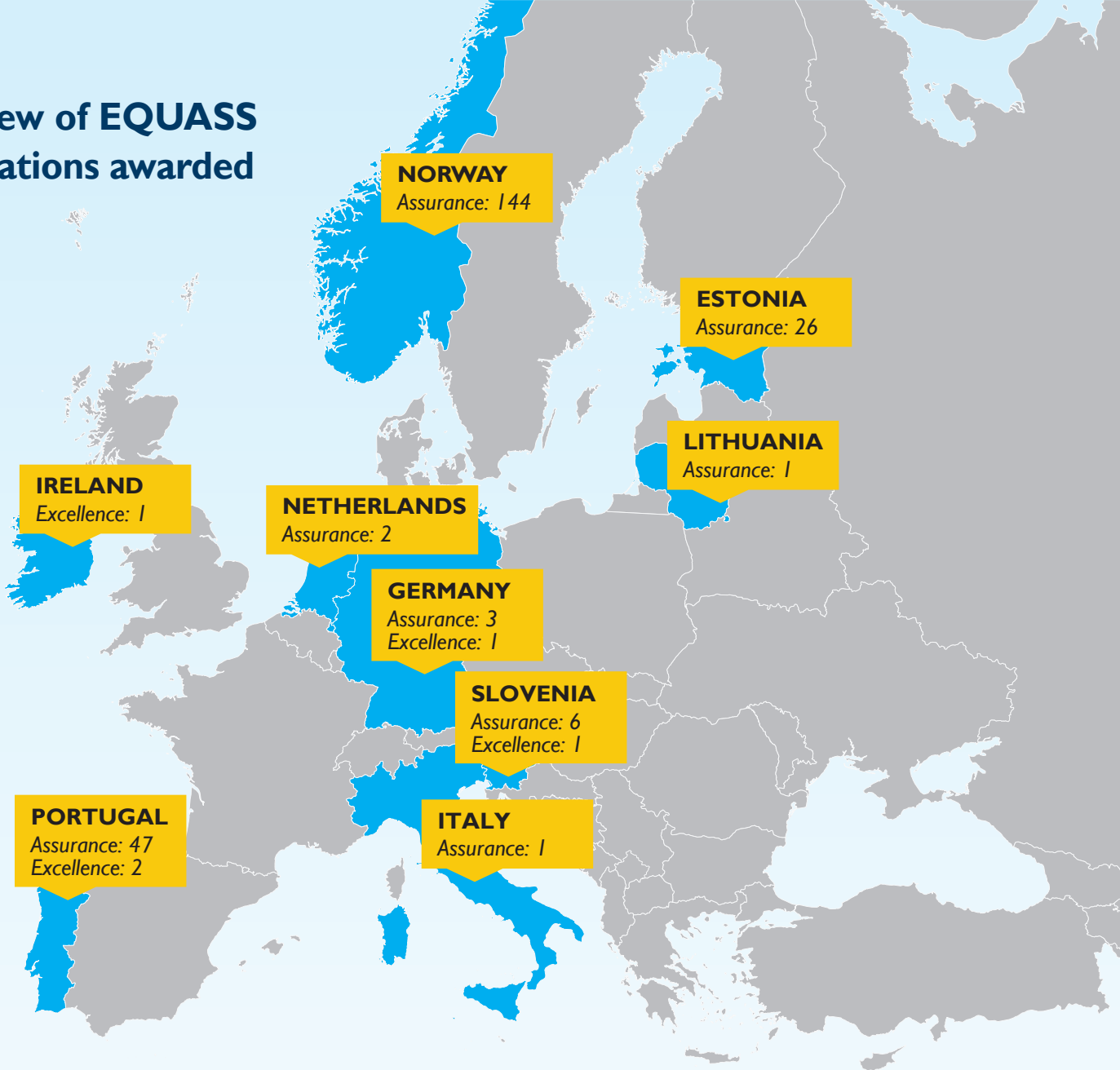
Associação Portuguesa de Pais e Amigos do Cidadão Deficiente Mental (APPACDM) de Viana de Castelo in Portugal was awarded with the EQUASS Excellence quality mark on 31 August 2015.

APPACDM de Viana do Castelo was one of many Portuguese organisations that had participated in the Arquimedes programme funded by the European Social Fund, with the aim of becoming EQUASS Excellence certified.

APPACDM de Viana de Castelo has over 300 staff across the Minho-Lima area and serves over 500 persons, providing social responses, vocational training and residential services for persons with intellectual disabilities, aimed at promoting the well-being and quality of life of the users, and their inclusion in the community and the job market.

APPACDM de Viana de Castelo extended the audit to 10 locations and 17 satellite services, with a total score of 65.

## Overview of EQUASS certifications awarded in 2015



# Market developments

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The EQUASS strategic plan 2013-2016 foresees evaluating and adapting the EQUASS system to the latest stakeholders' needs, demands and expectations by 2016. Social service providers, consultants and auditors will be informed about and trained on the upcoming changes. The year 2017 will be a year of transition and from 2018 the updated EQUASS system (Assurance and Excellence) will be operational. The process of evaluation and consultation with all stakeholders (EQUASS awarding committee members, service providers, auditors, license holders, service user organisations) has started in 2014.

## **Suggestions for improving the EQUASS system came from:**

- Members of the EQUASS Awarding Committee who reviewed and adapted EQUASS Principles and criteria
- The scientific evaluation of the EQUASS system in Norway carried out by Nordlandsforskning
- "Impact Study of the EQUASS Assurance Quality System", Mariliis Männik-Sepp, published in Estonia
- "Quality Management and Excellence in IPSS: An Empirical Study on the Model EQUASS", Guia, S. and Melão, N, published by the Instituto Politécnico de Viseu, Escola Superior de Tecnologia e Gestão de Viseu in Portugal

- EQUASS auditors who also reviewed their way of working.

A technical working group was established with the aim of collecting and elaborating all suggestions in practical guidelines for applicants, auditors, consultants and trainers. The Technical Working Group consists out of EQUASS experts and meet 3 times a year.

## **The main changes in the EQUASS system are:**

- An easier language formulation for principles, criteria and indicators.
- A more consistent assessment scheme for the Assurance and Excellence levels and emphasized compliance with clear and solid approaches, implementation, tangible achievements and results, learning and improvement.
- A more flexible system to take into account the national context where social service providers operate and less bureaucratic procedures in its application and maintenance.
- A more user-friendly system for social service providers and for all who work with the system.



# Projects

## DeSqual



On 30 September 2015, DeSqual partners convened in Zandvoort, the Netherlands, to attend the final project conference hosted by the project leader organisation REA College Nederland.

DeSqual project, launched in November of 2013, is a collaboration of four quality assurance expert organisations and 10 social service providers / VET providers for people with disabilities who have piloted a newly developed training program for achieving sustainable quality assurance in their organisation. Partners developed a training program that focuses on individual quality behaviour, quality awareness of professionals and quality culture in the organisation. In the final conference, 3 project pilots presented the impact of the ad-hoc training programme: Fundación INTRAS (ES) with the leadership development programme, the National Learning Network (IE) with the partnership added-value assessment programme, and REA College Pluryn (NL) with the team ownership programme.

The project conference highlighted the importance and impact of management and staff being aware of how culture impacts the daily work of organisations, and how the quality of the vocational services for persons with disabilities can be enhanced by an awareness of Quality issues throughout the organisation.

## EQUASS project with Handicap International



EQUASS unit has been selected by Handicap International - Maghreb division to contribute to its project "Support to the Quality Improvement and Sustainability of Social-Medical Services in Morocco".

Funded by the OCP Foundation, the project will last four years (2015-19) and aims to develop the capacities of 5 pilots by implementing a quality system based on the CRPD and good practices of management. The pilots will also receive ad-hoc support in training their staff and management in the various tools and practices identified in their improvement plan.

EQUASS will be supporting the project between October 2015 and May 2016, by training the managers and professionals of the 5 pilot centres in the use of a Quality approach, in understanding the EQUASS standard, and in performing their very first self-evaluation.

The 5 Pilot centres provide a wide range of services: educational, occupational and/or medical services to children, young people and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, persons with sensory and mobility impairments and persons with autism.

# EPR Structure

## Board of Directors

The Board is the representative body of EPR. It is composed of up to 8 Chief Executives/Directors of the full member organisations. The members of the Board (including the function of president and vice-president) are nominated by the General Assembly for a period of two years which is renewable, and these positions cannot be delegated. All members of the General Assembly are entitled to attend the meetings of the Board as observers. Its main task is to supervise all EPR activities and to execute the decisions of the General Assembly. In 2015 the Board held five meetings to discuss and approve EPR policies and activities.

## EPR Secretariat

The EPR secretariat is the main unit responsible for the development and implementation of the network's activities. Based in Brussels, the Secretariat acts as the interface with EPR member organisations and with external stakeholders.

<b>Laura Jones</b> <i>Secretary General (from April 2015)</i> <a href="mailto:laura.jones@epr.eu">laura.jones@epr.eu</a>	<b>Laurence Meuret</b> <i>Financial Officer</i> <a href="mailto:laurence.meuret@epr.eu">laurence.meuret@epr.eu</a>
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<b>Marie Dubost</b> <i>EQUASS Coordinator</i> <a href="mailto:marie.dubost@epr.eu">marie.dubost@epr.eu</a>	<b>Eric Falch</b> <i>EQUASS administrator</i> <a href="mailto:eric.falch@epr.eu">eric.falch@epr.eu</a>

## General Assembly

The General Assembly is the decision-making body of EPR. Its main task is to set the strategic, financial and organisational framework of EPR. The General Assembly consists of the Chief Executives/Directors of the full members. The associate members are invited to participate in the meetings of the General Assembly as observers. The General Assembly meets at least twice per year to discuss and approve EPR policies and activities. Once a year Directors participate at the Workshop for Director to reflect on strategic issues affecting the sector.

## Centre coordinators

Centre coordinators of full and associate EPR members represent the direct link between EPR and its member organisations. Their main role is to disseminate EPR information throughout their organisation and implement decisions taken by the General Assembly. Usually EPR Centre coordinators meet twice a year and hold additional bilateral meetings in the margins of other EPR activities they attend.

# Financial Information



Item	Results (in Euro)
<b>Revenues</b>	<b>1.218.779</b>
Membership fees	326.750
EQUASS	770.373
Projects and Consultancy	93.373
Other Incomes	496
Extraordinary Incomes	27.787

Item	Results (in Euro)
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>1.112.218</b>
Staff costs	320.589
EQUASS Operational Costs	554.758
Operational Costs Projects and Consultancy	59.335
Operational Costs EPR	63.271
Office Costs	99.664
Other Costs	14.599

<b>Balance</b>	<b>106.561</b>
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# Membership

## Full members



**Adelante, The Netherlands**  
Director: Jean-Paul Essers  
EPR Coordinator: Paul Kurvers  
<http://www.adelante-zorggroep.nl>



**Fundación ONCE, Spain**  
Director: Sabina Lobato  
EPR Coordinator: Ana Juvíño  
<http://www.fundaciononce.es>



**Heliomare, The Netherlands**  
Director: Frits Wichers  
EPR Coordinator: Frank 't Hart  
<http://www.heliomare.nl>



**National Learning Network, Ireland**  
Director: Marie Kelly (replaced by Lucianne Bird in 2015)  
EPR Coordinator: David Muldoon  
<http://www.nln.ie>



**Centre de Réadaptation de Mulhouse (CRM), France**  
Director: Bernard Barthe  
EPR Coordinator: Jean-Claude Schrepfer  
<http://www.arfp.asso.fr>



**GREP GRENLAND AS, Norway**  
Director: Thor Fjellvang  
EPR Coordinator: Anne Britt Holtren  
<http://www.grep-as.no>



**Josefs-Gesellschaft, Germany**  
Director: Manfred Schulte  
EPR Coordinator: Andreas Reiß  
<http://www.jg-gruppe.de>



**Pluryn, The Netherlands**  
Director: Tessa Zaeyen  
EPR Coordinator: Cees Jonkheer  
<http://www.pluryn.nl>





**RehabCare, Ireland**  
Director: Laura Keane  
EPR Coordinator: Kathleen Morris  
<http://www.rehab.ie>



**Stiftung Rehabilitation Heidelberg – SRH, Germany**  
Director & EPR Coordinator: Hans-Joachim Eucker  
<http://www.bbw-neckargemuend.de>

## Associate members



**AFID Diferença Foundation, Portugal**  
Director: Domingos Rosa  
EPR Coordinator: Lutegarda Justo  
<http://www.fund-afid.org.pt>



**ASTANGU**  
**Astangu Vocational Rehabilitation Centre, Estonia**  
Director: Mari Rull  
EPR Coordinator: Keiu Talve  
<http://www.astangu.ee>



**Comitato Regionale Lombardia A.I.A.S. Italy**  
Director & EPR Coordinator: Gaetano Santonocito  
<http://www.aiasmonza.it>



**Association of Vocational Rehabilitation Enterprises (AVRE), Norway**  
Director: Johan Martin Leikvoll  
EPR Coordinator: Paal Haavorsen  
<http://www.attforingsbedriftene.no>



**BBW, Berufsbildungswerk Südhessen, Germany**  
Director: Renee-Eve Seehof  
EPR Coordinator: Christiane Scholz  
<http://www.bbw-suedhessen.de>



**Don Carlo Gnocchi Foundation\***  
EPR Coordinator: Renzo Andrich  
[www.dongnocchi.it](http://www.dongnocchi.it)

\* EPR Member since January 2016

**Durapart AS, Norway \***

Director: Bjørn Paulsen represented by Grete Kristiansen  
 EPR Coordinator: Hiis Søftestad Hanne  
<http://www.durapart.no>

*\* Since January 2016*

**Fagerh, France**

Director: Isabelle Merian  
 EPR Coordinator: Frédérique Rueda  
<http://www.fagerh.fr>

**GTB, Belgium**

Director: Luc Henau  
 EPR Coordinator: Sophie Vandermarliere  
<http://www.gtb-vlaanderen.be>

**LOS – Private Social Services, Denmark**

Director: Michael Graatang  
 EPR Coordinator: John Anderskou  
<http://www.los.dk>

**EKON, Poland**

Director: Marek Lukomsky  
 EPR Coordinator: Małgorzata Zakrzewska  
<http://ekon.org.pl>

**Fundación INTRAS, Spain**

Director & EPR Coordinator: Pablo Gomez  
<http://www.intras.es>

**Irish Wheelchair Association, Ireland**

Director: Kathleen Mc Loughlin  
 EPR Coordinator: Josephine Dwyer  
<http://www.iwa.ie>

**Mariehjemmene Foundation, Denmark**

Director: Bo Kristiansen  
 EPR Coordinator: Hans Meier Andersen  
<http://www.mariehjem.dk>

**MEREK, Hungary**

Director: Mihaly Kogon

EPR Coordinator: Erik Fuksz

<http://www.merek.hu>**Theotokos Foundation, Greece**

Director: Papakonstantinou Yiannis

EPR Coordinator: Evangelos Kamoudis

<http://www.theotokos.gr>Labklājības ministrija  
Sociālās integrācijas valsts aģentūra**The Social Integration State Agency, Latvia\***

Director: Ilona Jursevska

EPR Coordinator: Lauma Jegere

<http://www.siva.gov.lv>**USEL (Ulster Supported Employment Ltd), Northern Ireland**

Director: Sam Humphries

EPR Coordinator: Arthur Savage

<http://www.usel.co.uk>

\* EPR member since July 2015

**University Rehabilitation Institute**  
Republic of Slovenia**University Rehabilitation Institute (URI), Slovenia**

Director: Robert Cugelj

EPR Coordinator: Jurij Svajger

<http://www.ir-rs.si>**Valakupiai Rehabilitation Centre (VRC), Lithuania**

Director: Edita Satiene

EPR Coordinator: Rasa Noreikyte - Ustinaviciene

<http://www.reabilitacija.lt>**Workshop "Panagia Eleousa", Greece**

Director: Dimitrios Chimariotis

EPR Coordinator: Mina Kyziridi

<http://www.ergpanel.gr>

epr

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