



EQUASS Newsflash

Welcome to the second issue of the EQUASS newsflash! This publication is an initiative of the European Quality in Social Services to provide you with regular updates about the most recent developments and achievements of the EQUASS System.

EQUASS Certification in 2008

In 2008 the following organisations have been awarded with EQUASS certification:

Assurance of Quality in Social Services (EQUASS Assurance):

- **Theotokos Foundation** from Greece
- **ROC Ter AA - Loopbaancentrum & Educatie Department** from the Netherlands
- **Motivation Foundation** from Hungary
- **Mølla Kompetansesenter Bærum KF** from Norway
- **Teli AS** from Norway
- **Hadelandprodukter AS - Senter for yrkeskvalifisering** from Norway

Excellence in Social Services (EQUASS Excellence):

- **Valakupiai Rehabilitation Centre** from Lithuania
- **Panagia Eleousa – sites Messolonghi & Agrinio** from Greece
- **Åstvedt AS – Bergern** from Norway
- **National Learning Network – sites Bray & Castlebar** from Ireland

Certifications have been handed out at the EQUASS Awarding Event on 11 December 2008 in Brussels.



Some of the certified organisations during the EQUASS Awarding event 2008

EQUASS Certification

Proven feasibility and ongoing experience

The EQUASS Certification programmes: EQUASS Excellence and EQUASS Assurance were extensively tested on various sites throughout Europe, and evaluated by independent scientific organisations. Systems, procedures and materials have been validated and continuously improved. Until now 35 sites of 18 different organizations in 10 European Countries have been certified with EQUASS certification. In Norway, Denmark and Ireland Local Licence Holders are responsible for operating the EQUASS Assurance certification process. In Portugal the EQUASS certification is supported by the Arquimedes-project, an initiative of the Ministry of Employment and Social Affairs. 23 consultants have been qualified for delivering adequate support to potential EQUASS applicants and more than 80 individuals from 15 European Countries have been qualified as EQUASS auditors.



Prometheus Project



Prometheus project addresses the different aspects of quality: the definition of quality (Quality framework and criteria), measurement (indicators), assessment (processes, procedures for (self)-assessment) and improvement of quality of Social Services of General Interest (SSGI).

In order to meet the objectives, PROMETHEUS will carry out the following activities:

1. CEN workshop. The result of this workshop will be a CEN Workshop Agreement (CWA), based on which the core criteria of the EQUASS approach will be validated and the operational quality indicators will be redefined.
2. Processes, procedures and instruments for self-evaluation, measuring quality and an implementation strategy will be tested on pilot sites in 4 European Member States in various social sectors: services for people with a disability, long term care for elderly people, child care services and services for homeless people.

3. National Information and training seminars will be organised in order to promote the CWA among the social service providers and stakeholders and to build up capacity to operate the EQUASS pilots.

4. An implementation programme will be organised in the pilot sites on how to implement the Quality Principles.

The Prometheus project will be carried out with European and National partners.

European partners are: Mental Health Europe (MHE), European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless (FEANTSA), Veneto Region, Italy on behalf of European Network of Social Authorities (ENSA), European Federation of Older Persons (EURAG), European Committee for Standardization (CEN).

The National partners are: Centro de Reabilitação Profissional de Gaia - CRPG (Portugal), Centre of Accreditation and Quality Development - CAKU (Denmark), Casa Ioana (Romania), Municipality of Alimos in Athens (Greece).

Upcoming EQUASS events and contributions

- **12 and 13 January 2009:** The kick-off meeting of the LdV project: 'EQUASS in Practice', Oslo (Norway)
- **15 and 16 January 2009:** The kick-off meeting of the Progress project 'Best Quality', Bigge (Germany)
- **26 January 2009:** Information seminar for Vlaamse Dienst voor Arbeids Bemiddeling (VDAB), Brussels (Belgium)
- **9 February 2009:** The kick-off meeting of CEN Workshop - Prometheus project, Brussels (Belgium)
- **9 and 10 March 2009:** EQUASS Assurance auditor training, Oslo (Norway)

Project 'Best Quality'

Project 'Best Quality' is an initiative of Josefheim Bigge (Germany) and it is granted by the Progress programme. In this project a number of European Quality Management systems (i.e. ISO, EFQM, EQUASS) will be analyzed, diagnosed and compared on their applicability for social services. The cross reference analysis will provide information about the applicability of the system for quality development and quality improvement. 7 partners from 4 European Member states will be involved in this project. The project will result in recommendations to the European Commission concerning defining, assuring and promoting quality in social services, particularly in the disability related social services and the services for elderly people. Guus van Beek, EQUASS Executive manager, will act as a Quality Expert in this project. For more information please contact Martin Kuenemund at: M.Kuenemund@Josefsheim-Bigge.de

EQUASS on the web!

For regularly updated information on EQUASS and its activities, please check our website: <http://www.equass.be>

EQUASS in Portugal

Service providers in the rehabilitation sector can apply for EQUASS Assurance certification through participation in the Arquimedez project. The Arquimedez project is an initiative of the Ministry of Employment and Social Affairs and it is funded by the ESF-structural fund.

The National Institute for Rehabilitation (INR) is responsible for monitoring the Arquimedez project. On 27 October 2008, managers and staff of the INR were informed about the EQUASS approach and the EQUASS certification programmes.

EQUASS in Norway

A national seminar on EQUASS Assurance and the Norwegian Indicator project was arranged by representatives from Durapart AS and Nopro AS together with the Association of Vocational Rehabilitation Enterprises (AVRE) on the 3rd and 4th of November 2008 with the title "To share is to improve". The main goal of the seminar was to share experiences and new activities on quality assurance and outcome measurement in the sector of Vocational Rehabilitation services in Norway.