



Welcome to the second issue of the EQUASS Newsflash in 2012! 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.

The EQUASS Newsflash is published three times a year. Last issue will be published in December.

## Upcoming events

**10-12 December 2012**  
EQUASS Assurance  
auditor training in  
Estonia

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## **New EQUASS Assurance Certified Organisations**

**The following organisations have been certified since the last Newsflash:**

Bydelenes Produksjonstjeneste AS, Kirkens Sosialtjeneste, Øvre Eiker Tiltakene, AS REKO, Oppegård Kommunes Industriservice as, Tremek AS, VekstTorget AS, Berg Vekst Drift as, Vesterålen Vekst, Vestvågøy ASVO A/S, Fossheim verksteder AS, Jobbhuset Røyken AS, SOGNEPRODUKT AS, Arbeidskompetanse & service AS, Dyrøy Vekst AS, HADSEL ASVO AS, Arbeidsglede & Utvikling, GREP Maribakkane barnehage, GREP Rønningen barnehage, Haram Industrier AS, Agenda AS, STOREHOLMEN VTA as, Rødøy Produkter AS, Lunner Produkter AS, AB Scandinavian Motorcenter, Oddaprodukt AS' Varanger ASVO, Askim ASVO AS, Lipro AS, Personligt Ombud i Skåne, Innovati AS, Velst Melhus AS, Tepas Personal AS, Kanmer AS, Frisk Bris Bamble KF.

## EQUASS Stakeholder Committee meeting in Lithuania



On the 7 June 2012, the Lithuanian Local License Holder held an EQUASS stakeholder committee meeting, in order to consult national stakeholders on how to improve the quality of vocational rehabilitation service for people with disabilities in Lithuania.

The following organisations have send delegates to represent them in the Local Stakeholder Committee:

- ◆ The Department for the Affairs of disabled at The Ministry of Social Security and Labour Monitoring and control division;
- ◆ The Lithuanian Paraplegic Association;
- ◆ The Lithuanian organization of People with Mental Disorders "Giedra";
- ◆ The Lithuanian Association of the Blind and Visually Handicapped;
- ◆ The Lithuanian Labour Exchange at The Ministry of Social Security and Labour Employment Support division;
- ◆ The Lithuanian Association of the Deaf;
- ◆ The Ministry of Health of the Republic of Lithuania;
- ◆ The Lithuanian Union of Persons with Disabilities;
- ◆ The Lithuanian Welfare Society for People with Intellectual Disability;
- ◆ The Ministry of Social Security and Labour Social Inclusion and Communities Department Equal Opportunities Division Head of the division.

The meeting was attended by one of the EQUASS quality system developers, EQUASS Key expert Guus van Beek, members of the National Stakeholder Committee. The meeting had the aim to look deeper into variety of quality management systems in Europe and Lithuania and seeks to improve the quality of service in social sector. The participants acquired knowledge about the role of the National Stakeholder Committee, the best practice in implementing EQUASS quality system in Portugal and Estonia.

At the meeting the delegate from Utena Labour Market Training Centre presented the experience on implementing EQUASS in Lithuanian market. The event gave information for all the participants about EQUASS Local Licence Holder functions, the results of EQUASS quality system implementation in Lithuania and action plan of Local Licence Holder for year 2012.

The information about the National Stakeholder meeting for quality improvement of vocational rehabilitation service for people with disabilities were disseminated at national and international levels:

[www.reabilitacija.lt](http://www.reabilitacija.lt)

[www.unriis.lt](http://www.unriis.lt)

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



## Local Licence Holders Summit in Norway



On 26 June 2012, the EQUASS unit held a meeting in Fevik, Norway, gathering most Local Licence Holders and one potential, on the margins of the EPR Annual Conference.

The meeting purpose was both an information session on the preliminary findings of the ISO 17021 feasibility study, as well as a consultation on the impact of the ISO standard which recognises quality in the operation of a certification body.

The seminar also featured a lively debate about the current role of the Licence Holders, best practises in marketing, dissemination and stakeholder consultation, and the potential structural changes arising from the efforts in further professionalising all levels and processes of the EQUASS certification, and eliminating potential conflicts of interest.

The meeting participants represented the EQUASS Assurance Licence Holders of Estonia, Germany, Lithuania, Norway, Slovenia, and representatives from Denmark. The seminar facilitators were Guus van Beek and Marie Dubost, of the EQUASS Unit.

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## EQUASS Introduction seminar Tallin, Estonia on 30 August 2012

On 30 August, the Estonian Licence Holder for EQUASS Assurance ASTANGU organised an information seminar for applicants. Participants received information and training about the ESF project, EQUASS approach on Quality, the implementation strategy and the EQUASS Assurance certification programme. The training covered a summary of quality certifications, the fundamentals of the EQUASS Assurance system, discussions and workshops. The event had over 30 persons in attendance. The 2012-2013 Estonian ESF project aims to certify 25 additional social services providers

by the end of 2013. The event received a satisfaction score of 4.62 over 5 (4 being "good", and 5 being "excellent").

More information on [www.equass.ee](http://www.equass.ee)



## **EQUASS Assurance auditor calibration training Oslo, Norway on 4 September 2012**

On the 4 September 2012, 10 EQUASS Assurance auditors received a one-day calibration session in Oslo.

The session was designed specifically to further the training of existing and practising EQUASS Assurance auditors, and address specific changes in the EQUASS Assurance system since 2012. The session focused on ensuring that auditing procedures and techniques were updated and coherent among the active auditors.



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## **Benchmarking with EQUASS Excellence Amadora, Portugal on 20-21 September 2012,**

At 20 and 21 September 2012, 20 participants participated in a benchmarking event, which was offered by the EPR as part of its Centre Action Plan joint actions. The event took place at Fundação AFID, an EPR member who was awarded with the EQUASS Excellence recognition in 2011. All participants prepared the event in detail by identifying Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and showing their performance on the EQUASS criteria for the EQUASS Principles Leadership, Result Orientation, Staff and Continuous Improvement.



At the event, the participants learned about the challenges, opportunities, limitation and pitfalls of bench marking by discussing concrete examples coming from the social health care and education sector. They discussed and exchanged their preparatory work and experienced the challenge of defining common and valid KPIs for similar criteria in various contexts so information about performance can easily be compared.

Two EPR members, Josefs Gesellschaft (JG Gruppe) and the Association of Vocational Rehabilitation Enterprises (AVRE) shared their model and indicators of benchmarking and bench learning.

The evaluation of the bench marking event show a high appreciation by all participants for AFID's organisation of the event (9,8) and the trainer of the event: EQUASS Key Expert (9,3). (Scale 1-10).

## Quick News

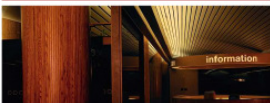
### Prime project publications

The PRIME-project emphasizes the transfer of knowledge and experiences, the implementation and dissemination of the results of the former EQAVET-project.

Two publications are now available:

- ◆ EQUASS Certification: A tool for VET providers to show compliance with the EQARF for VET
- ◆ Cross-reference study on EQAVET

To read the reports, please visit the Prime project page of the EQUASS website, [www.equass.be](http://www.equass.be).



### Upcoming EQUASS Assurance auditor training in Estonia

Registrations for the next EQUASS Assurance auditor training organised on 10-11-12 December 2012 in Tallin, Estonia are now open. The training covers the fundamentals of the EQUASS Assurance system, calibration of performance, the preparation of the site visit and reporting on the audit.

The training lasts 3 days, and is open to:

- ◆ Existing EQUASS Assurance Auditors wishing to update their skills
- ◆ New participants wishing to become EQUASS Assurance auditors

For more information and to register to the training, visit the Upcoming Events section of the EQUASS website, [www.equass.be](http://www.equass.be).

EQUASS is an initiative of the European Platform for Rehabilitation (EPR). EQUASS provides a range of comprehensive services in the area of approval and certification of quality, all of which comply with European requirements for quality in the provision of social services.

The EQUASS Newsflash is issued three times a year.  
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