

## **Provider Forum Report**

### **Athens, 14/11/2014**

#### **1. CONTEXT**

This Provider Forum was organised to bring together service providers in the field of disability (and mainly intellectual disability), to highlight the importance of issues such as social inclusion and independent living for people with disability and to share ideas of how to take these further. Moreover, it was an opportunity to inform service providers about EASPD's activities and how EASPD could help them to further develop and improve their services through funding programmes. Finally, the Provider Forum was a chance to emphasise the usefulness and importance of networking and structural cooperation between service provider organisations.

This Provider Forum took place at a time when big changes need to take place in the legislation and the policies in Greece regarding people with disability, and it was therefore important for certain issues to be raised by service providers. In addition, due to the current financial difficulties it was particularly important to share knowledge about accessing funding programmes and project opportunities by the European Commission.

#### **2. PROVIDER FORUM PROGRAMME AND DISCUSSIONS**

There were speakers/representatives from the Greek Government, the local authorities (central government and local government), as well as from service providers.

More specifically, the speakers and their topics were:

- Efi Bekou (Secretary General of Welfare at the Ministry of Labour and Social Security) "New policies in the area of support for people with disability in Greece"
- Efi Prokopaki (President of the Management Committee of ESTIA) "ESTIA as a receiver but also an active configurator of policies"
- Luk Zelderloo (Secretary General of EASPD) "Promoting complete social participation and inclusion of people with disability" UNCRPD
- Aikaterini Petritsi-Murad (Vice Mayor of Filothei-Psychiko in Social Security, Solidarity, Education, Health and Sports) "The social policy of the municipality of Filothei-Psychiko regarding vulnerable social groups"
- Dimitrios Nikolski (President of the Committee for the Rights of people with disability in the Council of Europe) "Independent living, equal participation, without obstacles and discrimination"
- Father Konstantinos Papanikolaou (President of the Institute for Community Rehabilitation) "Brief comparative approach of recommended practices for social integration of people with intellectual disabilities in light of secularisation on one hand and of the Orthodox Church on the other"
- Sonia Staskowiak (Project & Finance Officer EASPD) "EASPD in Brief"
- Luk Zelderloo (General Secretary of EASPD) "European vision for development and work of a national network"



There was also opportunity to ask questions and for interaction/discussion with the panel.

### 3. OUTCOME AND FOLLOW-UP

The representatives of the participating organisations expressed a real need of being part of networks, both national and international.

Estia is receiving a lot of inquiries of the benefits of being a member of EASPD.

Three of the participating organisations already proceeded to join EASPD as observers.

Meledoni – a small umbrella organisation representing 10 service provider organisations for PWID in Greece decided to re-join the EASPD after a few years absence due to the financial situation in Greece.

A national network of scientific information sharing was formed – The purpose of creating this network is the need to enable the different structures to exchange views and experiences on scientific level. This network was an outcome of the Provider Forum.

One of the target groups of the forum was the presidents and managers of the organisations. They brought the information back to their organisations and it reached different staff levels.

Today it is still on the agenda for many professionals working in the disability field.

The creation of a national and/or an international network is highly important in order to make changes and enhancements in the life situation of people with disabilities.

A group of professionals with long-time experience in the disability sector are in the middle of a process of implementing a social enterprise and they are interested in organising a follow-up provider forum in 2015.

### 4. PARTICIPANT LIST

Deputy Minister of Health- Mrs. Papakosta

Secretary General of Welfare at the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance- Mrs. Bekou

Deputy District commissioner of social policy, spokesman for the Commissioner of Attica region-Mrs. Thanopoulou

Former Deputy District Commissioner of economics Attica region- Mrs.Vassilakou

Vice Mayor for Social Security ,Solidarity, Education, Health & Sports – Mrs.Petritsi – Murad

President of the Local Council at the municipality of Filothei/ N.Psychico – Mrs.Passa

Emeritus Professor of Special Education- Mr Delasoudas

President of the committee of experts on the rights of people with disabilities of the Council of Europe- Mr. Dimitios Nikolski

Presidents and representatives of the following organisations:

AMYMONI- Panhellenic Association of Parents and Friends of People with visual impairments and additional disabilities- Athens

ALKYONI - Association for disabled people Nafpaktos, Peleponese



ALMA- PanHellenic Association of Adapted Activities for people with disabilities- Athens  
ARGO-The Association of Naval Parents of Children with Special Needs – Athens  
EGNYA- the Parent Association of Intellectual impaired individuals – Lagonissi  
ELEPAP- Rehabilitation for the Disabled- Athens  
SSNG- The Spastics Society of Northern Greece- Thessaloniki  
Cerebral Palsy Greece- Athens  
EFTHIMEIO- Centre Committee of Parents and Friends of Children and People of Special Needs-  
Corinth  
E.PSY.M- Society for Psychosocial Studies –Athens  
THEOTOKOS Foundation-Athens  
KOKKORI Foundation- supported housing for people with Intellectual Disability- Athens  
KEA -Special Education centre for people with intellectual disabilities- Thessaloniki  
K.E.E.P.E.A. "HORIZONS"- Center for Vocational Education for Children with Special Needs –Athens  
MARGARITA- Special Vocational Training Centre for PWID- Athens  
MERIMNA - Special Vocational Training Centre- Katerini  
MERIMNA-THERAPEUTIC EDUCATION CENTRE FOR PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY – Patras  
PAMMAKARISTOS -Foundation for Disabled Children – Nea Makri  
PANAGIA ELEOUSA- Special Vocational Training and Rehabilitation for People with Intellectual and  
Associated Disabilities – Prefecture of Etoloakarnania Messolongi- Agrinio  
PEGKAP- National Association of Parents of People with Intellectual Disability-Athens  
PETAGMA- Supported Housing- Athens  
ERGASTIRI- Association of Parents Guardians and Friends of People with Special Needs- Athens  
Day Centre for Children & Teenagers with Autism – Messinias  
Angeloi Gis-Association of parents and Friends of People with Rett Syndrome- Athens  
The Association of Parents Guardians and Friends of People with Autism- Messinias  
ESTIA – Support & Social Care Centre for People with Intellectual Disabilities- Athens

See attachment for signature list

## 5. QUALITY EVALUATION

The Provider Forum was successful as it received positive feedback from the participants and it met its aims. There were participants from the majority of the service provider organisations in the field of disability. Moreover, the participants expressed great interest in the topics and they were actively involved in the discussions. The information and ideas presented at the forum were then brought back to their organisations. In addition, a new national network was created. Finally, several of the organisations after finding out more about EASPD stated that they intend to join the EASPD network during 2015.

