

Newsletter 1

"GAMBE"

DECEMBER 2006

MARIE CURIE ASSOCIATION, BULGARIA



Dear Sir or Madam,

We are glad to present you the first issue of the newsletter, depicting the activities within the "Community close vocational integration of people with disabilities" project.

From the first issue of the newsletter you will find more information about the idea and the aims of the project as well as additional details about the partnership and news on the project work.

The team of Marie Curie Association in cooperation with our international partners will regularly inform you about all interesting themes and events, which occur during the whole project lifetime. At every 4 months you will receive the next issue of the newsletter by the national coordinator of GAMBE project in your country. The team responsible for the development of the newsletter will select for you useful information concerning life-long training programmes and other interesting topics, in close connection with community vocational integration of people with disabilities.

Through the regular issues of the newsletter you will be kept in touch with the news of the development of the project and the results achieved. From the unit "Valorization events" you will find out more about the dissemination of the project and the exploitation of its outcomes.

WHAT IS "GAMBE"

GAMBE project is an international initiative funded by "Leonardo da Vinci" programme of the European Commission. The project is coordinated by "Pro Mente", Austria and is one of the 9 projects in the country for 2006 selection year, supported by "Leonardo da Vinci". The duration of the project is 24 months with start 01.08.2006 and end on 01.08.2008.

The work title of the project GAMBE comes from the German official title, which translated in English, means "Community close vocational integration of people with disabilities".

This transnational initiative involves 10 organizations from the following European countries: Austria, the Netherlands, Italy, Spain, Germany, Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Slovenia and Cyprus.

The main idea of the project is to develop and propose an innovative approaches and flexible instruments for raise in the competences and soft skills of the professionals, working with people with social-psychiatric disabilities. The other target group of the project includes people with social-

psychiatric disabilities, who will be offered training tools for gaining basic skills, enabling them to easily find employment on the open labor market.

The project is targeted to regionally social-active people (policy makers), employers from small and medium-sized enterprises and service sector, who are directly and indirectly engaged in efforts for improvement of life and professional realization of disabled people.

PROJECT PARTNERSHIP

The project partnership includes various organizations from 10 European countries, all of which have great experience and expertise in the field of disability.



Contractor and coordinator of the project is “Pro Mente” Austria. The organization works in the field of vocational integration, club houses, voluntary services, medical rehabilitation, psychological counselling, addiction, daily structure and housing.

Contact person:
Tommy Zuljevic-Salamon

zuljevict@promenteooe.at

AUSTRIA



HCM International, Cyprus

HCM International is a global consulting firm helping organisations maximise return on investment in people

Contact person:
Costas Stavrakis

csstavrakis@yahoo.com

Cyprus



e-ISOTIS

e-ISOTIS is a non-profit making organization founded in January 2004, that works for People with Disabilities, their spouses as well as key players of the ICT (Information Communication Technology) and training/research community from the whole globe. Currently, its network of disabled and elderly

individuals as end-users, associations of disabled and elderly, ICT industry players, training/research institutions and universities expands not only through the whole Europe but also in Australia, China, US as well as in many other non-European countries.



Contact person:
Karel Van Isacker

karel@e-isotis.org

GREECE



Marie Curie Association, Bulgaria

MARIE CURIE ASSOCIATION is a non-profit, NGO whose activities are mainly intended to disabled people. Marie Curie Association has managed and co-ordinated many national and international projects in the field of career orientation, employment, labor law consultancies, mentoring, networks of employers of disabled people, health care, education, and unemployment mostly for disabled people particularly at graduate and managerial levels. All have had an emphasis on IT and web-resources, paper-based carrier and Braille.



Contact person:
Mitko Stamatov

mstamatov@marie-curie-bg.org

BULGARIA

AREAS

AREAS is a non-profit organization, established in 2005. The mission of the organization is to promote best practices in adult education and professional development with a view to contributing to the sustainable development of communities throughout Northern and Northeastern Romania.

Contact person:
Gafiuc Petru Vasile

areas@gmail.com

ROMANIA



ATRIUM

Advanced Technology Research & Innovation for Users & their Mobility is vocational training organization for people with special needs.

Contact person: Joost Thissen info@atriumbv.nl
The Netherlands

Fundacion ICSE, Spain

Contact person:
Enrique Andrare

enrique@fundacionicse.com

SPAIN

La Valle del Sole

La Valle del Sole was founded in 1986 as an association which provided summer activities for children and youngsters most of which were part of school groups and that in some cases included people with disabilities needing special educational care. Since 1993 the association has extended its activities to the whole social field, in cooperation with Local Health Authorities and Local Councils.

Contact person:
Elena Cellai

valle-del-sole@libero.it

ITALY

OZARA

OZARA prosecutes 9 care facilities for people with disabilities in Slovenia. Psychological counseling, day centers, vocational training measures, self-help groups, leisure activities, legal advice and vocational integration measures are offered.

Contact person:
Igor Hrast

igor.hrast@ozara.org

SLOVENIA

Ajb GmbH, GERMANY

The general juvenile counseling is a non-profit company for counseling of juveniles and psychological rehabilitation. It is a non-profit facility which has been founded in 1976 with the objective to grant related supporting services to adolescents and young adults with disabilities.

Contact person:
Christopher Abt c.abt@ajb-berlin.de

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Main objective of the partnership GAMBE is the community-close permanent vocational integration of people with social-psychiatric disabilities in rural regions. In order to have a lasting positive effect measures for employment integration of people with social-psychiatric disabilities have to be initiated multi-plane:

- Promotion of self-determined life of people with social-psychiatric disabilities;
- Embodiment of high-class professional education for people with social-psychiatric disabilities in the educational and employment policy
- Exchange within the partner-countries about methods of JobCreations and about new niche employment for people with social-psychiatric disabilities

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Within the project the following results and impact will be achieved:

- a tailored education programme designed on the capabilities and skills
- qualification in order to live a self-determined life
- access to information and communication technology
- practice-orientated professional qualification on the job
- establishment of permanent individual networks of support within the social life environment

VALORIZATION EVENTS

This unit provides current news about the valorization activities which GAMBE project partners carried out.

Gambe presentation at the Danube symposium in Varna/Bulgaria in October 2006

At the Danube symposium in Varna there was a workshop concerning new trends and projects in Vocational Integration in Austria. In this workshops Tom Zuljevic - Salamon presented GAMBE as one of the new projects. Special interest was considered to the principle of the coached layman work in its function as integration workers, the support circles and the stabilization of the community structures. The necessity of creative jobcoaching methods was stressed, to create real new work possibilities and not only to adapt to the displacement competition at the job market. In the workshop and in the following discussion approx. 20 persons from the surrounding field of psychiatric hospitals and ambulant psychiatric institutions participated.

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Meeting between pro mente oö and La valle del Sole in Italy in December 2006



In December Tom Zuljevic - Salamon visited our Italian partner la Valle del Sole. He was discussing the project progress with Marie Luisa Mion and Elena Cellai. Marie and Elena stressed the fact that due to the situation of gastronomy and tourism in the region and to the basic conditions with the testing phase, it is important for them to start the testing phase not only in

September but already in June. Beside first training parts at the computer were presented and in Austria available software of supported cognitive training programs were discussed and a translation into the necessary languages was considered. They decided to suggest to the other test partners to make a meeting between Austria, Italy, Netherlands and Greece to discuss the continuation of the work. The second February half was considered and the colleagues of La Valle del Sole will organize that meeting and the representatives of the Commune Casole D `Elsa would gladly receive us.

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Expansion of the Gambe test region in Upperaustria to the entire district of Steyr

The politicians in the district of Steyr has been discussing the possibility not only to choose the region Weyer as test region but to enlarge the test phase to the total district of Steyr. On the one hand a broader dispersion and more results would be available and on the other hand not only rural areas with small commercial structures but also urban areas with industrial work structures would be at disposal. Until now no decision was met however an expansion would cause no problems for the project.!

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Presentation of GAMBE project on e-ISOTIS website
GAMBE project is already presented on the e-ISOTIS website (news section – http://www.e-isotis.org/news_comments.php?id=428_0_11_0_C ;
project page - http://www.e-isotis.org/projects_comments.php?id=490_0_4_0_C)

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In the period 13-19 November 2006, in Suceava, Romania, carried on the Festival of Your Opportunities, an activity that has as objective the informing of citizens concerning their rights in the European Union, integration of persons with disabilities throughout education, the increase of non-formal educative institutions credibility in community, a better knowledge of educational needs of persons and of community and the promotion of European Certification as Xpert, EBCL.
In the framework of this event, on 15 November, County Hospital “Sfantul Ioan cel Nou” Suceava developed a Symposium with the title “Depression – therapy and management”. AREAS was invited to open the discussions by presenting its activity in mental health domain and, more specifically, the GAMBE project and its direct sustainable support for the community. The participants were invited to visit the Day Center, which is part of the project “An occupation and a club for persons with sociopsychiatric disabilities from Suceava”, developed in partnership with Pro-mente Austria

Association. Besides having the opportunity to see some of the daily activities which happen at the Day Center, the guests attended a short theatrical moment, imagined by the beneficiaries themselves.



European Day Conference to give the word to youth with disabilities

The European Commission for the first time focused the theme of the European Day Conference on young persons with disabilities "Youth=Future – Let's make a future for all".

The Conference took place on 4 and 5 December in Brussels. It was an unique opportunity for young participants with disabilities to express their opinion on important matters and share their experiences on the European scene.

The Conference focused on various topics which have a direct impact on the lives and interest of young persons with disabilities. Young disabled participants were informed on the EU youth strategy and were able to give their views on their participation in the EU.

Education, including formal and non-formal education, is another important topic which was addressed. Last but not least, the participants were to express themselves on their participation in the society, including employment and participation activities beyond employment.

It is important to note that the findings of the conference will be used by the European Commission to feed in the priorities of the next European Commission Disability Action Plan of 2008-2009.

The representatives of "Marie Curie" Association, Bulgaria, Maria Goranova and Petya Grudeva, were the only participants from Bulgarian NGO, invited to take part in the European conference. This forum was a great opportunity for informal presentation of GAMBE project in front of representatives of the youth community of Europe. During the event a special place was separated for exhibition of materials, related to the themes of the forum. GAMBE project was presented on paper on the exhibition.

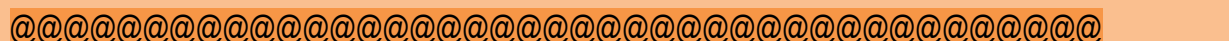
Internet: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/disability/day_en.html



National Network for social inclusion of disabled people, initiated within project under "PHARE"

„Marie Curie" Association joined the newly-established National Network for social inclusion of disabled people, initiated within project under "PHARE" Programme of EU. The kick-off meeting was held on 15/11/2006 in the Regional Council Hall – Plovdiv. With the presence of more than 25 representatives of organizations working in the sphere of training and employment of people with disabilities, the team of "Marie Curie" Association presented the GAMBE Project, its main ideas and expected outcomes. Other participants shared their great interest in GAMBE project and wished to receive regular information on the project progress.

The kick-off meeting was only the first stepping stone of the operation of the newly-established network. In the future workshops will be organized, where themes connected to disadvantaged people will be discussed, as well as the opportunities for their entrepreneurship initiatives will be cleared out.



The project GAMBE presented in front of Workability Europe Members

Since September 2006 “Marie Curie” Association joined the big family of the European network in the field of social work and employment “Workability Europe”. We are the first Bulgarian organization being a member of the network. The GAMBE project was presented at the first meetings with representatives of the “Workability Europe” Network on European level. They received printed information about the project containing interesting information about that international initiative. The “Marie Curie” team assured its new partners that future supply with important information and news on the projects will be at regular basis.

Online GAMBE Area

<http://www.ajb-berlin.info/fileadmin/GAMBE/index-2.html>

The draft version of GAMBE website is uploaded on this address. Temporarily this is the virtual place, where you can find the news about the development of the project. In the next issue of the newsletter the official website of GAMBE project will be shown.

