



newsletter 01/2008

European dimensions within the intercultural qualification for migrant women entering the health and care sector

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This is the 1st newsletter of the international Leonardo da Vinci Project (LLP-LDV-TOI-07-AT-0009) „**PreQual steps**“ conducted by 5 partners from 5 countries (maiz- Austria, Vuste Envis- Czech Republic, IEPALA-Spain, DemNet-Hungary, Antigone-Greece).
<http://prequalsteps.maiz.at>

It's objective is to highlight current information and results of the project's activities and to lounge issues related to female migration, work and health & care within the EU from the perspective of migrant women organisations. If you don't want to receive any further newsletter please send a mail to leonardo@maiz.at

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Leonardo da Vinci Project - Transfer of Innovation
Duration November 1st, 2007 – October 31st, 2009

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1. PreQual steps, developed by the autonomous Austrian migrant women organisation maiz, based in Linz, aims to support migrant women to enter the formal labor market within the health and care sector by implementing the course "PreQual- Intercultural qualification for migrant women entering into the health and care sector". As during the last three years within the initial EU project PreQual the course has been successfully implemented and tested in Austria, Germany and Italy as well as within two national follow up projects in Austria, the course will now be transferred and tested within Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary and Spain.

Questioning current concepts of interculturality, gender related issues within the field of health and care and the perception of work, the project always tries to follow the innovative educational principles the project is based on.

Educational work with migrants is one of the first and most basic activities of the project promotor maiz. "From the beginning, the work was entitled, conceptualized, and carried out as 'political education'. Here, processes are implemented which include a reflection on politics and society, and have the aim of supporting critical consciousness and participation."

Being part of the educational work of maiz the project **Prequal steps** is also guided by the following three basic principles:

„We raise political consciousnesses, we do not do charity work.

We support subjects – not clients or objects.

Education is always political. It can affirm the status quo or question it. Within maiz, processes of education are understood as having effects on changing on reality.

Language is not only understood as a communication tool, but as a process of the construction of meanings. " (R. Salgado, maiz)

1.1 Partner activities:

Beside a familiarisation with the content, goals and concepts of PreQual the partners are currently working on the elaboration of national backgrounds: eg. of their health and care systems, challenges migrant women face on the labor market, and necessary amendments of the curriculum. National studies and workshops with experts from the different target sectors are organized to enlarge the current curriculum by new European aspects and to secure a sustainable success of PreQual.

AUSTRIA: The Austrian partner and project promotor maiz is transferring the innovative concept of PreQual to the new European partner countries by introducing the partners into the concept of PreQual, particularly with regard to its pedagogical and methodological concept. Thereby maiz can draw on and share experiences that have been gathered within three previous PreQual courses and several other educational measures for migrant women.

More over maiz is responsible for the elaboration of the new interactive webpage.

CZECH REPUBLIC: Against the background of being a former transit country the migration into the Czech Republic has increased notably within the last years. VUSTE ENVIS Ltd. has prepared a national paper focusing migrant women's working situation within the health and care system of the Czech Republic, which actually is facing a lack of employees. Amongst other reasons this situation traces back to a "nurses movement" to Western Europe and difficult working situations within the country. VUSTE ENVIS states that many barriers exist for migrant women to enter the labour market in general and that many migrants are working in nonqualified positions. Within hospitals migrant women are frequently placed by personal agencies that have special contracts with them. A situation which offers a huge space for exploitation and restriction of rights of migrant women. Actually hospitals actively "try to cooperate with embassies in Ukraine and Vietnam to find workers".

The course concept of PreQual is actually being analysed in respect to the national requirements. And necessary amendments are discussed in cooperation with the "Association of Czech and Moravian Hospitals". The beginning of an implementation of the PreQual course is planned for October 2008.

GREECE: Migrant people in Greece do not have the right to work in the public sector something that keeps them back from any kind of work in public hospitals. And although this is mostly the case in Greece, there is also a big need in the home care sector, as well in private elderly houses. However, there is a big difficulty for migrant women to find good conditions in the home care sector as they are often taken advantage of and have no workers' rights at all. The PreQual course aims to be a valuable tool for the migrant women, in order to get a descent job, since it will provide women with qualification in the health care field and this way they will be in a better position of finding a good job.

HUNGARY: In Hungary the questions of migration do not make part of a social dialogue as the country hosts small number of migrants and migration does not cause any social tensions yet. Besides some Hungarian advocacy and awareness raising projects, the Prequal initiative has a great chance to highlight the issue in Hungary. It also offers a unique opportunity to work together with migrant women through self-empowerment. Since the project has begun DemNet Hungary collected all the recent researches that reflect on the situation of migrant women or women in the labor market although there is a lack of researches and accessible data in this field. Based on the freshly prepared country report, experts involved from migrant organizations and training NGOs started discussions about the Prequal curriculum development in Hungary adapting the Austrian model.

SPAIN: IEPALA: "In order to concretise the contents for the course we consider it important to include the proposals of migrant women and self-organisations. There have been meetings with self-organizations and one workshop to present the project and to explain the questionnaire, the project objectives and the importance of their inputs in the course design. To supervise the technical part of the curriculum of the course (production and elaboration of the curriculum and materials, contact for the materials, profile of the participants...) the organization of the course has been outlined with an expert trainer. Several contacts were established with an expert in interculturality and Augusto Boal's theater to involve her designing the part of the curriculum related to the personal development. We also contacted an educative cooperative that will support us in the cooperative knowledge.

As result of the diffusion of the press release, there were several contacts of mass media interested in extending the news on the project. This way there was an interview in a radio station and an interview was published in a newspaper (*It is possible*) related to the world of the cooperation and the immigration.

Despite contacts with the state and local administrations to obtain the official certification of the course, this certification could not have been obtained so far; so IEPALA will award a certification which will have a merely private character. The fundamental challenge for this project is to obtain an assistants' good participation during the course. Economic aids for people who are not receiving the subsidy of unemployment are therefore needed. Four projects have been presented to two different private entities to obtain scholarships so that the assistants could follow the course without it any economic costs. "

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2. JOIN the NEW and interactive Website!

The ICT based virtual platform and the website – build up by maiz/AT will provide a basis for the exchange of international outcomes, thematic key points and challenges among experts with and without migration background. We invite you to give feedback, to send your comments and get in contact with us through the website.

With our website we try to specially address not only the target sectors from the health and care field but migrant women and self-organisations of migrants.

The website will soon be online in all partner languages as there are: Czech, Hungarian, German, Greek and Spanish.

See: <http://prequalsteps.maiz.at>

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3. International partner meetings in Greece and Austria:

The first international meeting of PreQual steps took place in Austria/ Linz. In April 08 the 2nd meeting was held in Thessaloniki/ Greece hosted by the partner organisation Antigone. Within the meeting the partners especially focused on the pedagogical concept of PreQual, the pedagogy of Paulo Freire, on critical exchange and reflection about concepts of interculturality. For more information please contact maiz. (leonardo@maiz.at)

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4. Milestones of the project

1st Step: Familiarisation with the concepts of PreQual and PreQual steps.
Start: November 2007

2nd Step NOW: National reports and national workshops with experts from the different target sectors - modification of course concept considering national requirements. Introduction into pedagogical concept, methods and self-evaluation (fore more: see: <http://prequalsteps.maiz.at>)

3rd Step: National implementation of PreQual courses and self-evaluation process
Between September 2008 and April 2009

Throughout the project: Dissemination activities, Lobbying, networking, efforts for sustainability of PreQual,

End of the project. October 2009

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6. Announcements and Events

Regular newsletter: Within PreQual steps 5 newsletters will be published.

If you are interested in further information on the project please contact the website, the project promoter and/or the project partners:

Austria: Verein maiz, leonardo@maiz.at

Czech Republic: Vuste Envis, envis@vuste-envis.cz

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The Leonardo da Vinci programme

Leonardo da Vinci is the European Community's vocational training programme whose aim is to implement and support lifelong learning strategies in accordance with the national training strategies. In an effort to increase mobility, foster innovation and improve the quality of training, co-operation between the various players in vocational training are promoted within the framework of transnational projects.