

## EQUIL - 2<sup>nd</sup> Newsletter



EQUIL  
Equality in Learning

EQUIL, a project co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme - Key Action 2 Strategic partnerships for Adult Education, promotes the inclusion of people with mental health issues in the labour market. In the two years of the project, partners will develop four training modules for practitioners with the aim of increasing their skills in supporting people with mental health issues into work.

**Short-term joint staff training event, Palermo, 26th - 30th of September 2016**



After the co-production of the draft training modules, partners met in Palermo to review findings, discuss the key learning outcomes of them and develop their structure. The training modules foreseen by the project are:

1. Employment Support Models - Beliefs and Values for Educators/Practitioners
2. Educator/Practitioner Skills for Supporting People with Mental issues who want to work
3. Educator/Practitioner Skills for Supporting Employers to Employ and Retain People with Lived Experiences
4. European Guided Toolkit for Co-production

The training modules are composed of exercises, which have been developed and tested during the **Short-term joint staff training event**, this enabled the partnership to receive feedbacks useful to finalise training and learning content of the modules according to partners' social and cultural context. The next steps of the project have been discussed with a focus on how to implement the piloting phase in each country and the different obstacles practitioners might have in implementing the training modules with people with lived experiences of mental ill health.

## Piloting phase



After the training event in Palermo, each partner has to start the piloting of the training modules. Practitioners from each partner country will test the training modules with people with lived experiences they work with, in order to support them in finding and keeping a job.

The piloting phase will involve:

- 25 practitioners, that will increase their knowledge and awareness on values and beliefs needed to be able to support people with mental health issues back into the workforce (Module 1 - Employment Support Models); Each of these practitioners will pilot the skills and approaches learnt in the module with 10 mental health services users, 50 per partner country 250 in total.
- 250 people affected by mental health issues who will be supported by practitioners on how to enter and/or return into the labour market (Module 2 - Educator/Practitioner Skills for Supporting People with Mental issues who want to work);
- 18 employers who will be supported and encouraged by practitioners to recruit people who may have experienced mental health illness (Module 3 - Educator/Practitioner Skills for Supporting Employers to Employ and Retain People with Lived Experiences);
- 10 practitioners will experiment Co-production by involving other relevant actors in the development of a service, product, or project (Module 4 - European Guided Toolkit for Co-production).

Co-production has been the methodology used throughout the first phase of the project to develop the training modules.

## Dilemmas



During the training event in Palermo, the different challenges that could arise in each partner country have been analysed and discussed.

One of the main barriers existing for people with lived experience to integrate in the labour market is the **stigma** and **lack of knowledge** of employers about the relation between mental illness and job performance. To address this issue, EQUIL aims at increasing awareness about mental health issues and foster employers' knowledge about the real consequences mental illness might have in the working environment.

Another barrier could be the **diversity of services** providing support to people with lived experience. EQUIL will try to involve different professionals in the field in order to put together people acting in different spheres of people with mental health issues' life and to foster their cooperation.

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## Partners

The Coordinator of the EQUIL project is [Merseyside Expanding Horizons](#) from the United Kingdom. Project activities will take place in all partner countries: Denmark ([Mht Consult](#)), Italy ([CESIE](#)), Netherlands ([Zorgvragersorganisatie GGZ Midden Holland](#)), United Kingdom ([Mersey Care NHS Trust](#)) and Spain ([Action Laboral](#)).

## For more information

- [www.equilcoproduction.eu](http://www.equilcoproduction.eu)
- [www.facebook.com/equil.eu](https://www.facebook.com/equil.eu)
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