



newsletter 04/2009

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

This is the 4th 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, Sophia-Czech Republic, IEPALA-Spain, DemNet-Hungary, Antigone-Greece). <http://prequalsteps.maiz.at>

Its objective is to highlight current information and results of the project's activities and to launch discussion on 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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1. PreQual – innovative PreQualification for migrant women: experiences in young EU-member states and recommendations

After the very successful implementation of already eight international PreQual courses within Austria, Greece, Germany, Italy and Spain, the qualification measure for prequalification of migrant women who want to enter the health and care sector was now for the first time also successfully realized within the young EU-member states Czech Republic and Hungary. The following articles from the partner organizations Sofia (Czech Republic) and DemNet (Hungary) give a first interesting insight into the experiences they have made.

1.1 PreQual in Hungary / DemNet:

“Migrants’ situation is very different in new EU Member States, and it is unique in Hungary compared to other New Member States. Non-Hungarian speaking migrants are present in a very low number and many migrants eventually move on to other, mainly Western, EU countries.

DemNet therefore has organized several workshops in which experts in the field of migration as well as labor market specialists and health and care field experts discussed the feasibility and relevance of the proposed draft course concept. The Refugee Reception Center at Bicske finally could offer a training venue and assisted DemNet in finding women interested in an intercultural training with the goal of entering the labor market. The Centre at Bicske is the refugee camp responsible for carrying out integration programs and providing facilities able to assist persons with confirmed refugee status in their attempts to build a new life in Hungary. This turned out to be successful and 8 women signed up for the intercultural training.

By turning to refugee women expressly, several presumptions and principles of the PreQual Steps project gained extreme relevance and eventually became the empowering tool for these women in their search for personal integrity and intercultural understanding of their new context.

The group dynamic was amazing. The women became a strong self-supporting team and their level of Hungarian was rapidly improving. Meanwhile, they have important ties to the trainers and the support staff.

PreQual Steps in Hungary became a training program evolving by small steps, though having an enormous empowering affect on women.”

1.2 PreQual in Czech Republic / Sofia

“The course that took place in the Czech Republic underscored the richness of the women participants’ lives and professional experience. They were most interested in the subjects where they discovered completely new areas of knowledge, providing them with a great deal of space for interaction and exchange of perspectives. The “language barrier” was immensely popular issue; women in this unit were interested in the specificities of the Czech language in communication and were keen to learn what is “behind” certain phrases or words. All of them showed a great interest in a continuation of the course.

The experiences made through the internships and excursions showed that the migrant women are indeed self-confident when interacting with clients and able to make use of and adapt their existing social skills to new environments. The host organizations included hospitals and social health care workers.

It is likely that the fact that most of the women are from the former Soviet Union block also played a role in this easy adaptation. We worked with migrant women who have similar experiences with totality as we had, thus, some of communication barriers were not given. Our present experience showed that there is a communication gap between East, Central and

West European environments, which has rather not yet been introduced as a topic. From the point of view we recommend integrating the topic into the European-level reflection.”

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2. Final conclusions and outlook in all partners' countries

PreQual enabled the development of an education measure capable of stepping up to transform the highly-charged contemporary socio-political debates on care, migration and labor and provide a solution-oriented approach for migrant women. The outcome is a recognized concept that is capable of being implemented internationally. It has now been successfully realized and evaluated in seven EU countries. Throughout this program, we supported and encouraged numerous women and received confirmation from the local authorities that the measure will be able to continue. This is indeed a positive outlook toward working to bring improvements to the life realities of migrant women in Europe through providing further education programs that serve migrant women instead of merely serving Eurocentric and hegemonic interests.

The rich experiences we have made during this project and above all during the recent PreQual courses in Austria, Czech Republik, Greece, Hungary, Spain will soon be published in the new booklets described beyond.

Experts form the fields of health, care and migration and recent participants of PreQual will further more discuss future perspectives and the outlook of PreQual and it's contents during the international final conference scheduled for October 2nd at Madrid. (see point 4)

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3. Two bookles published soon

3.1 PreQual basics

The main focus of PreQual is to provide an educational program that forges a link between the restructuring of everyday life in society and the emancipatory capacity of migrant women within Europe to act as subjects within this process. The educational measures respond to the labor market policies in an emancipatory manner, setting awareness processes in motion and providing a framework for the course participants to explore and practice different ways of acting as a subject within society. Furthermore, PreQual aims to create a common ground for all participants (including the teachers) to develop strategies for changing one's own situation as well as the conditions within the general labor market.

Within our new **printed publication** PreQual basics we therefore like to provide a concrete contribution by presenting pedagogical and methodological basics and the mein contents of our work within PreQual.

3.2 PreQual steps

In this **electronic brochure** we have tried to present our very diverse and to a certain extent varying international experiences and through the citation of examples encourage the implementation of measures which aid migrants to access qualified gainful employment. The countries' reports were written by representatives of our partner organizations. Coaches, course participants, experts and project coordinators should be given the opportunity to present their experiences from a subjective perspective.

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4. Final conference in Madrid

From 30th of September until 2nd of October all partner organisations will meet for the final conference in Madrid.

Some of the international conferences' highlights in brief:

1. 10.09 19:00 – 21:00 **Theatre** following the method of Augusto Boal organized by the association MINKA/Madrid
2. 10.09 12:00 -14:00 Public **Round table**: “Female Migration, Work and Care. European experiences and models for support”; with experts from the fields of migration, education, health and care, participants of PreQual in Spain et.al
- presentation of the booklets and outlook

For more information please contact the Spanish partner organisation IEPALA or the project promoter maiz.

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

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6. Contact:

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, Elisabeth Cepek and Gabriela Küng: leonardo@maiz.at

Czech Republic/ Sofia, Hana Caluš and Muller Alice muller.alice@cet-sofia.cz

Greece/ Antigone: Konstantina Tolia prequal@antigone.gr

Hungary/ DemNet:: Jaksa Brigitta jaksab@demnet.org.hu

Spain/lepala: Sonsoles Garcia-Nieto sonsoles.garcianiето@iepala.es

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