

## **Main objectives of STEPS in the second Phase (Sept. 2002 – Aug. 2004)**

### **Foreword:**

Partners in STEPS would like to cooperate in order to reduce discrimination for men, women and children with learning disabilities and to develop structures towards full participation in society. A stable network of local partnerships in five European municipalities, - joining perspectives of providers, administration and scientific research - is being developed in order to approach the following main objectives.

It is clear that every local partnership will have different priorities within these objectives and will contribute in its own specific way.

Nevertheless every partner accepts the following points as main objectives in the second phase of STEPS.

### **1. Comparative Analysis**

Comparing social services and structures as well as data about learning disabilities throughout Europe is obviously difficult. Another problem of the trans-national dialogue are different terms and their definitions in the different languages and systems.

Data and information collection as well as a glossary of the most important terms are necessary in order to compare and to have a common basis for the discussion.

Steps will

- develop a "glossary" for the most important terms in the field of services for people with learning disabilities
- collect the most important data and information on national practices related to the individuals position referring human rights, existing advocatoric structures, available instruments to reduce discrimination, existing inclusion and necessary referring human rights, advocatoric structures, inclusion, community development.

## **2. Evaluation and Publication of Best Practices**

Best practices in the five countries concerning financial service-structures, legal regulations and institutional settings of services should be shared and published. Keen attention will be paid to independent advocatoric structures, which safeguard the individuals rights for participation and prevent discrimination. The Evaluation will strengthen advice for structures, necessary legal and financial regulations.

## **3. Development of Structures towards Emancipation, Participation and Solidarity**

In this setting STEPS will try to develop structures, methods, instruments in order to guarantee a better quality of life and as independent a lifestyle as possible for the people living in the community. In detail STEPS will develop

- ?? organisational settings that support providers to deliver flexible services according to individual needs, their rights and wishes
- ?? financial and administrative strategies that establish more inclusion and participation
- ?? advocatoric structures that support people with learning disabilities in planing their own life
- ?? training methods for the professional staff to manage the organisational change

The local partnerships will focus on the following approaches:

- ?? Barcelona: human rights in services
- ?? London/Canterbury: advocacy and assessment-practices
- ?? Lidingö/Uppsala: assessment and future planing-practices
- ?? Rotterdam: access to work
- ?? Hamburg: development of community based services

## **4. Involvement of people with learning disabilities**

STEPS will involve people with learning disabilities on the local level. The networks will establish suitable forms of participation, for example with the help of self-advocacy groups. In any case Steps has to make sure, that the involved people with learning disabilities will not get an alibi-function.

## 5. Development of Proposals for the European Level

For the European Level STEPS will develop a proposal for structural and financial changes towards non-discrimination, emancipation and participation.

According to the Treaty of Amsterdam §13 human rights will be introduced as a quality measurement and a planning instrument in the municipality, the administration and the provider services.

## 6. Communication

The communication between the partners on Conferences and via Email and Internet will be the basis of the project: The intention is to exchange knowledge and experiences, to learn from each other and to establish an international network of experts.

To support society's awareness for the needs and interests of people with learning disabilities, STEPS will try to publish best practices and interventions against discrimination. Hearings with politicians, administrators and with organisations of social services to discuss the outcome for concrete changes in social services will be organised.

## 7. Evaluation

STEPS will realise a permanent process-evaluation through

- ?? Self-advocacy-groups of people with learning disabilities
- ?? Professionals working in the field
- ?? An internationally known expert

This evaluation is dedicated to reinforcing the development of STEPS through monitoring, expertising and constructive criticism.

The evaluation will be based on the theory of action-research (K. Lewin) and will use the SMART-System (K. Hekele) for control.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

- Indicators and a set of crucial data about human rights, advocatoric structures, inclusion, community development
- A linguistic basis for the exchange of the five involved countries
- Quality control methods that can be used throughout Europe
- Shared knowledge about the reasons for the discrimination of people with learning disabilities
- Evaluation and publication of best practices and experiences and reforms
- Policy, methods and strategies for the participation of people with learning disabilities
- Proposals for legislative steps with regard to finances, structures and possible implementations of advocacy
- Establishing an international expert-group in the field of social services for people with learning disabilities

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