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Newsletter No. 13

Hamburg, 16th September 2003

Dear Partners and Friends,

Last week, at the 8th of September, the European Commission invited the promoters of the trans-national projects to combat discrimination for a session to Brussels. Anne took part at the meeting on behalf of STEPS.

The purpose of the meeting was to collect experience with operation and implementation of the project's work programmes. Further the Commission informed about implementation of the Community Action Programme to combat discrimination.

Before we give you the most important information from the meeting we would kindly like to ask for your support with writing the STEPS-report on the first year for the European Commission.

With good wishes

Dorothee Bittscheidt

Anne Ernst

Michael Langhanky

IMPORTANT!

Request for reports on the local projects

At the end of November we must submit the final report for the first year of STEPS. The report should include an overview on the activities of the partners as well. Therefore we would like to ask the local partnerships to summarise shortly their experience with the local projects. To simplify and standardise the local reports we send you with the attached file some questions proposed by the Commission for the reports.

We would like to ask you to send us the reports on the local reports latest by!

Friday, 24th of October 2003.

Discussion about the local projects in Barcelona

The reports should be distributed among all partners in STEPS. At the Barcelona Conference in November we have planned a session to discuss the activities, results and questions of the local projects. We hope this idea meets your interest!

Information about the meeting in Brussels

The meeting of the promoters of the trans-national projects to combat discrimination in Brussels took place on the occasion of the beginning of the second year of the programme.

Initially the Commission informed about the action programme to combat discrimination in general which is carried out in the period for 2001 to 2006. This year the main activities are:

Important - a new call for proposals!

The Commission will publish a second call for proposals for trans-national actions to combat discrimination in the next days/weeks to continue with projects like STEPS.

Proposals must be submitted by 26th of November. The call will place similar demands but will have different priorities as the first call.

It is possible that organisations which take part in STEPS submit a proposal for a new trans-national project to the Commission.

We would like to suggest that we should keep informed all partners about possible ideas and plans to submit a proposal in connection with STEPS.

For further information please contact Anne Ernst or have a look at the web site of the European Commission, DG employment and social affairs.

EU-Information campaign.



To raise public awareness about the importance of combating discrimination the commission has started the information campaign “For diversity – against discrimination” (www.stop-discrimination.info)

The central aim is to inform public authorities, organisations representing victims of discrimination, employers and trade unions about the strategy for tackling discrimination. The campaign this year focus on the application of equality principles in the labour market.

We are invited to link STEPS with the campaign.

Commissioning of the Eurobarometer survey on discrimination in Europe.

The Executive Summary of the Eurobarometer has been published in May. The survey can be found on the web site: http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/

Publishing of the “Annual report on equality and non-discrimination 2003” and “New powers to combat discrimination”.

Information: www.stop-discrimination.info

Training for layers, judges and public prosecutors in European legislation to combat discrimination

All partners are kindly requested to name interested persons for the one- or two-days training sessions which take place in Trier, Germany, to pass on the names and addresses to the European Commission.

Evaluation of the programme to combat discrimination

The evaluation is carried out by an external company. (Some of you have already received the questionnaire by email.) The report will be published in 2005.

We plan to provide the brochures and information material about the campaign at the Conference in Barcelona.

Discussion about operation and implementation of the work programme

At the meeting in Brussels the 27 projects were represented. We had a very lively discussion which has shown the interest to exchange information with the other projects. The Commission has promised to establish a platform for communication in the Internet.

In the centre of attention was trans-national work. All projects reported on similar experience:

- All partners have a gain from the trans-national exchange. It is worth to learn about the perspectives of other countries. A great issue is to transfer experiences from the local to the international level and vice verse.
- The approach of most projects is: "Thinking global (or international) and acting local". Most of the projects combine the international discussion with practical oriented projects on the local level.
- To set up the team and teamwork are important. And it is worth the effort to develop a high commitment and a productive working atmosphere.

- A “friendly competition” with the partners is judged as productive and useful.
- Different languages are a challenge in all projects.
- All projects highlight the demand of the programme to work with double discrimination. To co-operate with different groups of people potentially exposed to discrimination exploits valuable knowledge.

In the second part of the meeting the best way to involve the people who suffer from discrimination in the projects was discussed. All participants agree that they should be involved from the beginning on every level of the projects. They want to take part actively – not as objects but experts for their own life. It has been discussed whether involvement of the partners should be a rigid duty or not. Probably it will not, but the involvement of the target groups will be taken into consideration more intensively.

Further different ideas to diffuse the results of the trans-national actions were collected. Most of the projects think about publications, PR-material, campaigns and public activities. The European Commission is asked as well to promote the results of the project in the frame of the community action programme and the information campaign.

Anne Ernst

Steps – Structures towards emancipation, participation and solidarity

c/o University of Applied Sciences for Social Work
Horner Weg 21, D – 22111 Hamburg
www.eu-project-steps.de, aernst@rauheshaus.de