

«The AGID Project» *Time for sharing: Feedback from the “focus groups”*



Studios atmosphere in the Northumbria University of Newcastle (North-Eastern England) on the last 10 and 11 of June

The AGID project is a European project aiming at creating training modules for professionals supporting elderly people with mental disabilities. Funded through the European Commission's Executive Agency, this project aims at creating a training programme with the particularity of being accessible on a web portal. Still in the co-elaboration stage within an international consortium consisting of motivated partners who are very intent on meeting the particular and evolving needs of this “new” population¹, the programme will give diverse answers to the different collaborators.

¹ See communication article [coup d'envoi du projet « AGID »](#) (website of Genêts d'or *Actualités*, and of ARFIE *Projects and Activities* or CREA Nord Pas de Calais and on AGID's website: <http://www.agid-project.eu/>, tab news)

Target groups' consultation: feedbacks

As decided during the AGID programme opening meeting at the end of January in Luxemburg, the methodological coordination of the data collection among some segments of the population (users, families and professionals) was entrusted to Zonnelied, a Belgian association with several partners. This important operation represents the base for the creation of the training modules for the professionals supporting mentally disabled persons. For that very purpose, the methodological approach of the *Appreciative Inquiry* technique was studied by the partners during a two-days training in Brussels last February. This is in order to ensure certain homogeneity among the consultation practices of the target populations from each participating country.

The meeting in England in June was therefore focused on the sharing of the

numerous items brought to light during the exchanges with the consulted persons.

The second part of this coordination meeting in June was devoted to the classification of ideas and concepts collected in order to integrate them in a coherent categorical package which will constitute the framework for the training programme.

Variables and constants in the analysis of the data collecting

The feedbacks from the consultations of the focus groups globally show three main tendencies in the protagonists' expression: the consideration of the auto determination in the way of living (no matter their age), the material means for minimum comfort for a life with dignity, and the consideration of the needs for social relations.

Great similarities were also observed among the French and Italian groups regarding the notions of liberty of choice and life's project outside the institutions. The northern countries' participants accorded more importance to the collective aspect, considered as the base of the social link, necessary to the individual's balance.

In any event, the opinions and recommendations extracted from this survey apply for them all, given that both the individual and the collective have levels of responses adapted to varied and non-linear situations. Besides, the base of the requisite values for a support full of respect regarding the individual desire to lead one's destiny until the end of the path...remained implicitly at the centre of the debates.

A well organized and efficient task-sharing and coordination programme

The brainstorming and the analysis of the items chosen by the focus groups led, after a two-day classification, to opt for the implementation of 6 training modules illustrated with 60 to 70 slides each.

The modules will deal with the emotional regulation in the support, the schedule focused on the person and her needs, the relational aspect and the communication with the environment, the conception and the global management of the treatment, the

behaviours adapted to the population as well as all the aspects inherent in the normal and pathological ageing.

Interactivity within the programme will systematically be the rule and information will be enriched with references.

However, considering the complexity due to great heterogeneity of the national public policies, it was decided from the start not to deal with this particular aspect which relates more to information specific to each country, province or territory according to the political and administrative divisions.

Therefore, each country is invited to make an exhaustive draft of a module under cross control of another partner. After the face-to-face experimentation with a group of experts, according to the process of the Delphi technique, which we will comment on in a later communiqué, the validation of these modules should in theory be effective by mid-December, during the third coordination meeting in Vienna (Austria).

However, taking into account the complexity due to the great heterogeneity of the national public policies, it was straight away decided not to address this particular subject which is more about information that is specific to each country, province or territory, according to the political and administrative segmentation.



The giant post-it were the favourite support for the classification of the items most useful to the creation of the future training module

For more information regarding the project, please contact per mail: arfie@arfie.info.

Partners of the AGID project:

- A.P.E.M.H. fondation (Association de Parents d'Enfants Mentalement Handicapés):
Luxemburg
- Northumbria University of Newcastle (tertiary education); United Kingdom
- Vienna University (department of clinical psychology); Austria
- A.R.F.I.E. (Association for Research and Training on Integration in Europe)
- C.A.D.I.A.I. (Cooperativa Assistenza Domiciliare Infermi Anziani Infanzia); Italy
- Les Genêts d'Or (Association: deficiencies and dependancy in Britany) ; France
- Zonnelied a.s.l.b. (NGO: intellectual deficiency & double diagnosis); Belgium