

Equipping Professionals for Supporting LGBT Migrants & Refugees (Epsilon)

The European Commission, under their KA2- Strategic Partnership for adult education programme has commission IARS International Institute to manage a European wide project that includes partners from: Netherlands (Movisie); Greece (KMOP); Cyprus (CARDET) and Italy (ANS) to equip professionals supporting LGBT migrants and refugees.

An advisory board has been set up comprising of LGBT migrants, academics and professionals working in the field to help the project is developed through a bottom up approach

More details of the project can be found at www.epsilon.eu

About Epsilon

The project is responding to two current and urgent educational needs in Europe i.e.

- (1) the rise in migrant and refugee numbers
- (2) the persistent inequality and persecution of Lesbian, Bisexual and Trans-gender groups (LGBT).

Combined together these two characteristics makes LGBT migrant and refugees one of the most vulnerable groups in modern Europe. Our project aims to help address this issue by increasing the knowledge, skills and awareness of all those adult professionals who come in contact with them.

In particular, EpsiLON will focus on sharing, developing and transferring innovative practices in education targeting professionals and volunteers working in services for LGBT asylum seekers, refugees and migrants. It will develop innovative, evidence-based, user-led educational tools in order to raise adult learners' awareness and sensitivity to the needs of all those with LGBT background. The educational tools will enable the professionals and volunteers to identify these LGBT groups' most current and urgent needs some even reaching on issues of survival, dignity and respect. It will also help them challenge their own biases and improve their skills in providing tailored and culturally sensitive services. The need for the development of such training programme is highlighted at top level by all competent organisations such as UNHCR and the EP.

Epsilon Advisory Board : Terms of Reference

The Epsilon Project is a User Led project that looks to support some of the most marginalised groups in the EU. There advisory board has been set up to ensure that LGBT migrant voices are at the heart of everything the project does. The makeup of the board includes LGBT migrants, academics, activists and professionals working in the field.

To ensure the board reflects the European nature of the project it will extensively live online through a secret Facebook group and Skype conference calls. The conference calls will be scheduled to coincide at the start and just before the end of each project phase to give the advisory board the opportunity to input at the start and before the end of each element of the project.

The Role of the Advisory Board

The advisory board will ensure that the project stays true to its bottom up ethos throughout. The board are to input into each phase of the project. The board's input will change as the project grows and develops. However it is expected the input for each phase will be as follows:

Phase 1: Research

- Advise on the questions asked during the field research
- Review and feedback on the country chapters for Output 1

Phase 2: Training Development

- Advise on the topics that should be covered in the training
- Review the training materials during the production stage

Phase 3: Dissemination

- Where appropriate support with the dissemination of the training through helping to recruit and deliver the training materials

Requirements

Each Member of the Board will be required to:

- Commit to inputting at least 2 hours a month to the support of the project.
- Commit to taking an enhanced role in the group when project activities relate to their specialism
- Attend the online meetings as and when they happen.
- Liaise with partner organisations in regards to advisory board issues when necessary
- Commit to being well-organised and prepared for attendance at each meeting, including reading all relevant documents and agenda papers ahead of each meeting.
- Agree with all other members the boundaries and expectations of the members.