

“PreQual Steps”

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

MINUTES FROM NATIONAL WORKSHOPS

ANTIGONE carried out three national PreQual Steps workshops in Thessaloniki, Greece during December 2007 and January, February 2008. They all took place in the Social and Immigrants’ Center, where a sector of it houses ANTIGONE.

The moderator of the national workshops is a nurse who has strong connection with the PreQual project and has experience of teaching nursing classes in the university of Greece. The participants of the national workshops were migrant women, professors of nursing and of pedagogics (at the public university and at private training schools), nurses at public hospitals, experts specialised in social psychiatry and the migration reality and a representative of the local authority.

There was a presentation of the project’s principles and goals. The focus was on the pedagogical approach and on the future perspectives of the project.

The accomplishments and past experiences of PreQual were discussed and there was further elaboration on the Handbook that was delivered from it.

There was a discussion on the suggested Training Course of PreQual and the possible adaptations in order to meet to the national needs. All participants agreed that it is wise to have half of its duration as internship, because practical experience would be very useful for the course’s participants. There was also a long elaboration on the topics of the curriculum.

It was agreed that there is a big need for “social and nursing carers” and the success of the course is based on the high level of competency and capacity to deliver the care that their future clients will require.

There was an agreement on the great need for language and terminology being taught throughout the PreQual course, including courses for special expressions, that is, the way professionals communicate both formally and informally.

During the national workshops, the importance of the participants’ introduction and familiarisation to medical methodology and equipment was pointed out. Many migrant

women come from small villages and do not necessarily know the urban ways of the health care field.

Most of the partners stressed that the evaluation of the participants should be done through case studies and constant feedback. This will help to test themselves in real situations, which they might face soon.

Furthermore, it was pointed out that the course should be free of charge, so that all women interested would be able to attend. Furthermore, it would be much better if they could be compensated for the time spending in the course, such as the vocational courses that are already taking place in Greece, and which offer unemployed people the chance to learn some craft and be paid some small symbolic amount in return. These are offered by the Greek Ministry.

There was a big focus on the problems that migrant women are facing in the home care sector. They feel that they are taken advantage of and that they have no workers' rights. Migrant people in Greece complained very strongly of not having the right to work in the public sector. Concerning the health and care sector, this keeps them back from any kind of work in public hospitals, which is mostly the case in Greece. There was a discussion on other possible working places in the field.

Migrant women also mentioned that there is a big difficulty in finding good conditions in the home care sector. The PreQual course aims to be a valuable tool to get a descent job, since it will provide women with qualification in the health care field and this way they will be in a better position of finding a good job. This was stressed because ANTIGONE believes that this is the motivation for migrant women to attend the PreQual Steps Course.