

Workpackage progress update for ASDEU website – July 2017

WP4: ASD Policies in the EU

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Update on activities:

Autism-Europe has elaborated on its literature review of existing autism policies throughout the EU. Further consultation was undertaken in order to verify some of the findings in the report, AE contacted key stakeholders at the level of Member States key national ministries (in particular CRPD focal points), and civil society groups.

Autism-Europe has also begun the process of developing a public health plan addressing the needs of the autism community. With the help of its members across Europe, Autism-Europe is currently identifying experts and specialists to assist in jointly pooling knowledge and experience in order to contribute to the drafting process of the proposal.

AE members were kept informed about the work carried out so far and the next phase of consultation on policy recommendations, in particular on the occasion of the Annual General Assembly, held in Zagreb at the beginning of May 2017. The meeting was attended by over 60 delegates from 24 countries.

Key learning from activities:

What worked well

- Satisfactory level of feedback from large range of stakeholders on the literature review and policy mapping exercise;
- High level of interest and engagement from stakeholders, including members of the public.

Findings and outcomes to-date:

- Over the last decade, to tackle existing challenges, some countries and regions have adopted autism-specific policies. It varies from single policies to all-encompassing national autism plans or strategies;
- Currently a growing number of Member States have a national autism plan or strategy and some have autism-specific legislations or are in the process of adopting them (France, England, Wales, Hungary, Denmark, Italy, Ireland, Malta, Spain and Cyprus).
- In other countries, autism-recommendations are implemented via more mainstreamed instruments.

Research and consultation show that autism strategies having a positive impact have the following characteristics:

- Practical approach: identification of the specific needs of people concerned (children, young people, adults on the autism spectrum, but also families and carers).
- Thus designed in close partnership with autism organisations, and generally after public consultation.
- Flexibility to allow for revision without recurring to formal procedures
- Requirements for on-going monitoring

- Direction and co-ordination of services at national and regional levels
- Adequate public funding for their implementation.

Next steps:

Autism-Europe will soon conclude its literature review by incorporating the latest feedback received.

Several rounds of consultation will take place to draft the proposal for a public health plan for autism by involving relevant stakeholders identified across Europe.