

**Grundtvig Learning Partnership N. 2010-1-FR1-GRU06-14362 1:  
Self-assessment of their needs by family carers:  
The pathway to support**



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme

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**Perception of their Role and Needs by Family Carers:  
Presentation of the Results of the Grundtvig Learning Partnership**  
Céline Simonin, Unapei

COFACE Seminar, European Parliament, 26 June 2012

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# Partnership Presentation

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## General information

- Start: August 2010 – End: July 2012
- Funding: EU Lifelong Learning Grundtvig Programme for adult education
- Partners:
  - 10 NGOs from 9 countries
  - BE, BG, CY, ES, FR, IE, IT, LU, SK
  - Coordination by Unapei (FR)
- With the support of:
  - 3 other NGOs (FR & BE)
  - 2 EU networks (COFACE & Eurocarers)

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## Rationale

- Family members are the largest provider of care
  - Financial, professional, health and social consequences
  - Need for recognition and support
- Why self-assessment?
  - Difficulties of family carers to gain awareness of their role and difficulties, to define their needs and to ask for adequate support (incl. reconciliation of work and care responsibilities )
  - Risk of breakdown

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## Aim and objectives

- General objective: identify challenges and formulate recommendations in the field of awareness raising and training, aiming at promoting self-assessment of their needs by family carers
- Aim: prevent social exclusion of families and ensure quality care for persons with dependency needs

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# Methodology

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## Approach

- Reflecting diversity, with organisations from 9 countries and with various scopes:
  - Organisations of persons with disabilities and their families
  - Organisations of persons with Alzheimer disease and their families
  - Family carers' organisations
  - General family organisations
  - Centre for women's studies and policies
- Participatory approach with the involvement of family carers as adult learners, at all stages
- Guiding principles to provide an ethical framework (European Charter for Family Carers)

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## Step by step (I)

- Analysis of the obstacles to family carers' perception of their needs (national surveys)
  - Many obstacles (e.g. no legal status, lack of support, lack of time and energy)
  - Isolation both a major risk and consequence
  - Pay attention to factors such as gender
- Identification of best practices
  - Ability to promote awareness and identification as family carer
  - Ability to help family carers assess and express their needs
  - Ability to reach out to the most isolated family carers



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## Step by step (II)

- Analysis of best practices
  - Identification of key characteristics
  - Analysis of the impact on relationship between family carers and professionals
- Analysis of the transferability of best practices
  - All countries are not equal in terms of best practices
  - Most best practices are transferable ...
  - ... but funding is often needed
  - More time is needed in less advanced countries

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## Step by step (III)

- 3 sets of practical and policy recommendations
  - Recommendations for the design of tools for the self-assessment and expression of their needs by family carers
  - Recommendations on training provision to be made for family carers and professionals to help family carers assess and express their needs
  - Recommendations to the European Union

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Recommendations for the design of tools for the self-assessment and expression of their needs by family carers

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## Objectives

- Support to family carers' identification as carers
- Support to family carers' expression of their needs
- Empowerment of family carers

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## Important considerations to design a tool for self-assessment of their needs by family carers

- Design, e.g.
  - acknowledgement of the diversity of family carers
- Implementation, e.g.
  - role of the workplace to reach out to family carers
  - compatibility with family carers' role and responsibilities
- Content, e.g.
  - proposed module of questions on employment and other commitments
  - toolbox
- Next steps, e.g.
  - access to advice and support services
  - identification of training needs
  - empowerment

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Recommendations on training provision to be made for  
family carers and professionals to help family carers  
assess and express their needs

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## Rationale

- Necessity of developing learning provision for family carers and training provision for professionals to:
  - Support family carers' identification, assessment, and expression of their needs;
  - Empower family carers;
  - Foster partnership between family carers and professionals

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## Identification of key success factors

- Common recommendations, e.g.
  - Involvement of family carers in the definition of learning/training modules
- Recommendations concerning learning provision for family carers, e.g.
  - Compatibility of learning provision with care responsibilities
  - Use of questionnaire for self-assessment of needs
  - Tool box
- Recommendations concerning training provision for professionals, e.g.
  - Train professionals to enable family carers to make a free and well-informed choice
  - Train professionals to help family carers to access support



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# Partnership Recommendations to the European Union

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## Introduction

- Based on the results of the Partnership
- Measures and initiatives needed at EU level to establish social and policy environments supportive of self-assessment and expression of their needs by family carers

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## Fostering EU wide recognition of family carers

- Family carers do not benefit from the same recognition in the whole EU
- Lack of recognition
  - No/few policies and programmes
  - Family carers' lack of awareness of their role
- EU role:
  - Awareness raising (European Years, European Day of family carers)
  - Policy coordination and exchange of good practices between Member States
  - Mainstreaming of the issue in relevant policies
  - Adoption of a directive on carers leave
  - Collection of statistics and data

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## Encouraging the development of holistic support services

- One of the key best practices
  - Instrumental for self-assessment and expression of needs
  - Essential for access to concrete support
- Not enough developed in the EU – incl. funding issue
- EU role:
  - Exchange and promotion of good practices (EU programmes, e.g. Progress)
  - Use of EU structural funds (2014-2020 priorities)

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## Encouraging the development of learning and training provision

- Need for learning provision for family carers and training provision for professionals
- Objectives: awareness of professionals, empowerment of family carers, and partnership between family carers and professionals
- EU Role:
  - exchange and promotion of good practices (European Agenda for Adult Learning, EU LLL programmes)
  - use of the European Social Fund

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