



## FURTHER ENHANCING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF QUALITY STANDARDS IN DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION ACROSS EUROPE

Quality standards (QS) were a central priority in the EU Drug Strategy 2013-2020 to improve the quality of drug services and to bridge the gap between science and practice. The EU Strategy 2021-2025 puts further emphasis on QS and evidence-based interventions.

Yet, the extent and ways in which QS are implemented in daily practices of drug prevention, treatment and harm reduction in the EU varies substantially. Some countries have successfully implemented QS. There is a clear need to understand what transferable lessons can be learned from available 'good practices', which can guide implementation of QS in different contexts across the EU.

### Project general objective

The general objective of this project is to enhance implementation of QS in drug prevention, treatment and harm reduction throughout the EU, with more services, organizations and countries applying QS in daily practice. The project focuses on the actual application of QS in all EU countries and factors stimulating implementation.

The first step in this project is the assessment of QS application throughout the EU and an inventory of implementation needs and challenges. Based on an online survey and interviews with key informants, a comprehensive country-by-country overview will be made, which will allow us to identify 'good practice' examples of QS implementation. By identifying 'good practice' examples and successful implementation strategies, key stakeholders (e.g. policy makers, service providers and users) will have access to do's and don'ts for implementing QS in various areas of drug demand reduction.

### Project main output

The main output of this action will be a field-tested implementation toolkit, providing step-by-step guidance for individuals and organizations interested in implementing QS. Training sessions, webinars and a video tutorial will support the introduction of the toolkit. Country representatives and civil society organizations will be involved throughout the project to maximize stakeholders' abilities to share good practices and to implement project recommendations in daily practice and at local level.

### Project time line

The project started on April 1<sup>st</sup> 2021 and will last for 24 months.



# WORK PACKAGES

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## WPI Management and Coordination

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The objective of this WP is to ensure that the overall coordination of the action is carried out in an effective and efficient way; the main task is to provide participating teams with all necessary information and tools to fulfil their tasks. **Ghent University** leads this work-package.

The coordinator team will support all WP leaders and the whole partnership in the implementation of the action while adhering to the work plan. The coordinator team will organize regular video calls and meetings to support project partners and supervise the development of the work plan. In addition, the coordinator team will organise the meetings with the International Advisory Board, which will advise on project progress and intermediate results and act as external evaluators of project outcomes.

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## WP2 Assessment of QS implementation in the EU - Needs and challenges

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An inventory of the current application of QS across Europe will be performed, while checking the implementation of the Minimum Quality Standards adopted by the EU Council (2015). **The Laboratory for Prevention Research – PrevLab** (University of Zagreb, Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences) and the **Department of Special Needs Education (Addiction & Recovery research cluster)** (Ghent University) will lead this work-package.

A country-by-country overview of QS implementation will be undertaken to identify barriers, needs and challenges regarding implementation in each country. This assessment will contribute to an overview of QS implementation level, correspondence with the MQS, core challenges identified for adoption and implementation and linked assets. In addition, good practices on QS implementation will be collected, based on the suggestions made by country representatives.

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## WP3 Case studies of good practice examples of QS implementation

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A case study methodology will be developed to identify 'good or promising practice' examples and a selection will be made based on this methodology. **The Department of Addictology** (Charles University, 1st Faculty of Medicine) will lead this work-package.

The case study methodology will be applied to selected good practice examples. Case study reports will be prepared including information on key aspects such as contextual factors, background for QS implementation, main features of the implementation, implementation experiences and current state. A meeting with all identified 'QS champions' will be organized to draft implementation strategies and recommendations for QS implementation.

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## WP4 From good practice to a proof-tested implementation toolkit

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The objective of this WP is to promote the transferability of the lessons learned from the assessment of QS implementation (WP2) and the case studies examples (WP3) to produce an implementation toolkit that will enhance the application of QS in drug demand reduction. **Correlation – European Harm Reduction Network (C-EHRN)** will lead this work package.

The implementation toolkit, as main outcome of this action, will address practical challenges of QS implementation. A Delphi study on core implementation recommendations will be undertaken and results will be described in the implementation toolkit. The field-tested implementation guidelines and active promotion of the toolkit will contribute to further implementation of QS in drug demand reduction across Europe.

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## WP5 Dissemination of project findings and deliverables

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The objective of this WP is to establish mechanisms for effective dissemination and exploitation of project findings and results to maintain ongoing interest in the action and maximize exposure opportunities and adoption of the outcomes throughout the project development and beyond. **IREFREA** leads this work-package.

Communication with various stakeholders will be conducted via the project website, regular e-newsletters, dissemination of key activities through video-conferencing and webinars and the organization of a final conference. In addition, a video-tutorial will be prepared to facilitate dissemination and adoption of the toolkit.

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# PARTNERSHIP

## Ghent University - Department of Special Needs Education

[Ghent university](#) (UGent) is a top 100 university and the [Department of Special Needs Education](#) (Faculty of Psychology & Educational Sciences) has a long tradition of alcohol and drug research, starting from research in drug-free therapeutic communities. The research group on 'Recovery & Addiction' studies recovery in persons with addiction and other mental health problems, with a particular interest in the role of treatment, experts by experience and other types of support. A recent study (COMIQS.BE, 2015) focused on the implementation of quality standards in alcohol and drug prevention, treatment and harm reduction services in Belgium. UGent is (co-)responsible for WP2. Professor Wouter Vanderplasschen functions as scientific coordinator of the FENIQS-EU project. Dijana Jerković, Ph.D., is the project manager.



## Charles University - Department of Addictology

The [Department of Addictology](#) ([Charles University, 1st Faculty of Medicine](#)) is responsible for WP3, with special focus on selecting and developing case studies. Department staff has 25 years long tradition and experience in the area of quality control and policy. Prof. Kalina (team member) was the leading person in the period 1995-2005 responsible for establishing national quality standards for harm reduction and treatment facilities and service providers in the Czech Republic, including a specialised certification process. Prof. Miovský (team member) was responsible for developing and implementing a quality system in school prevention. Elizabeth Nováková has extensive experience in this area and worked for the National Drug Commission. Tereza Jovbakova is the project manager for the Prague team.



## University of Zagreb - PrevLab

The [Laboratory for prevention Research \(PrevLab\)](#) is part of the [Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences](#), University of Zagreb, Croatia. The goal of PrevLab is to contribute to better recognizability and visibility of prevention science and developing and implementing effective models for transferring knowledge of prevention science into practice. PrevLab team members are involved in a number of international projects in the field of mental health, positive youth development and risk behaviour prevention. The experience and competences gained in the projects ASAP Training (EC, 2019-2021) and UPC Adapt (EC, 2017-2018) will contribute to the FENIQS-EU project. Martina Ferić, Ph.D., full professor and head of the PrevLab, acts as the leader of Croatian team. Matea Belošević is an early career researcher and acts as project associate, together with Katarina Serdar.



## Claude Bernard University of Lyon 1 - SUAL

The [Claude Bernard University of Lyon 1](#) (French: *Université Claude Bernard Lyon 1*, UCBL) is one of the three public universities in Lyon, France, including a hospital unit for addiction medicine (French: *Service Universitaire d'Addictologie de Lyon*, [SUAL](#)). The SUAL team offers training programs to both beginners and professional teams, and publishes international scientific studies in top-ranked journals. Within the FENIQS project, UCBL (prof. Benjamin Rolland & Emelinne Breniaux) will assist EUFAS in screening and assessing innovative European initiatives on harm reduction, and determining, with the rest of the consortium, which types of harm reduction programs should be prioritized across the EU.



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## European Institute of Studies on Prevention - IREFREA

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The [IREFREA network](#) was founded in 1988 and is one of the oldest professional drug prevention networks. With its activities, IREFREA supports the need for an evidence-based approach to drug policy and has been collaborating, both directly and indirectly (through the Spanish National Plan on Drugs), in the development of evidence-based and best-practice initiatives at European and International level. IREFREA is also committed to improve the quality of drug services and to bridge the gap between science and practice by enhancing the way in which quality standards are implemented in the daily practices of drug prevention, treatment and harm reduction in the EU.



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## Correlation - European Harm Reduction Network - C-EHRN

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[Correlation - European Harm Reduction Network](#) (C-EHRN) is a European civil society network and centre of expertise in the field of harm reduction and social and health inclusion. Its activities connect harm reduction services, grassroots organisations, community-based services, research institutes, and health facilities from all over Europe. As a network, C-EHRN cooperates with partners and policy makers on local, national and European levels. The network is hosted by De Regenboog Groep – a low-threshold service provider in Amsterdam that delivers harm reduction services to people who use drugs and other related groups. C-EHRN strives to contribute to the development of Quality Standards in harm reduction services by producing monitoring tools and a civil society led monitoring of harm reduction, and using its results to address and advocate for necessary measures.



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## European Federation of Addiction Societies - EUFAS

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The [European Federation of Addiction Societies](#) (EUFAS) was founded in 2010 to promote education and advances in knowledge and understanding in the field of addiction in all European countries. 'Addiction' refers to all mental disorders related to the use of psychoactive substances and non-substance habit-forming products (such as gambling). Specifically, EUFAS intends to improve addiction care, ameliorate prevention measures both on a national as well as a European level, and support countries with less developed prevention and treatment systems.



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## European Treatment Centres for Drug Addiction - Euro-TC

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European Treatment Centres for drug addiction (Euro-TC) is a network of professional addiction treatment centres covering 12 European countries. The network provides exchange of knowledge on the level of professionals as well as on the level of clients. It aims for steady progress in optimizing treatment programs towards the needs of clients. Mutual exchange of best practices and sharing of knowledge is provided through meetings and conferences, common therapeutic, creative and sport activities, training and staff exchange. Euro-TC is a member of various networks and consultative bodies like the Civil Society Forum on Drugs (consultative body to the European Commission) and the Vienna NGO Forum on Narcotic Drugs (consultative body to UNODC).



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