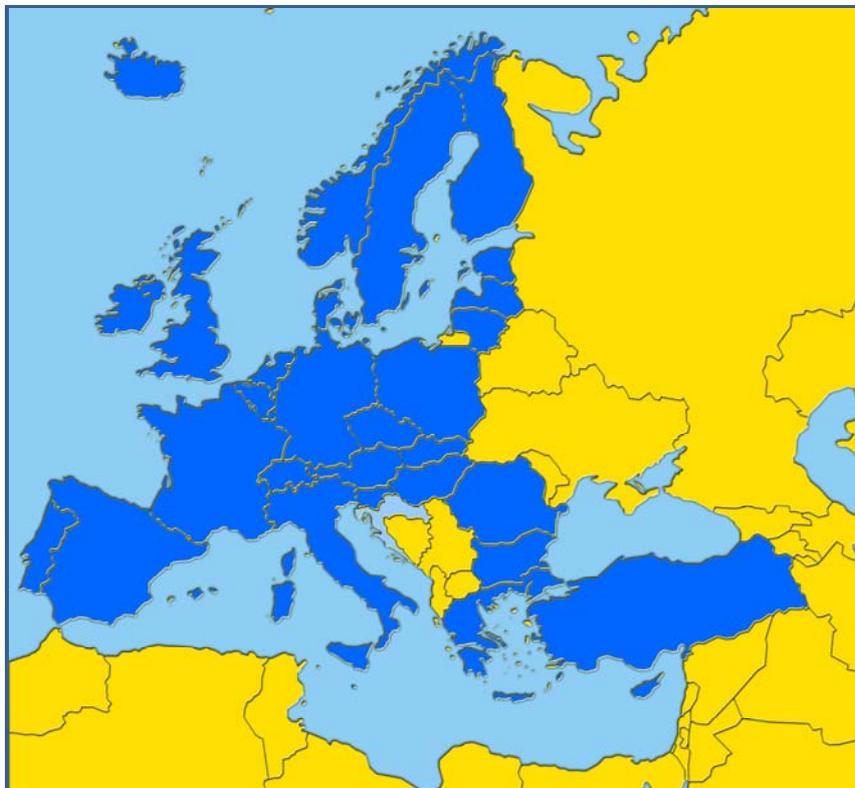




*NetQues*



*Network for Tuning Standards and Quality of Education programmes  
in Speech and Language Therapy / Logopaedics across Europe*



**Newsletter 1**  
**December 2011**

[www.netgues.eu](http://www.netgues.eu)

Coordinator: CPLOL Comité Permanent de Liaison des  
Orthophonistes-Logopèdes de l'Union Européenne/ Standing Liaison  
Committee of E.U. Speech and Language Therapists and Logopedists

## Greetings from the Coordinator

Welcome to the first Newsletter of NetQues. The project has now been running for just over a year during which time there have been two meetings of partners from all countries plus several meetings of the Project Management Steering Group and Work Package (WP) Teams, many of which have been conducted using virtual technology, especially VoIP – we have had many successful discussions on Skype though also experienced some technology trials when attempting to engage all members of a team at once using this form of communication. However as communication specialists, rather than dwell on the frustrations, it has been a challenge to be overcome using our problem solving skills and usually we have managed to proceed using multi-methods or a total communication approach!

Production of this Newsletter has been largely due to the commitment of two key persons: Pirkko Rautakoski from Finland, WP lead for Project Dissemination with the support of her team and Bent Kjaer our webmaster and supreme techno-knowledgeable SLT from Denmark.

This Newsletter is designed to give an overview of what is happening as the project progresses. It is intended to provide updates for those speech and language therapists, colleagues and others who are interested but not directly involved, as well as allowing those partners in the project to share what they are doing with those in other WPs.

I have been impressed throughout by partners' contribution to the work, often giving extra of their own time and volunteering to meet "over the airwaves" at times which can be construed as antisocial, well outside normal working hours, in order to accommodate the fact we have partners from several time zones. One of the many features speech and language therapists seem to have in common across cultures and countries is an amazing capacity for work, commitment to the profession and willingness to collaborate with colleagues, regardless of personal inconvenience.

I must also pay tribute to the support of colleagues in CPLOL whose interest in further developing links and improving standards across Europe led to the original decision to seek funding to allow this project to be undertaken, for the benefit of the profession and the people we work with who have communication and swallowing needs. Their continued interest, support and practical help is much appreciated by those of us directly involved in the project.

I hope this Newsletter lets you have a flavour of what is going on, what is still to happen and perhaps also where you can assist us in making sure this venture is a success. Enjoy!

*Aileen Patterson,*  
Project Coordinator, CPLOL

## Reports of the Workpackages

### WP 1: Project management and coordination

The Project Management Steering Group (PMSG) is responsible for overseeing the total project management. It comprises partners from, France, Latvia, Slovakia, Sweden and United Kingdom. During the first year of the project this has involved face to face meetings and Skype on a regular basis. In dealing with the various challenges of administration across so many partners we have learned the value of SLTs being so good at team work but we have also experienced the pleasure of new friendships and learning more about our profession in different corners of Europe.



Our opening meeting in Paris in October shows what a happy smiling lot of partners we have – despite most being strangers to each other and speaking different languages, there has been a great sense of collaboration and belonging to the speech and language therapy.

The PMSG thanks all the work package team leads for keeping to their tight deadlines. We are pleased that the work of WP2 whose crucial job includes preparing a survey to elicit key data from all countries has progressed well despite some setbacks. It is good that WP3 has been willing to work closely with them to ensure that the data being collected is appropriate and can be analysed to give the much needed information that will allow comparisons across countries and consensus on key competences of the profession.

The issues facing the PMSG have been centered around working with the WP teams to keep them “on track” and for that each WP has been allocated link PMSG members who in turn report regularly to the PMSG. Another main area tackled during the year has been working in conjunction with the Quality Assurance team (WP4) led by Monika Rausch of DBL to make sure that all processes are transparent and audited. To this end it has ensured that the project coordinator has robust governance, quality management and audit in place. The PMSG has examined and approved CPLOL Risk Assessment documentation to satisfy itself that all potential risks have been assessed and addressed.

We organised the first annual meeting, held in Berlin in September. This was a good occasion for both reflection and proactive decision making, engaging with the views, comments and questions from partners. As a result of the discussions and suggestions, we have made some improvements to the website and also are happy to see the production of this first newsletter.

PMSG members are privileged to be regularly in touch with other partners but we appreciate it is easy to feel isolated when working in small teams, albeit that every part is vital, therefore we do urge you to look at the project as a whole and for those involved to try to see where their part of the jigsaw fits in with the rest and perhaps to see how they can work across teams as well as in teams.

Here we have a group of exhausted partners following a very long day's intensive meetings in Berlin – ready for dinner – but still smiling and willing to take time for a quick group photo!

1st Annual Meeting, Berlin,  
September 2011



## WP 2: Tuning SLT educational programmes

WP2 has been responsible in planning and designing the survey to study the general and subject specific competences of newly qualified Speech Language Therapists in the Europe. This has been an enormous work and has been done in liaison with WP3. After the installation meeting in Paris in October 2010 the members of WP2 agreed a working terminology and notional framework in English for the survey. At first we gathered all the existing information concerning the Tuning methodology and the relevant competency frameworks. According to this information we designed a pilot version of the survey questionnaire and planned the statistical analysis of the results.

In May 2011 the design of the survey, the glossary and the demographic information to be asked was ready to be put into a program called Survey Monkey Gold and an Internet-based questionnaire was ready to be tested. In June 2011 a pilot study with this questionnaire was conducted among of the members of the WPs 1, 2, and 3. After piloting some changes to the questionnaire were done. The revision of the questionnaire was completed 15th of August 2011.

During the process it was important also to take care of the ethical issues and also the possibility to translate the questionnaire into many different European languages. This is why we created also a terminology list to be sent with the questionnaire. In the first Annual meeting in Berlin in September 2011 the questionnaire was presented to the participants and comments were gathered. After this process some final changes were done and the statistical analysis of the incoming results was planned together with the WP3.

The final version of the questionnaire and other texts were sent to the national translators in September 2011. In November 2011 the work to put all the different language versions into the Internet-based Survey Monkey Gold program began and the survey is going to actualize in January 2012. In November the country lead partners were contacted and asked to prepare to distribute the link to the questionnaire in January in their own countries.

## WP 3: Tuning stage 2 - analysis and evaluation of survey results

The NetQues Project workload has been divided into six teams of partners, each with aims and objectives which correspond with the Tuning approach and key aspects of the project's

management, its dissemination and exploitation. Work Package Team 3 (WP3), lead by the Project Coordinator C.P.L.O.L., has been liaising with the other teams since the kick off meeting in Paris but now as per the planned schedule, following the annual NetQues meeting in Berlin, has commenced its important task which will focus on the analysis of the data gathered in the survey and its interpretation.

Following TUNING methodology WP3 will analyze the results of the survey compiled by WP2 for completion in January 2012, in order to be able to formulate the necessary generic and profession specific competence of an SLT professional at time of qualification. The analysis will look at the degree to which the generic competences are relevant to the SLT particular subject area.

Three groups, namely: speech and language therapists having graduated within the last 5 years, their employers and members of staff of academic institutions offering courses in Speech and Language Therapy, will have the opportunity to rate the relevance and importance of the generic and subject specific competences.

These groups in 27 EU member countries plus partners from Liechtenstein, Norway, Iceland and Turkey are being encouraged by their country lead partners to respond to the questionnaire, which has been translated into 22 languages. Each different language version has a unique link and related collector but all have to be collated into the one set of results. This of course has been a major logistical challenge for administration and also for the analysis.

WP3 will commence the statistical analyses and interpretation of the results in February 2012, using SPSS multilevel analysis and log-linear models. The results rating the relevance and importance of the competences will be the basis on which to establish a consensus of which core competences are essential and which are desirable for a newly qualified professional i.e. the Speech and Language Therapy clinician who is fit to practice independently. These data will be used in order to establish benchmark statements, which will be of interest to diverse institutions offering educational degree programs in SLT throughout Europe and also provide useful guidelines and information for other stakeholders and policy makers.

#### **WP 4: Quality assurance of the management and outcomes of the project**

WP4 has two subgroups, one is in charge of reviewing the management process of the project and the other one in reviewing the methodology used in WP3. Subgroup one has developed the Quality Guidelines and a self-assessment checklist which has already run twice (in March and in August 2011). This subgroup compiled the first annual audit report from the results of these self-assessment checklists and sent it to the Project Coordinator and to the PMSG at the end of October. The annual audit report after approval by the Coordinator and the PMSG will be passed to every project partner.

The next run of the self-assessment (which is sent out to all lead partners of the Workpackages) will be in January 2012 and then again at the beginning of June 2012. That timeline allows us to prepare the second annual audit report before the 2nd annual meeting in September 2012.

The second subgroup of WP4 had a skype-meeting to plan their activities in reviewing the methodology planned by WP3. We are in contact with WP3 regarding their timeline and their plans (objectives, aims, hypotheses and statistical methods).

## WP 5: Dissemination

The aim of the Dissemination working group is to spread information about the NetQues project and the ongoing work. For this purpose a Website has been set up (<http://www.netques.eu>). Updating of the website is ongoing. All the partner organizations were asked to send a short description of their activities and these can be seen on the web site ([http://www.netques.eu/?page\\_id=249](http://www.netques.eu/?page_id=249)). The project has also an Intranet for partners only to enable fluent change of information between the working groups as well as between the administration and the partners.

To disseminate the project as wide as possible the participating Higher Education Institutions as well as the national Associations of Speech Language Therapists/Logopedists have been requested to set up a link to the NetQues web pages on their websites. Plans to contact other relevant quarters are under work in co-operation with the workpackage number 6.

The Associations have also been asked to tell about the project in their national conferences and to write about it in their national journals.

A project leaflet has also been designed and printed. There is a link to the leaflet in the lowest part of the NetQues main page (<http://www.netques.eu>). The leaflet is in PDF format to be able to upload.

The Coordinator has presented the project with a poster presentation in a convention of The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA). The poster can be seen on the project website, under the title "Dissemination activities" or by clicking this address [http://www.netques.eu/?page\\_id=636](http://www.netques.eu/?page_id=636)

Other proposed dissemination activities include presentations at the CPLOL congress in May 2012.

## WP 6: Tuning stage 3 - Exploiting project outcomes

The aim of WP6 is to ensure that the results of the project are exploited as widely as possible. This WP has begun to gather the important contacts who should be aware of the NetQues project and will benefit from the results of it. The addresses of these important contacts are going to be gathered and published on the NetQues web page. WP6 has been working in liaison with WP5. Towards the close of the project we have to ensure that the results are not only useful and disseminated widely but also that the outcomes are meaningfully employed.

8<sup>th</sup> European CLOL congress



More details available on the congress website: <http://www.clolcongress2012.eu/>

The European Day of Speech and Language Therapy, 6.3.2012

More details available on the website: <http://www.clol.eu/eng/EU%20day.htm>

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