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# MeetingDem Newsletter

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## Overview first year MeetingDem

The MeetingDem project started in March 2014 and it has been an interesting journey so far. At the moment, phase one, the exploration and preparation phase, is almost finished.

March 2014, the project has started in the four partner countries (Italy, Poland, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands). Firstly, an inventory was made of all care and welfare and other organisations involved with people with dementia in the region where a Meeting Centre was planned: Milan (Italy), Worcester (UK), and Wroclaw (Poland). Based on this inventory of organisations, in each country an information meeting about the MeetingDem project was organised in which these organisations were invited to participate in an initiative group to prepare the implementation of a (at least one) Meeting Centre in each country. There was a lot of interest in the three countries to be involved in these initiative groups, which resulted in a broad representation of care, welfare, volunteers and patient representative organisations. In monthly meetings, the three initiative groups have explored pathways to care and potential facilitators and ! barriers for successful implementation of a Meeting Centre for persons with dementia and their carers. The members of the initiative groups worked in smaller working groups on specific themes of the implementation. Identified themes were: Target group, support programme, location, personnel, location, financing, protocol for cooperation and PR. With the help of these themes country specific implementation plans and materials were developed. This results in an implementation plan per country.

The past year, many presentations and articles were conducted to inform the public, policy makers, local governments and colleague researchers on the aims and contents of the MEETINGDEM project. In each country this has led to a stimulation of interest in the project and the concept of the Meeting Centre

Support Programme (MCSP). In Italy, Poland and the UK several other care and welfare organisations have expressed their interest to set up a Meeting Centre in another region.

## Opening of the first MeetingDem Meeting Centers

In Italy, the first two (!) Meeting Centres were opened in Milan: The first opened on 5 May, and the second at the end of May. The personnel from these centres received a training on working with the MCSP.

## What to expect the coming period?

In the coming period, training will be provided to the personnel of the Meeting Centres in Poland and the UK. The Meeting Centres in these countries will open in September 2015. All Meeting Centres will be evaluated on impact, cost-effectiveness, user satisfaction and the implementation process. Moreover, pioneer workshops will be organized for representatives of care and welfare organizations in the participating countries who are interested in implementing the MCSP in other regions.

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