

Speech of thanks for the Citizenship Award to projekt UDENFOR

On behalf of projekt UDENFOR I will like to thank you for the award, which consists of both money and a cactus, which I will take as an invitation to sting a bit more.

We are both glad and proud that our work has been noticed, but more importantly: that our users are noticed

- the homeless who are mentally ill
- and the users who have some sort of abuse, whom all too often get to be invincible or are met with obstacles when they try to get help.

There is great need of visibility – but there is also need of action instead of just words.

2007 was EU's year of "Equal possibilities" – and it is debatable whether we, in Denmark, lived up to this – in projekt UDENFOR we met a lot of people who did not have many possibilities.

This year – 2008 – is EU's year of "Intercultural communication"

- and communication is at large in need when the numbers from The National Social Appeals Board show that a great part of the users of the shelters in Copenhagen is of foreign origin – and when the Minister of Welfare in the beginning of this year threatened to remove the financial support from these shelters, which open their doors to other EU citizens.

We are in need of a new and more realistic view of things.

In projekt UDENFOR, we will like to be a part of this communication – and preferably in a more nuanced way and preferably in collaboration with all of you in the municipalities.

We hope that you – who share the responsibility for the municipal service and public administration – in spite of your sometimes mal conditions of work, will continue to focus on the struggle against social expulsion, but certainly also on communication – together and in a dialogue we can overcome a great deal of these challenges.

When all this is said, I will promise you that projekt UDENFOR in 2008 will focus on both rights, laws, conventions but most certainly also on ethics and humanism within our work.

Once again thank you for this award!

Head of Secretariat Ninna Hoegh, projekt UDENFOR