

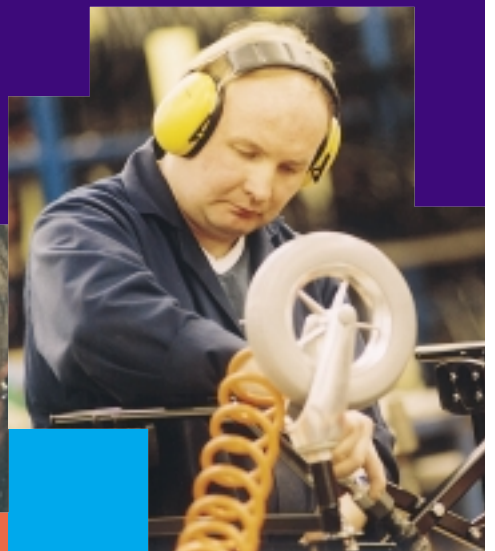


European Community



# Realising the value

New thinking and methods on  
employing disabled people



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methods on employing  
disabled people

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# Foreword by the President of the EUROPEAN Group - IPWH



For many years, European member states have taken different actions to support the employment of people with disabilities through their own national funded programmes. The European Commission's Directive for establishing a general framework for equal opportunities in employment is an encouraging advance, and supports the recommendations within this publication.

There is increasing recognition by people beyond the specialist employment organisations that providing appropriate support and removing barriers will enable disabled people to participate and sustain employment in the European labour

markets. This marks the beginning of a new and dynamic European agenda for all member states, employers, people with disabilities and our members.

This publication identifies a number of barriers that have to be removed, including a perception of disabled people as an anonymous homogenous group without ability or motivation. Rejecting universal solutions, the clear message is that disabled people are individuals, with the same range of ambitions and motivations as their fellow citizens.

We have to establish a common language of shared definitions relating to disability and to overcome variations in knowledge. We must also focus on the resources and actions needed to make the accommodations and provide support for individual disabled people to realise their potential through employment.

The removal of the barriers that exist through the ignorance, prejudice and lack of social and community responsibility of the gatekeepers to employment will not happen overnight. However, the Community Directive provides a common framework for the legislation of individual member states to give guidance and minimum standards to ensure equal opportunities for all disadvantaged groups, including disabled people. This must work in parallel with

increased awareness, education and positive action until equality is achieved and maintained.

Providing specially organised employment remains a necessary, key ingredient of positive action, as some disabled people will not be able to achieve the productivity levels of their co-workers, even with available 'accommodations'. The change of technology, the migration of sunset industries to low cost economies outside Europe, the shift from manufacturing to service industries, and the opportunities created by Information Communication Technology (ICT) demand that specially organised employers should maximise their business operations to sustain employment of disabled people and develop their transferable skills, competencies and confidence to progress to mainstream employment.

Our members have a new role. Building on their skills and many years of experience, they are no longer just employment providers. We are supporting disabled people to prepare, access and sustain mainstream employment. We are extending our knowledge and experience to employers and enterprises to enable disabled people to access and sustain mainstream employment. Considerable

changes will have to be made to adapt our organisations to mainstreaming. These will be more profound in some countries than in others. They should reflect and be reflected in the environment in which our organisations operate e.g. national policies, local labour market conditions.

We are aware that every policy or organisational change that is made in our sectors, will (and should be) weighed against the contribution it makes to the mainstream trend. We recognise that we must invest in new activities and policies, qualitative organisational structures, performance standards and working methods. It is inevitable that part or all of our workforces, which are mainly disabled people, will be only temporarily involved in what used to be a 'stable' work environment. Our awareness of, and ability to cope with, these conditions will have a great effect on the viability, positioning and size of the specially adapted work sector as a whole.

However, mainstreaming is not a solution for all disabled people. We have to recognise that we must continue to provide an option of secure sheltered employment for those who are unable work within the mainstream. We make this commitment in the interests of disabled people as decided and expressed by disabled people themselves, and not to oppose progress or defend a "status quo".

The combination of these three reports provide a major contribution to working towards the equalisation of opportunity for disabled people and provides the agenda for the immediate future.

## Specially organised employment

The EUROPEAN Group - IPWH has always believed that, whilst unemployment levels are substantially higher for disabled people than for non-disabled people, specially



organised employment contributes to the solution to ensure that disabled people become part of the labour market. We also recognise that the provision of support and facilitating access by reducing or removing barriers is an increasing role that specially organised employers are undertaking.

## Plans for 2001

The methodology used for producing this and the previous publication 'Europe's Undervalued Workforce' has proved successful. The EUROPEAN Group - IPWH has decided, within the third work programme co-funded with the European Commission, to operate a further three new thematic working groups to explore the following issues, relevant to the employment of disabled people:

1. The role of specially organised workplaces supporting disabled people with intellectual and mental illness impairments into the labour market.
2. The role of specially organised workplaces in the provision of Life Long Learning, including basic skills for disabled people so that they can access and participate in Information Communication Technology (ICT) employment opportunities.
3. The development of a good practice guide for employers in applying 'reasonable adjustments/ accommodations' to support disabled people into employment.

A new publication, including the reports produced by these working groups, will be published towards the end of the work programme, in Autumn 2001.

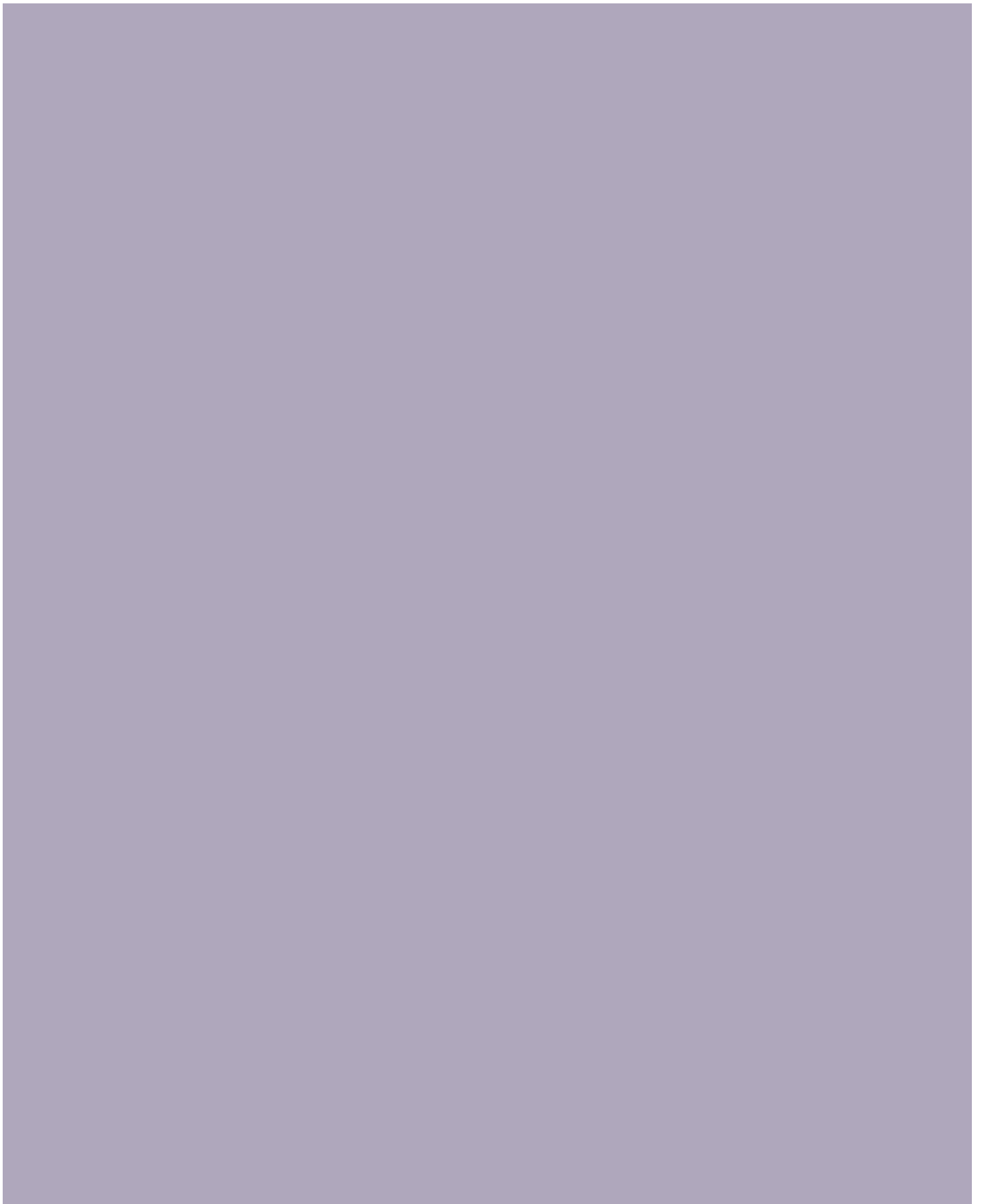


## Final remarks

We very much appreciate the support received by the European Commission. We hope that this publication, from the second work programme, will result in direct benefits for all those who support equalisation of opportunity for all, whilst seeking to increase and sustain the employment of disabled people within the European Community.

I really hope that this publication will stimulate your thoughts and create action to recognise the ability of disabled people and to increase their employment levels within Europe.

*Hans V. Vrind*  
President, the EUROPEAN Group - IPWH





## Introduction

At the EU Lisbon Summit held in March 2000, European Heads of Government set a ten-year strategic goal for the EU to become the most competitive and dynamic economy in the world. Their vision was of an innovative and knowledge-based society, capable of sustaining economic growth, which in turn will support an active welfare state within a new European Social Model. The Social Affairs Commissioner had been directed to produce a new Social Policy Agenda that will link action on employment, social protection, social inclusion, equal opportunities and anti-discrimination as essential prerequisites of a performing economy.

For the first time, social inclusion is at the centre of EU strategic planning.

It was therefore timely that, as a part of its main programme of activities for 1999/2000, the EUROPEAN Group - IPWH undertook a series of studies related to the inclusion of disabled people in employment. The reports included in this publication are the results of the work of three thematic Working Groups established by the EUROPEAN Group - IPWH to examine the following issues:

1. The employment of the most severely disabled people within the European Union.
2. The opportunities and threats affecting the employment of disabled people arising from new business sectors and methods.

3. Adapting to the new trends of mainstreaming in employment and social inclusion for disabled people.

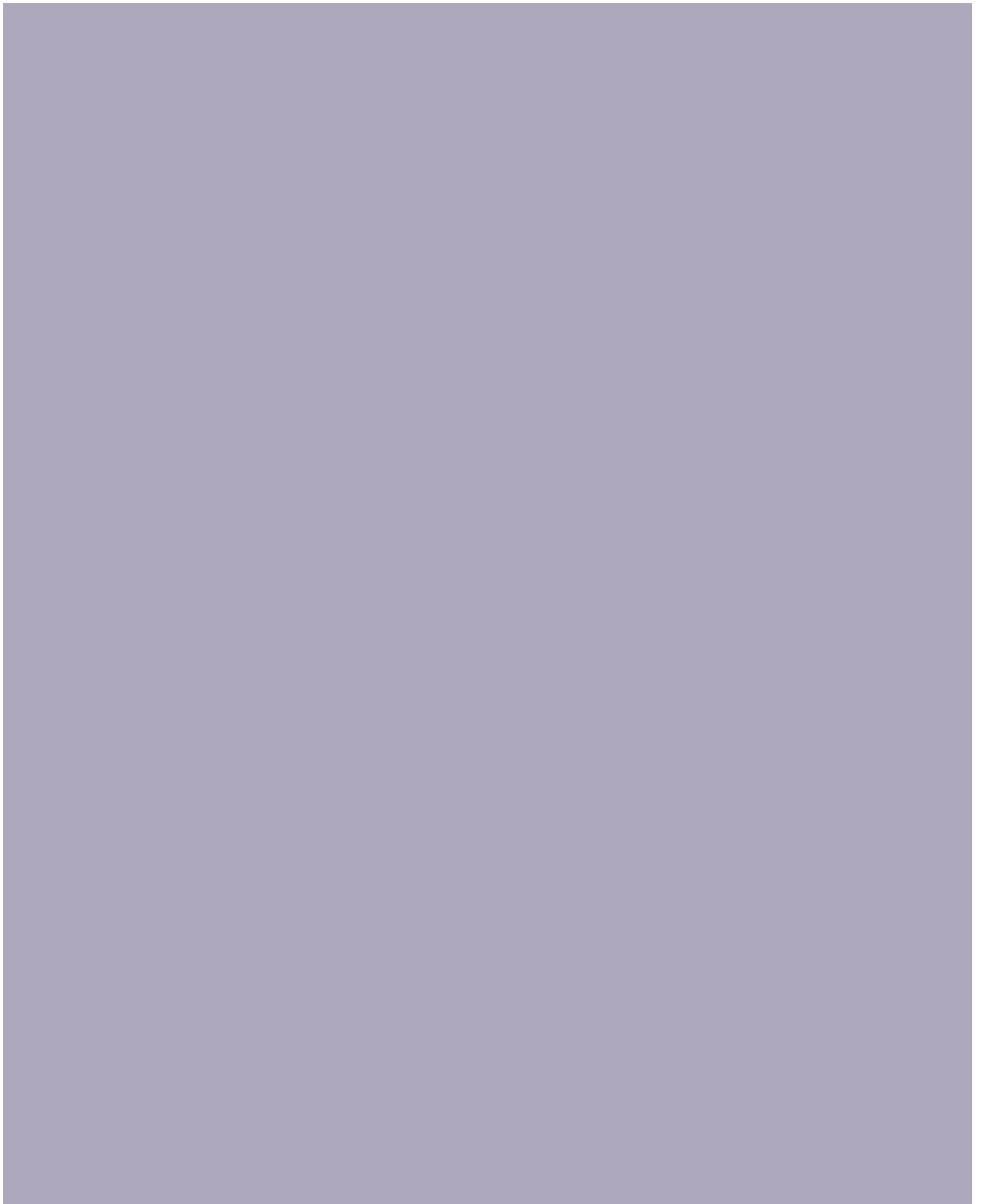
Each group held three meetings within Europe and presented progress reports to the Conference held in Brussels on 24th May 2000.

Although each Working Group considered a clearly defined area of work, there is a common theme running through all the reports. We are living in an age of near-revolutionary change: social, economic and technological. The challenge facing specialists working in the field of supporting employment for disabled people, governments and society at large is: how to change attitudes, structures and procedures to seize the new opportunities that exist to enable disabled people realise their full potential.

To allow people with disabilities to take their rightful place as equal and active citizens of the New Europe, we need a new agenda.

The purpose of the reports is to set a new agenda for member organisations of the EUROPEAN Group - IPWH. However, it is felt that findings of the expert Working Groups will be of wider interest and benefit to other organisations and individuals interested in disability and employment issues.







## EUROPEAN Group - IPWH

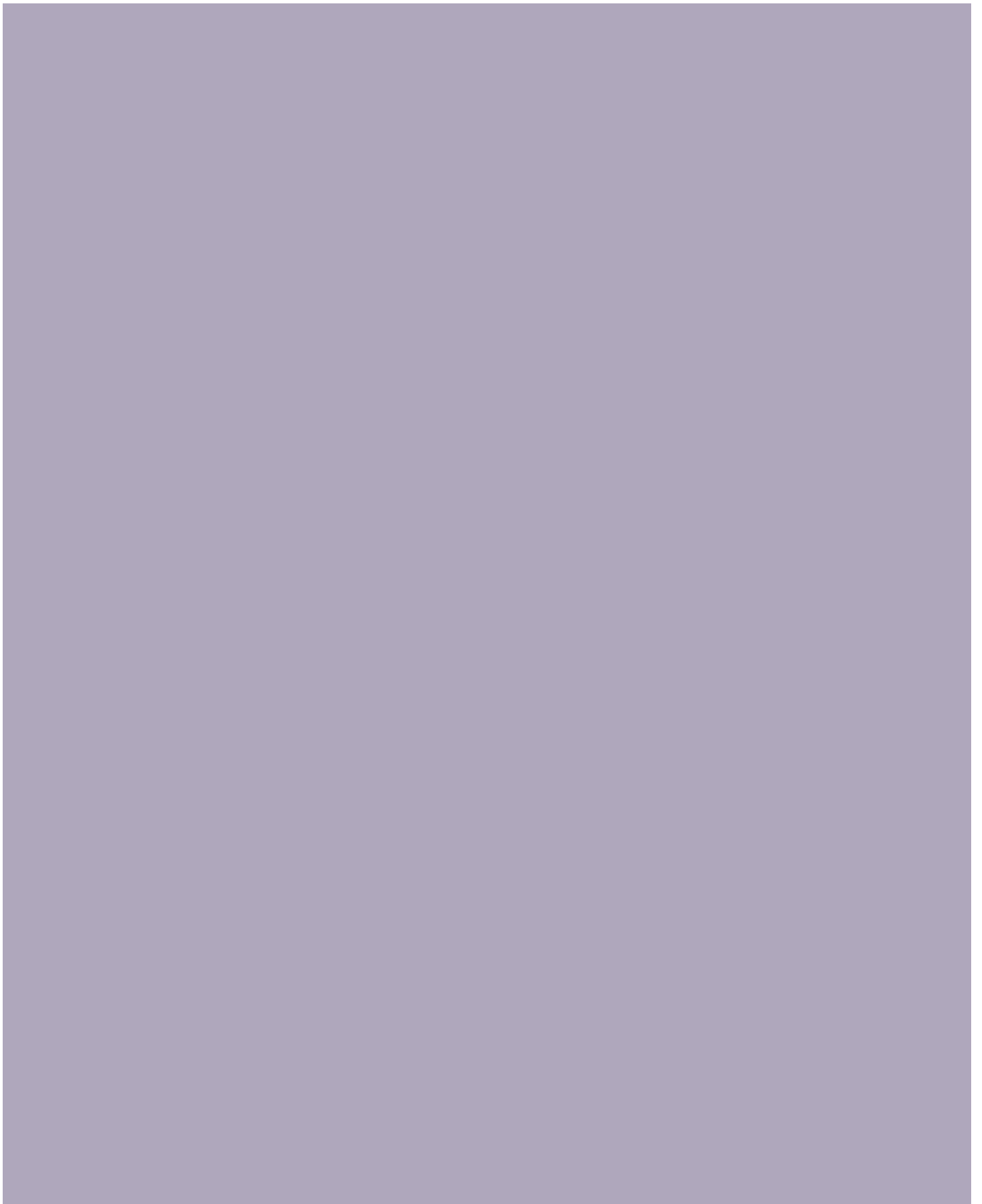
The IPWH (International Organisation for the Provision of Work for People with Disabilities and who are Occupationally Handicapped) is a world-wide organisation representing the majority of organisations providing specially organised employment for disabled people.

The EUROPEAN Group - IPWH was created in 1995 as a regional group of IPWH under the title the European Union Group (EUG) - IPWH. It currently has 22 members from 16 European countries (11 EU countries, Hungary, Iceland, Norway, Poland and Switzerland). The name was changed in 2000 to the EUROPEAN Group - IPWH to

reflect its growing membership beyond the EU member states.

EUROPEAN Group - IPWH members provide more than 450,000 jobs for disabled people in Europe and represent the majority of specially organised employment in the European Union. In many cases, the members are the umbrella or leading organisations for specially organised employment in their countries.

The EUROPEAN Group - IPWH is a founding member of the European Disability Forum (EDF) and associate member of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Europe.





# Acknowledgement of Support from the European Commission

The EUROPEAN Group - IPWH acknowledges the provision of support given by the European Commission to EUROPEAN Group - IPWH as a Representative European Co-ordination Organisation active in the field of Equal Opportunities for Disabled People, for the work of the Working Groups.

Budget line B3-4111 enables the European Commission to implement measures to support representative European organisations actively working in the field of equal opportunities for disabled people and are responsible for co-ordinating their own network. This budget line anticipates the new Community strategy to fight discrimination, which the Commission is committed to pursue in the future.

The Commission recognises EUROPEAN Group - IPWH as an organisation operating at the European level, with a structure and programme of activities that include more than half the Member States of the European Union. For that reason, the Commission awarded funding to the EUROPEAN Group - IPWH for a second year (1999/2000) in support for our work programme as a Representative European Co-ordination Organisation, active in the field of Equal Opportunities for Disabled People.

Financial allocation under this heading provides for activities which are of

Community-wide interest, contribute significantly to the further development and implementation of the Community disability policy, and meet the principles underlying the Communication of the Commission of 30 July 1996 (COM 406 final) on equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.

In the first work programme (1998/1999), which successfully met the majority of the European Union's funding criteria, the EUROPEAN Group - IPWH established four working groups drawn from its membership. The results of their work appeared in a series of reports, published in a single volume under the title 'Europe's Undervalued Workforce'.

In evaluating the first work programme - and in particular the work of the four working groups - it was concluded that participation, consultation and involvement of disabled people should be expanded to meet the requirements of the European Union's criteria.

The challenge facing this year's work programme and the three working groups is to meet all criteria within the resources, time limitation and the geographical coverage that the EUROPEAN Group - IPWH membership operates.

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# Employment of the Most Severely Disabled People

# 1

## 1.1 Introduction

1.1

This report is the result of a study commissioned by the EUROPEAN Group - IPWH (European Union Group - International Organisation for the Provision of Work for People with Disabilities and who are Occupationally Handicapped) to review the employment of people with severe disabilities within the European Union.

The study's main objective was to identify deficiencies in the provision made by European countries to achieve inclusion of severely disabled people into society. Therefore, this report considers the level to which disabled people are included in every day life as well as employment.

The report does not offer universal solutions to the problems of achieving total social inclusion. However, it does attempt to present a new perspective on disability issues, which focuses more on disabled people than on the institutions active on their behalf.



## 1.2 Terms of Reference

Before undertaking the study, the working group spent some time reviewing the original terms of reference set by the EUROPEAN Group - IPWH. Members were anxious to extend those terms to include extra targets, to raise debate to a higher abstract level, and to present an overview of the field of research. In particular, they wanted to replace the term 'Integration' with that of 'Social Inclusion'

To obtain a total picture of Social Inclusion or Exclusion, members identified a number of key issues and questions:

### 1. Hypothesis

In what circumstances can severely disabled people find the greatest satisfaction in their work?



### 2. Working hypothesis

EUROPEAN Group - IPWH members should aim to create and sustain conditions that enable severely disabled people to participate in society. To achieve this, members must consider all factors affecting disabled people's lives, including housing, complementary day care, education, extra medical care, pensions, etc. Statistics from each member state would be needed to produce a total figure for the whole European Union.

### 3. Practice

To what level are individuals and organisations working for the severely disabled people committed to social inclusion? What are they doing to achieve it? Contact with such individuals and organisations would produce relevant information about their current practice and experience.

### 4. The study

The following statements/questions are fundamental to the study:

What factors are needed to enable severely disabled people to work successfully in a business environment?

What socio-economic factors (e.g. housing, complementary day care, education, extra medical care, pensions, etc.) are essential to achieve a rights-based approach to paid work for severely disabled people which will give them a sense of happiness, fulfilment and security?

In achieving the required goals, is it better that participating institutions work together within one large care system, or is it possible for them to progress alone?



Are there any barriers that prevent institutions from working together?  
Is it possible to provide a single model that describes the European situation?

### 5. Criteria

In defining the terms of reference it was considered important to meet the following criteria required by the European Union:

The degree to which the terms of reference contribute to the promotion of a rights based approach to disability issues.

The level of participation by disabled people to produce their effective and substantial involvement in the design and implementation of the working group activities, which must themselves prove to be beneficial to disabled people.

At the first working group meeting on Monday December 20th 1999 working group members agreed to the following draft terms of reference:

1. Define the term 'disabled people' and identify the group to which the term applies.
2. Assess whether this group is increasing/declining within our organisations and nations.

3. Overview the selection criteria of disabled people to our organisations.
4. Identify overall strategies to ensure their integration in special employment: setting specific targets for this group.
5. Establish whether there must be a minimum level of performance under which integration in special employment is not possible.
6. Consider whether there is an ideal balance between less and more severely disabled people to ensure a good economic and social performance.
7. Consider how technical aids/personal support increase performance level.
8. Consider whether transition is possible for this group of people.
9. Provide successful case studies, taking account of different impairments.
10. Establish the degree of any extra financial support required to ensure that disabled people are not excluded from special employment or access to mainstream employment.
11. Identify any special jobs or ways of organising that are more beneficial for these people.
12. Produce conclusions and recommendations.

The Working Group submitted these terms to the EUROPEAN Group - IPWH Secretary for approval by the Chairman. That approval was granted.



## 1.3

## 1.3 Narrative

In a search for quantitative illustrations, the Working Group compiled and circulated a questionnaire to EU organisations active in the field of disability. The Group's intention was to provide a graphical representation of the numbers of disabled people employed, where they work, etc. In the covering letter we informed the addressee that, if absolute numbers should not be available, estimated figures would suffice. The response to this questionnaire was very low. After a second attempt, we only received responses from 6 countries. We considered this too low a return to produce scientific data and, for this reason, the figures have not been included in this report. Details of the questionnaire are given on page 27.

The Working Group comprised 9 people representing seven organisations from 6 countries. It was felt that the depth and range of knowledge and varied experience held within the Group would enable them to define a vision and a path for the future. Details of the organisations represented on the Working Group are given on page 25.



applied in his or her country. This exercise did not produce a set of 'European standard definitions' but it did highlight the international differences in the way people think about disability issues, what terms mean in a national context, and how professionals working in the field apply them in their own countries. This in turn led to discussion on the form of European 'keynotes' relating to each term and the issues raised.

**10 terms with salient points raised in the Group's discussion are given below. Whenever a general consensus on a working definition was agreed, that definition was used in the substance of this report.**

## 1.4

## 1.4 Definitions

Before they could begin to make even general statements in a report, Working Group members recognised that they would have to overcome differences in interpretation. It was essential to find the right terminology to be able to present conclusions that are understandable throughout Europe. For example, a key definition would be that of disability itself. To what group of people does the term 'most severely disabled' apply? How is that term understood in each country?

As a first step, each member identified a number of key terms and phrases relating to disability, and described how they were

### 1 Employment

Employment as defined in European directives is: *'Any remunerated activity which is performed, either as a third party's employee or as a self-employed person, under a contractual relationship or according to the labour market patterns (i.e. sector or business labour agreements), and which makes reference to workers' rights and obligations (e.g. wages, work time, leave, holidays, etc.)'*

The Working Group recommends that this definition be applied to the employment of people with severe disabilities.

## 2 Severely disabled

Applying percentages to measure degrees of disability presents us with certain problems. A person's impairment may have a moderate or severe impact on his or her performance, regardless of the severity of the impairment. For example, a severe impairment such as total blindness (100%) may not result in that person's total inability to be a typist. This can apply as much in everyday social life as in the work environment.

Assessing a disabled person's social and work environments is just as important as measuring his or her level of performance or the percentage of ability/disability. Today, deciding whether or not someone is severely disabled is based upon his or her minimal level of performance. This is also expressed as a percentage and is extremely difficult to measure.

To a greater or lesser extent, EU member states use the definition of disability proposed by the World Health Organisation (WHO):

**Disability:** Disability is understood to refer to any kind of restriction or absence, due to a deficiency, of the ability to carry out an activity in the way or within the confines of that which is considered to be normal for a human being. The concept of disability refers to the permanent consequences of personal illnesses and accidents.

**Handicap:** Handicap is understood to include all situations deemed disadvantageous to an individual which result as a consequence of a deficiency or a disability and which limits or impedes the fulfilling of a normal role on the basis of age, gender, and concurrent social and cultural factors. The concept of handicap

refers to the permanent consequences of illnesses and accidents within the social sphere.

However, the Working Group identified variations in the percentage classifications used by different European countries in establishing disability. These range from a starting point of 50% degree of total ability up to, logically, 100%.

*For example:*

COUNTRY	DISABILITY
Germany	>50%
Spain	>65%
France	Category C or >80%
The Netherlands (pending confirmation)	>60%
United Kingdom	>70%
Austria	>70%

In each country the degree of disability is determined by a medical examination. But the classification of a person as seriously disabled can vary from one country to another. Further variations can arise from differing perceptions of total ability. For example it is likely that 70% in Germany does not mean the same as or is equal to 70% in Austria.

The definition of disability is as varied as each individual case assessed. For this reason impairment does not automatically mean inability. Work-related disability only applies when a person's impairment impedes the ability to do a certain type of work.

The Working Group concluded that target groups for the study should be those people whose employment perspectives are substantially reduced by a physical, mental, or sensory impairment, or learning difficulties (whether permanent or temporary); and to those who are unable to work or have very limited employment potential.

Thus, we considered those with impairments above 50% as our target group - but taking account of people's personal and work-related circumstances.

Bearing in mind that a level of impairment is not the same as the level of performance (as in the example of total blindness given above), the Working Group tried to relate the level of an individual's disability to his or her level of performance. We concluded that the performance level has to be between the 5% and 15% of a notional maximum performance norm. Anyone who is capable of performing on a higher level or who is not capable of performing at least to a 5% level is excluded from the target group.

After discussion all Working Group members agreed that the following sentence should be added to the definition of severely disabled:

*'A person must be able to increase his or her capacity/level of performance when he or she receives specific training.'*

It is important to be flexible when considering severely disabled people within the context of their social environment. For example, in a case where a person's ability level is just 1%, we should provide the stimulation required to maximise his or her potential, whatever that may be. Our objective must be to give each individual the maximum satisfaction and sense of fulfilment in whatever he or she is doing, no matter what level their ability and irrespective of any time taken.

The Working Group recognised that the social environment can adversely affect people's impairments and be a disabling barrier to employment. Thus, the percentage of ability is influenced by the personal and social circumstances within the working environment. Each individual must be viewed according to his or her unique personal circumstances.

As a long-term objective - perhaps over the next 10 to 20 years - we should aim to match work to people. In doing so, it is essential that we treat the individual, and not the system, as the most important factor. In our view, this should apply not only to people with disabilities but to everyone. Experience tells us, that adapting the job to the person is all that is required to overcome serious impairment and for that person's productivity to reach a satisfactory level.

### 3 Integration

The Working Group replaced the term 'integration' with the words 'social inclusion'.

To define inclusion, we had first to define 'exclusion'.

Exclusion develops from a number of 'negative' elements in, for example, childhood, up-bringing etc. These lead to a low level of social inclusion, which translates as a social impediment or social handicap. For example, an individual may not be able to find regular employment or is not given the opportunity to transfer into regular work due to some social disability.

#### Integration v Social Inclusion

The term 'integration' implies a breakthrough by people with disabilities into able-bodied society, plus an assimilation and acceptance of disabled people by society into an established set of norms and codes of behaviour.

It suggests that people with disabilities have to be accepted, or tolerated, which implies a previous disengagement for the individual with a disability. Integration contains a negative concept. It starts from a position of 'segregation' and implies the individual has 'suffered a personal tragedy' (i.e. is a victim) that has set him or her

apart. Whilst integration may be seen as a humanitarian response to a real need, it is paternalistic with the non-disabled taking responsibility and control of the process.

For these reasons, integration should not be the aim of supported employment. Instead it should work for 'Social Inclusion'. This enables all citizens to participate fully in society, allowing them full self-expression within a freely changing society whose future they can determine as equally as their fellow citizens. Supported employment agencies must promote social adjustment in all its 'emancipating' forms.

The issue of inclusion as opposed to integration is not new. Steve Biko wrote in similar terms in 1978 when commenting on the integration of Blacks into White Society. Michael Oliver made this comparison in his seminal book 'Understanding Disability.' (Macmillan, 1996)

## 4 Social Inclusion

Our first task, then, is to combat social exclusion and create a fully inclusive society.

Exclusion is an accumulation and combination of several types of deprivation, which may exacerbate the individual's primary disability.

*For example:*

- Lack of education, or exclusion from benefits of mainstream education.
- Discrimination.
- Loss of family support.
- Bad health conditions.
- Homelessness.
- Non-participation in active society.
- Lack of job opportunities - not being given the opportunity to enter a Supported Employment Programme.

Allan Larsson highlighted these points in a report *'Europe: An Active Society, for all*

*ages, for all Europeans.'* (October 1999).

The Dutch '4 x 10% Model' did not take account of these factors and was unsuccessful partly because of not doing so.

### Employment

Inclusion in open employment should be viewed as a transitional process, in which employees progress through differing stages of Integration into Supported Employment.

### Supported Employment

Factory or workshop based supported employment offers a high level of security, providing individuals with economic independence. It brings them income, social status and other employment related benefits. However, the 'high level' of support may act in part as a barrier to social inclusion, as the supported workshop is segregated from mainstream employment. Thus, the 'support' may become part of the segregation process.





The supported employment programme should develop an 'Inclusive Culture' through:

Progression: training and development leading to promotion within the organisation.

Transition: the development of individuals and 'Open Employers' so that a physical or mental impairment is not seen as relevant (or disabling) to employment. (e.g. *'Do not aim to make the legless person normal, but create a Social environment where to be legless is irrelevant'* M. Oliver, 1978)

The Transition Process:

The process of Transition should be seen as a four-stage path to Social Inclusion.

- Unemployment.
- Supported Employment.
- Supported Placement.
- Open Employment.

### Progressive Contracts

A Progressive Contract is the term applied to an employment arrangement in which a 'Host Employer' takes on greater contractual responsibility for the client as their employment progresses. The role of the supported employment agency is to provide

an appropriate and flexible level of support appropriate to the position of the disabled employee in this process.

Initially, the agency charges the host for the value of the work performed by the disabled client. As the charge for those services increases, the supported employment subsidy is reduced and the client progresses to take on the terms and conditions of the host, until he or she eventually becomes an employee of the host's workforce.

### Training and Development for Social Inclusion

Supported employment providers should promote Training and Development programmes for people whose impairment prevents them taking an active 'inclusive role' in society.

If we are to successfully achieve Inclusion, training and development within supported employment should concentrate more on interpersonal and advocacy skills than those required for the particular job.

A comprehensive training and development programme should cover:

- Life and social skills: world of work; relationships.
- Advocacy Skills: thinking skills; decision-making, empowerment - enabling the individual to take responsibility for their future career path.
- Work related skills.

Such a programme must be continued in any progression to 'supported placement' and should incorporate Job Coaching, further training and practical support as required. If this process is to be successful we must achieve a form of holistic support, in which all barriers are removed. The barriers may be personal, institutional or social, but none are acceptable.

## 5 Supported Employment

Supported employment is an employment initiative ('specially organised employment') for people with disabilities who are unable to obtain or hold employment in the open labour market without special support. The aim of supported employment is to facilitate access to the labour market for disabled people who might otherwise be excluded.

Supported employment can be provided through supported workshops/factories, co-operatives, occupational centres, supported employment centres, enclaves and progression into open employment. By its very nature, supported employment is meant to be time-limited. It must ensure that those who have the ability and the desire to make a transition to employment with another employer are able to do so; but it must also take account of those who may not be able to take this option (see 8 - Minimal Level of Performance).

Employees in supported employment receive wages, whilst the supported employment provider receives government funds to reimburse approved costs arising from the employment of people with disabilities.

Often the nature of the 'supported employment' is defined by the contract between employee and employer. Supported employment does not always imply supported contracts, and such arrangements are not always appropriate. In an ideal situation of social inclusion, contracts for disabled employees would be similar to those used in regular employment.

Many different kinds of contracts are currently used in Social Employment. It would be beneficial if, in future, we developed a more homogenised approach to contractual arrangements for people with severe disabilities.

## 6 Employment Targets

Many countries operate a quota system whereby employers are required to employ people with disabilities as a specified percentage of their total number of employees. In practice, many employers prefer to pay the fine that exists for non-compliance. No EU country would accept such a payment for default on health and safety regulations. Why then is it allowed with employment legislation?

The challenge facing us is to encourage employers to recruit people with disabilities rather than pay the fine.

But managers of supported workshops also fail to meet employment targets. Few supported workshops achieve their contractual targets for transitions, achieving only a minimal percentage of disabled employees moving into open employment. In some cases, managers of sheltered workshops would prefer to pay the fine rather than lose their 'best' workers. For them, the cost of a transition to their operation is greater than any financial penalty they might incur.

## 7 Performance levels

Although European countries produce reliable figures on 'performance levels' there is no single European criteria. This is why assessments of a percentage of performance level vary between countries and why it is not of much value to record them in this Report.

## 8 Minimal level of performance

### Regression and progression

Any discussion of a minimal level of performance must accept that individuals can regress as well as progress and that

regression is just as important as progression when planning a transition process. Regression might be caused by increased disability, illness or ageing. It might also be the result of unsettling changes in the working environment; for example, a move to another operation within an organisation, or to other supported employment providers with different objectives.

Clearly we must understand that a minimal level of performance can rise or fall according to changes in an individual's circumstances. Of course, regression and lower performance levels are problems common to the whole of society and not just disabled people. Our task as providers is to influence social attitudes, and provide acceptable models of transition that provide for and support negative and positive changes in performance. In other words, we must operate both a 'progressive' and a 'regressive' transition process.

The 'Regressive' transition process may well be:

- Open Employment.
- Supported Placement.
- Supported Employment.
- Day Care.

For this model to be effective, members and supported service providers will need to establish stronger partnerships with other support agencies. We must create a reliable link between day care centres, workshops, supported placement and open employment that will enable disabled clients to move seamlessly in any direction.

### Establishing a minimal performance level

As already seen, the Working Group proposed that, for practical reasons, to consider the minimum level of performance applicable to those in the 5 - 15% range. However, it is interesting to note the variations between EU countries of the minimum criteria for being accepted for

work in a sheltered workshop:

Spain:	A minimum impairment level of 33%.
Portugal:	The minimum level is based upon mobility.
United Kingdom:	A work capacity that can be no less than 30% of an ordinary workers' average.
France:	A work capacity that is no less than a third lower than the ordinary workers' average. If they do not have this minimal level of performance but have sufficient potential, clients can work in job search centres (CAT).
Holland:	A potential to work.

## 9 Ideal balance

Ideal balance is the criteria applied to balancing the need of the individual against the economic requirements of the business. It can also be used as a perspective for all aspects of society. Within employment, it establishes the foundations for inclusion of disabled people in the normal labour market, preferably in full time employment.

To obtain an ideal balance, each enterprise must evaluate themselves and their operation against the needs of individual disabilities. Each severely disabled person must be allowed to achieve equality not only in a regular work place but also - and especially - as a citizen and a human being.

To achieve ideal balance, severely disabled people must have the opportunity to choose their way of life - or at least to participate in making that choice - whether it concerns a job or any other aspect of society.

Ideal balance is closely linked with social inclusion, and the definition proved useful for the Working Group when creating our vision.

## 10 Transition

### Supported employment - facilitating transition

Facilitating transition to open employment is an inherent task of supported employment centres (sheltered employment); but only if transition is the choice of the disabled person.

Centres have to operate on sound commercial lines. They must be managed as competitive enterprises, but configured as flexible business organisations able to integrate people, with and without disabilities, into a sustainable process. They should show themselves as cost-effective users of subsidies and operate in such a way that they do not prejudice the benefits due to disabled beneficiaries.

Although they must be commercially viable, their social role is paramount. Their main purpose is to act as a means to achieve a higher level of inclusion of those people with serious or severe disabilities, whose impairments make it difficult for them to compete in the open labour market. Their prime objectives are to provide opportunities for useful and remunerated work and rehabilitation, and to create and develop opportunities for progression into the open labour market, as far as possible.

A centre's profitability, the percentage of disabled employees in the workforce, and their output and performance should determine financial aid, subsidies and incentives. As a general rule, financial assistance should be calculated on the basis of the company's result, in such a way that salaries can be structured according to the worker's performance and to the profitability of the centre, and always within minimum legal limits.

To stimulate transition from supported employment centres to ordinary

employment, incentives should be given to organisations taking on a disabled employee from a supported employment centre and to the centre from which the worker comes. We must accept that some supported employment centres consider the loss of trained employees as a threat to their productivity and are reluctant to support the transition process.

### Normalisation and mainstream employment

Normalisation is one of the most important features of the social integration of people with disabilities. In part, it is achieved through access to mainstream employment. However, mainstreaming in employment does not conflict with the provision of specific aid for specific needs. Both the National Employment Plans and the Commission's Directives on Employment for the implementation of specific measures within the various strands of the European Strategy for Employment make this clear.

Mainstream employment does not mean we have to apply a standard set of measures for everybody; but it does require us to set a standard objective, which we should achieve, taking whatever firm action may be necessary.

Through training, people with disabilities should be equipped with the means to become employable and productive and not just with the skills of a particular job. We must help them prepare for the world of work and remove the barriers facing them. The methods we apply may vary, but they will help us achieve our standard objective of an all-inclusive society.



## 1.5 Summary of Conclusions

1. The Working Group found considerable variations in governmental 'disability' policies and strategies, which made it extremely difficult to draw Europe-wide conclusions. These differences at a national level also caused problems in making comparisons between the work done in different countries at regional, local and organisational levels. Variations in statistical methodology, targets, performance measures and basic terminology reflected the national differences and also hampered the study. Fundamentally, these differences create barriers to co-operation, restrict access to subsidy sources and impede progress at all levels.

2. The business community does not provide enough employment opportunities for severely disabled people.

3. There is too much emphasis on severely disabled people's disabilities. Measurement of severe disability is always related to a fixed time and place with no account taken of past or future variations. As a result, disabled people's qualities are not always developed to a maximum potential.
4. There is a need for recognised organisations working on behalf of disabled people, including EUROPEAN Group - IPWH and its members, to take the lead in developing Social Inclusion programmes.
5. It is extremely difficult to obtain national statistics relating to disabled people and employment. Not only did this limit the work of Working Group, but impedes future development.
6. There is a lack of benchmarking criteria.

7. There is no single standard measure or definition of disability. The process of evaluating disability on the basis of a 'percentage of performance' presents problems.
8. The processes and contractual arrangements for supporting disabled people in employment vary considerably between European countries.



## 1.6 Vision

Over 400,000 people in the EU are severely disabled and occupationally impaired. Many attend a day care centre - with or without a supported labour contract - whilst others are in supported employment, funded by the government or by private initiative.

Our detail review of definitions highlighted many differences between the ways countries approach the issue of disability and employment.

The aim of EUROPEAN Group - IPWH is to create more employment opportunities for people with disabilities; and as employers, our members have the skills and resources achieve this objective. The role of sheltered/supported employment is to provide employment and/or support into employment for disabled people so that, through employment, they gain social inclusion, which is an objective of society.

Our vision of a Socially Inclusive Society is one where: 'The competencies of severely disabled people are rewarded through working in open employment.'

To achieve this, the following conditions must apply:

1. Individual impairments are not a disablement to employment.
2. Individual impairments are not a reason for social exclusion. Segregation through institutionalisation runs contrary to society's wishes.

Institutions, including IPWH members, need to adopt Social Inclusive Policies. To do this, we must change our role from that of Employers to one of Enablers of Transition for people with severe disabilities. We must promote 'best practice' and remove employment barriers facing people with disabilities. Also IPWH members and other organisations, institutions and governments should provide suitable 'safety nets' which allow disabled people to return to the sheltered environment if open employment does not prove to be suitable for them.

We must work together on behalf of the severely disabled for social inclusion. We must aim for a society in which all members participate, and which allows self-fulfilment within in an environment that changes according to the democratic wishes of the people.

## 1.7 Recommendations

1. EUROPEAN Group - IPWH members must extend our focus beyond the workplace to the total social environment in which the severely disabled people live (i.e. work, support, housing, leisure activities, etc.). Our objective is to ensure access to all facilities of everyday life and allow individuals to develop their thinking skills.

2. We must develop a single European strategy that will enable our members to share their knowledge and experience. It should also help us expand and harmonise the following processes:

- Diagnoses.
- Developing learning capacities.
- Testing and training.
- Adapting working environment to enable mainstream employment.
- Homogenising statistical information relating to disability.

3. We must devise a comprehensive policy and action plan for those people whose personal circumstances prevent their working in open employment. The paid work they do should give a meaning and content to their lives.

4. Businesses of all sizes (from large multi-nationals to small enterprises) must be encouraged to develop partnership programmes to permanently increase the opportunities for the severely disabled people within paid open employment.

5. Statistical information on employment and disability issues must be more readily available. European statistics must be more homogeneous.

6. We must devise a strategy that will help and encourage disabled people overcome their reluctance to leave a sheltered workshop and gain experience of other work and social environments.

7. Future strategy should emphasise disabled people's competencies rather than their impairments. Individuals, institutions, organisations and businesses engaged in employment, housing, complementary day care, education, extra medical care, pensions, etc., should be trained and encouraged to adopt this approach.

8. The assessment of an individual's working capacity, given at a particular time and place, should never be taken as final. Every consideration must be given to opportunities for development and change for both progression and regression. We would again emphasise that the way measures are taken should be the same in every European country. This would enable us to highlight regional differences.
9. In striving to produce a trans-national model to achieve transitions to open employment, EUROPEAN Group - IPWH should continue to recognise that supported workshops and placements must always be available as a 'safety net' for the most severely disabled people who have low working capacity.
10. We must work to break down existing barriers between service agencies such as institutions, day centres, supported workshops, and supported employment providers, and subsidy and insurance channels.
11. We must develop programs that will encourage and support people with severe disabilities to explore, discover and develop their qualities. Our purpose is 'to give each individual the greatest satisfaction in whatever he or she is doing, at no matter what level and in no matter what timescale.'

However, when developing a European strategy, we must remember:

1. The target group is constantly changing in nature and numbers. The wishes and aspirations of both the mentally disabled people and those with severe physical impairment are increasing.
2. Our task is not to work FOR disabled people, but WITH them.
3. Factory or workshop based supported employment offers a high level of security. It provides an income and economic independence, social status and other employment related benefits. However, it may also act partly as a barrier to social inclusion, as the supported workplace is segregated from mainstream employment. Paradoxically, the 'support' may become part of the segregation.

1.8

## 1.8 Manifesto

IPWH members should be seen as major enablers for societies to achieve the goal of Social Inclusion for all severely disabled people within the next 15 or 20 years.

To achieve this, we must facilitate progression and transition to non-supported employment by investing more in Job Coaching and the development of disabled people's personal and advocacy skills.



## 1.9 Preparing for Change

1.9

The Working Group proposes the following short-term initiatives:

1. Action should be taken by EU Member States under the co-ordination of the European Commission for each country to produce inventories of barriers existing between institutions and created by legislation and financial systems.
2. The EUROPEAN Group - IPWH should record and publish information on successful initiatives taken to place severely disabled people into mainstream employment, and disseminate it as a benchmark for other members and countries.
3. The European Commission should promote the needs of disabled people, increasing public and political understanding of their impairments, but also creating a wider social appreciation of the value of the work they can do and the contribution they make to society.
4. The EUROPEAN Group - IPWH should publish and promote a European Code of Good Practice similar to the Code of Good Practices; Guidance for

attention of quality in Sheltered Workshops produced by Grupo Gureak

5. A continuation of a dynamic on-going programme of specialist initiatives.

These initiatives must be included in programmes taken at individual, organisational, national and European levels.

In addition, every EU Member State should establish benchmarking criteria for the employment and development of people with severe disabilities.

Consideration should be given to operating the following:

- A single European Classification.
- A positive programme for transition to open employment.
- Employment partnerships with employers in the open labour market.
- Partnerships with all stakeholders within the supported employment environment to establish and maintain a seamless transition process.

It is also essential that the European Commission and national governments should be made aware of the lack of relevant up-to-date statistics and the implications for future progress towards social integration.

## 1.10 Members of the Working Group

1.10

Hans Vrind (Chair)	NOSW	Netherlands
Phillipe Boidin	SNAPEI	France
Mariano Cortes	GUREAK Grupo	Spain
Marlia Martins	FENACERCI	Portugal
C�line Poulet	SNAPEI	France
Steve Scott	Remploy Limited	UK
Ignacio Velo	Fundoso Grupo	Spain
Kristjan Valdimarsson	Formaour SW	Iceland
Henk Weijers	NOSW	Netherlands

## 1.11 Questionnaire

The questionnaire circulated to EU organisations active in the field of disability is given below:

In its search for quantitative illustrations (the working group's aim was to add graphics of numbers of disabled working in different settings as workshop, regular employment etc.), the working group circulated a questionnaire to organisations active in the disability field in all European Union-countries. In the covering letter we informed the addressee that, if absolute numbers should not be available, estimated figures would suffice. The response to this questionnaire was very low. After a second try, we only received responses from 6 countries. For this reason, figures are not complete and not included in this report. Details of the questionnaire are given on page 27.



EUROPEAN Group - IPWH Working Group 1

"EMPLOYMENT OF THE MOST SEVERELY DISABLED PEOPLE"

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

Please answer the following questions (preferably in absolute numbers but if those are not available an 'educated guess' will do also):

**Country:****Population**

1. total population: \_\_\_\_\_
2. total population working age: \_\_\_\_\_
3. total population disabled: \_\_\_\_\_
4. total population disabled working age: \_\_\_\_\_
5. total population disabled working: \_\_\_\_\_

**Employment**

1. total employment disabled in regular labour \_\_\_\_\_
2. total employment disabled in sheltered workshop \_\_\_\_\_
3. total employment disabled in supported placement: \_\_\_\_\_
4. total employment disabled in other schemes: \_\_\_\_\_

**Disability types**

1. total psychic disabled: \_\_\_\_\_
2. total psychic disabled employed: \_\_\_\_\_
3. total psychic disabled not employed: \_\_\_\_\_
4. total mental disabled: \_\_\_\_\_
5. total mental disabled employed: \_\_\_\_\_
6. total mental disabled not employed: \_\_\_\_\_
7. total physical disabled: \_\_\_\_\_
8. total physical disabled employed: \_\_\_\_\_
9. total physical disabled not employed: \_\_\_\_\_

Add further comments on the report.

My comments on the report are:

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

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# Opportunities and Threats of New Business Sectors and Methods

# 2

## 2.1 Introduction

2.1

In recent years, the rise of a new economy has brought major changes to business and business methods. It is now dominating work and the workplace. The organisations represented by EUROPEAN Group - IPWH operate their businesses along traditional lines, mainly in the secondary sector of the economy where most opportunities for

employing people with disabilities are to be found. It is therefore important that we examine the new economy to determine the threats and opportunities it presents to our organisations to develop our businesses and find new ways to extend work opportunities for people with disabilities.

Between 1973 and 1997, the employment level within the general Labour Market in Europe fell from 65% to 60%. However, in recent years, the trend has been reversed; largely through growth in new economic sectors. Consequently, we have to look to these sectors for new opportunities to provide work. New economy sectors have to be flexible to respond quickly to constant demands for change. They also require a new approach to trading relationships and work organisation.

To benefit from the opportunities of the new economy, it is important that our organisations become more flexible in the ways they organise work and develop partnerships with customers. They must also identify new technologies and new markets that will extend work opportunities for severely disabled people.





## 2.2 Fundamental Social Changes

The consensus amongst leading academics is that the future of employment depends on five key internationally operative factors:

- Globalisation.
- Environmentalism.
- Digitalisation.
- Individualisation.
- Politicisation.

These new developments result in a 'social removal of specific places' for work and production, with consequences that cannot be envisaged today.

### a) Environmentalism

The growing popular concern for the environment in recent years has prompted national governments to give greater consideration to environmental issues in developing their policies. As with globalisation, it has produced contradictory effects.

On the one hand, massive and effective publicity, particularly from civic pressure groups and environmental protection initiatives, seeks to discredit industries and manufacturing processes. This undermines capital investment, destabilises capital and employment markets and increases unemployment. On the other hand, new jobs and professions emerge in alternative production areas. Entirely new production processes, product and service chains are created. New markets grow and new capital is generated. Environmentalism has resulted internationally - like globalisation - in entirely opposite ideologies: neo-liberalism with its share holder and power ethics against a 'new social awareness' that exhorts companies to take greater social responsibility and demands greater state regulation of market forces.

### b) Digitalisation

Digitalisation and globalisation have been mutually dependent phenomena since the 1980s. People who distance themselves from the international language of the computer will be excluded from the global communication network, dominated by this form of communication. Digitalisation is both the result of the technological revolution as well as the driving force for its perpetual dynamic growth. On one sense, the space for work and life is limited to the location of a computer workplace. In another, it is unlimited through access to the global communication network. Only those who can keep pace with this development through further and advanced training will ultimately be able to adapt to the changing employment market.

### c) Individualisation

Over the last twenty years, social restructuring in industrial countries has resulted in a flexible approach in meeting the demands of the workforce including a transition to flexible working hours. The 'traditional CV' - school education, craft-technical apprenticeship, study, profession - is becoming obsolete. The division of employment is divided into units of time and is reflected in contracts. The world of the consumer is also being individualised, as retail structures adapt to the ways and times customers want to view, select and buy goods. Globalisation and digitalisation enable individual and personal consumption at any time, resulting in extremely individualised products and markets.

### d) Politicisation

These radical changes are accompanied by social instability and uncertainty, and confront national and supranational politics with new challenges. The fact that capital is now international, to a previously unknown extent, questions the nature of current political. National states are no longer in a

position to control these processes alone. Their political framework is far too narrow to accommodate the rapid development of globally operative capital. Often super-national structures are little more than a response to the expansion and dynamism of multi-national companies, rather than a positive attempt to create new state regulation mechanisms. For many years, social scientists and philosophers have warned about the threat to democratic government by an economic community that can all too easily escape its control.

#### e) The consequences for employment

The consequences of this major transformation have been well documented in numerous publications. The key issues may be summarised.

*Job specifications and qualification requirements for the workforce have long-since changed. Technological innovation demands a life-long willingness and ability to learn on the part of the employee. This is not offset by any guarantee of employment, and certainly not a 'job for life'. This development particularly affects those social groups with limited learning ability and who are disadvantaged in their social and communicative skills. The hurdles for entry into working life facing these individuals are no longer surmountable, whilst a state mechanism for a collective solution does not exist.*

*Since the 1980s, there has been a massive reduction in simple jobs. This is associated with a global decline in wage and salary levels. This is an ongoing process, which primarily affects people without vocational qualifications.*

#### f) New definition of 'social work'

An increasing number of support organisations are urging acceptance of 'fractional CVs', which will incorporate a 'fragmentary' building process through

further training and development. Integration into the employment market is no longer a simple matter of assimilation in the full-time job world. Job exchanges, employee take-overs and day work projects' are presented as potential solutions. However, many organisations believe that the state should support such measures by providing the necessary security. This should take the form of payment of the cost of education and further training, plus payments during periods without income.

It must be noted, however, that there is a danger that the national security systems will be undermined and entire groups of (non-working) social security recipients will potentially slip below subsistence level. All support organisations agree that a new definition of work in society is required and that it should no longer be restricted to paid employment.

No qualified and differentiated investigation into the effects of these developments on the disabled sector of the population has yet been conducted. As a result, there are no future-orientated concepts available.



2.3

## 2.3 New Technology Sectors

New technology sectors have provided the driving force European economic development. These sectors include:

- Information technology.
- Communication technology.
- E-commerce (contact centres).
- Automation.

Some of the defining characteristics of these sectors are:

- Rapid growth.
- Flexibility and change.
- The high demand for technological skills.

2.4

## 2.4 Other New Business Sectors

Although new technology sectors receives the most publicity, there are many other industries within the service sector which are expanding rapidly. These include:

- E-business services (e.g. Call-Centres, microfilming/CD document compression).
- Re-cycling.
- Hotel and catering.
- Social services.
- Staffing.
- Facilities Management.
- Leisure services.
- Cleaning (e.g. clothes, offices, service in hotels etc.).
- Public services.
- Gardening.
- Fulfilment Centres (warehousing and delivery).

## 2.5 New Sector Experience for People with Disabilities

**Many EUROPEAN Group - IPWH member organisations have responded successfully to the demand of the new sectors, by changing from the traditional customer base and reorganising the way in which they do business. Some examples of these achievements are given below.**

### 1 Austria

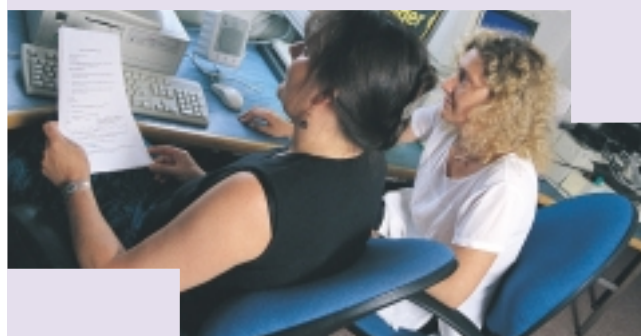


#### BBRZ Sheltered Workshops

##### E-commerce Warehouse

The rapid growth in E-commerce and tele-shopping has provided an increasing number of work opportunities for disabled people in supported employment organisations. BBRZ believes that by using automated systems, work places can be adapted to provide call-centres, mail order, logistic and warehousing services.

This type of work requires a range of competencies and abilities, which enables the employing organisation to mix the target group. Disabled people, the long-term unemployed and non-disabled people can contribute their abilities to a common enterprise.



## 2 Ireland

### New Work Group Opportunities

Response Electronic Manufacturing (REM) is a Gandon enterprise based in Limerick, which enables its disabled employees to work outside Gandon's own factories. REM is contracted to manage and operate printing and warehouse facilities for the supply of keyboards to a major computer manufacturer.

The Taiwanese manufacturer of the keyboards supplies the printing equipment and warehouse. REM supplies the workforce and manages the operation. It stores the keyboards, which are bulk-delivered from Taiwan, prints letters on the keys in over 30 different language variations, quality tests and despatches the keyboards to the computer assembly line in the sequence and quantities required. At times, the operation runs for 24 hours a day and 7 days a week to meet the customer's needs.

### Joint Ventures in Ireland

Gandon Enterprises is a partner in two successful joint venture businesses. In each case, Gandon owns 51% of the business with the remaining 49% held by a private sector partner with a joint board of directors controlling the operation.

The first, Connect Industries Limited, provides a range of logistic, assembly and disassembly/recovery services to customers in the technology and software industries. It has been operating successfully for more than five years and employs over 80 people of whom 20 have a disability. The initiative began when Gandon formed a partnership with a neighbouring company, Qualtech Limited to win a major contract. Gandon supplied the manpower and premises, whilst Gandon provided management expertise, supply chain knowledge and private sector entrepreneurial skills. Gandon retained responsibility for personnel to protect the interests of disabled employees.

The original contract is no longer active; but Connect Industries Limited continues to trade successfully and has expanded its operations. In response to the growing demands of its multi-national customer base, the company has since moved from a small to a larger plant in Galway, opened a second plant in Scotland and, more recently, a third plant in the Netherlands.

The City Recycling Company was established in early 1999 as a pilot scheme for the collection of glass for recycling from commercial premises (pubs, restaurants, clubs, etc.) in Galway City. It combined Gandon's recycling expertise with the experience and resources of a local waste contractor. The business has been operating successfully for the past year, and Gandon plans to replicate it in other cities in Ireland.

Rehab Recycling Partnership (RRP) is fully owned by Gandon and is the largest recycler of domestic waste in Ireland. It operates a nationwide collection of glass, cans and textiles, which it processes with other materials purchase from other collectors. RRP employs 50 people at its three processing plants in Dublin and Cork, including 38 with disabilities. A further 20 people are employed in collection services.

Although wholly owned by Gandon, RRP relies on a complex arrangement of partnerships which include:

- Local government authorities which provide many of the sites for public recycling banks and pay a fee to RRP for their recycling service. They have also helped provide sites for processing plants.
- Repak, an organisation representing the recycling interests in the commercial and industrial sectors, which provides funds to RRP.
- Supermarkets and other retail outlets, which provide sites for collection banks.
- IGB, the main customer, which provides a market for glass and has assisted with the purchase of processing equipment.
- The general public who segregate and collect recyclable materials, and bring them to the collection banks.

### 3 Sweden

#### Samhall AB

More than 90% of Samhall's employees have one or more types of occupational disability. The vast majority of approximately 40% have disabilities arising from personal impairment, multiple disabilities or medical conditions

#### Partnership with Partena AB

Samhall has formed a partnership with Partena AB to provide a service for the delivery of chilled foods, Hemservice. Partena is affiliated to the French multi-national company, Sodexho Alliance. In 1997, Partena had a turnover of 3 billion Swedish Kronen and employed approximately 8,000 people. Sodexho had a sales turnover of 29.5 billion FRF of which 90% were in catering services to companies, factories, hospitals and schools. 70% of their market was in Europe. Their total workforce is 152,000 employees.

51% of Hemservice will be owned by Partena, will build sales and create profit. Their target is a minimum of 5% profit on net sales. Samhall will appoint the Managing Director, but will not be actively engaged in the company. Representatives from both partners will form a board, with the Chair appointed by Partena. Partena will recruit a sales manager whilst administration will be recruited from both Partena and Samhall.

Hemservice operates by ordering and delivering chilled foods in about 30 out of Sweden's 288 local municipalities. The company will buy the food from Samhall LGC and the distribution from Samhall regionally. Distribution will be governed by a supplier contract.

The company will be funded by share capital to cover the running costs for a year.

### 4 Germany

#### Westeifel Werke (WEW) Sheltered Workshop

Under German legislation, workshops for disabled people have to be non-profit making rehabilitation institutions for integrating severely disabled people into normal working life. Therefore, Westeifel Werke (WEW) operates according to economic principles but with social, educational, therapeutic, medical and psychological factors as its prime concern.

#### Integration Company of Park and Landscape Furniture

This creates high quality park spaces and pedestrian areas, as well as landscape furniture with more than 30 standard models in different variations.

#### Balloon Printing

With more than 15 years experience in the business, WEW is recognised as one the leading balloon printers in Europe. More than 100 million colour-printed balloons are supplied to advertising agencies, commercial and private companies. They have the capacity to print and despatch 500,000 balloons daily.

#### Commission Work

Work on commission accounts for about 80% of WEW's business and is built upon a long-standing clientele within the region. Operational flexibility is required as customer orders vary. Examples of the work include:

- Work on aluminium profiles.
- Fitting of draw strings.
- Finishing on plastic housings for the electronics industry.
- Assembly work for the automobile and high-tech industries.

- Packaging for drinks, entertainment and cosmetic industries.
- Commission work for warehouse chains.

#### Pallet Repair

WEW operates a pallet repair section for local customers in the beverage industry.

#### International Co-operation

WEW has entered a cross-border partnership with Christian Health Insurance (CKK) in Belgium. It is expected that the initiative will provide 70 workplaces for disabled people, including German-speakers from Verviers (Belgium).

#### Sales and marketing

From an early stage, WEW recognised the importance of a sales and marketing strategy to achieve sales growth. They established a sales and marketing department to optimise conditions to realise enterprise targets. Sales of their own label products including the park and landscape furniture ('Quality from Gerolstein') and balloons ('Balloons from Gerolstein') have benefited considerably. At the same time, WEW acquired co-operative partners in Belgium, France and Thuringia (Germany) to work together to develop European markets. They found a common interest in discussing, agreeing and executing sales and marketing initiatives. These include:

- Participation at trade exhibitions and fairs.
- Advertising.
- Field services.
- Mailings.
- Telephone marketing.
- PR reports.
- Market research.
- Organising brochures.
- Development.
- Price policy.

#### Work Training Section

WEW is drawing up plans for a diversified system of training that will enable disabled people maximise their potential within their area of work. Courses will combine both practical and theoretical training.





4. Government demands for a 'best-value' return on the supported employment 'fee for service', within its overall employment programme.
5. Opportunities from IT and other new systems.

Under the title Remploy 21, the company undertook a radical reappraisal of its role for the new Millennium. As a result, Remploy has adopted an enterprise culture based upon dynamic partnerships with its major stakeholders: its disabled employees, customers, trade unions, other employers, the Employment Service and Government. The company's prime objective is commercial growth to increase work opportunities for disabled people.

## 5 UK

### Remploy Limited

Remploy Limited, is a Government supported organisation that exists 'to expand the opportunities for disabled people in sustainable work, both within Remploy factories and externally.'

Remploy is the UK's biggest employer of disabled people, with more than 6,000 employed in the company's 87 industrial units and over 4,000 working with external employers under Remploy's Interwork external employment programme.

During the first forty years after its foundation in 1946, Remploy relied on the development of its own manufacturing operation to provide work for disabled people. In recent years, however, it has responded to a number of social and economic changes. These include:

1. Market forces.
2. Globalisation.
3. Demands for greater social inclusion and equality for disabled people, reflected in the Government's Disability Discrimination Act, 1995.

Remploy is divided into two independent but strongly inter-active operations: the Commercial Business and Employment Development.

Through its Commercial Business, Remploy produces, markets and sells a range of its own products including furniture, knitwear, mobility and orthotic goods, book binding, protective clothing and buoyancy aids. However, its Contract Business is its main growth area. An intensive programme of retraining and investment to upgrade its manufacturing units has enabled Remploy to become a prime source for contract manufacturing. All its manufacturing units are fully equipped to undertake precision assembly of electronic, mechanical and electro-mechanical components, ranging from basic assembly to full quality-assured supply chain management, including materials sourcing, packaging and distribution. Lever Brothers, Peugeot, Esso, BT, Panasonic and Land Rover are just a few of the major companies included in Remploy's growing customer base.

The trend for companies to outsource 'non-core' business has produced opportunities in other areas. Remploy has provided teams of trained and supervised staff to undertake a

range of tasks 'on site'. These include high-level electro-mechanical assembly, CCTV security surveillance, and hotel housekeeping and maintenance.

Employment Development co-ordinates and promotes the recruitment, assessment, training and progression of Remploy's disabled employees. It markets and sells expert training, advice and guidance on the employment of disabled people to other employers; and also directs Remploy's Interwork supported employment programme.

Over the last five years, Remploy Interwork has found jobs for over 5,000 disabled people in the private and public sectors. Interwork employees are normally employed by Remploy, and are paid at the same rate of pay and under the same conditions as the rest of the host employer's workforce. The host pays Remploy the value of the work done by the Interwork employee. Remploy provides both employee and host employer with on-going support for as long as it is needed.

This year, the success of Interwork will be marked by the progression of over 700 disabled people from Remploy into full employment in the general labour market. Remploy plans to increase this substantially over the next three to four years so that by 2004, over 5000 disabled people will be supported into the regular labour market.

By developing its Commercial Business as a high-quality, customer-led, 'best value' enterprise including service sector development, and expanding its network of Interwork employment with higher levels of progression, Remploy plans to significantly increase the number of work opportunities for disabled people in the UK. The UK Government has endorsed the company's Remploy 21 strategy and is encouraging Remploy to work with other organisations and employers to promote the employment of disabled people in the regular labour market.

## 6 Spain



### Fundosa Grupo, S.A.

#### Joint venture Ford

Early in 1999, the Ford Motor Company approached Fundosa with a proposal to establish a joint company, subcontracted by Ford to provide assembly and logistic services to the Ford factory in nearby Valencia.

On the basis of information provided by Ford, a joint feasibility study was undertaken to establish if the new company would be financially viable.

It was decided that the joint company should be a special employment centre under the Spanish model of special employment. Qualification would enable the new company to obtain financial subsidies to support the initial investment as well as monthly benefits, which compensate part of the salaries and social charges of the disabled employees.





Accreditation as a special employment centre requires a company to show that disabled people comprise a minimum of 70% of the total workforce. The proposed level for the new company was 90%.

The contributions made by each of the partners were:

- **Fundosa:** its knowledge in the selection, training and recruitment of disabled workers, as well as its expertise in obtaining subsidies and the special employment centre qualification.
- **Ford:** its expertise in the sector and role as main client of the new company as well as providing for additional customers. As a result, Ford benefits from excellent relations with the public authorities of the region, where the company is one of the major employers.
- **Both partners:** The financial means for the initial investment, which was estimated at about 1.2 million Euros.

The initial process was completed and the new joint company was set up in the second half of 2000. Ford became shareholder through a foundation, which had been promoted and financed by Ford. Each partner holds 50% of the shares of the new company.

Apart from the statutes of the new company, a special contract was signed between the two partners to establish the commitments between the partners and between the partners and the new company.

It is foreseen that the new company will employ more than 50 people with different types of disabilities.

## 2.6 Methods and Operational Structures

The examples given in the previous section show that, to benefit from the opportunities in the new business sectors, it is necessary to utilise new methods and operational structures. The methods have to be flexible to meet the demand for constant change. Those that have been identified include:

### Joint Venture

Joint ventures bring together the workforce potential of disabled people and the skilled resources of the commercial partners. The main advantages of this co-operation are:

- Long term nature of the relationships.
- Risk sharing.
- Learning from the experience of partners.
- Participation in larger scale projects, which would not be possible within its own resources.
- Improve the image of organisations employing disabled people.

However, it is very important to choose the right partner so there is not a conflict of visions and values.

### Work Group Placements

Opportunities exist to provide teams to operate a production line or a section within a larger plant. This can involve providing labour with its own supervision, or taking responsibility for the total management of the line. The main advantages of this method are:

- Integration of disabled persons in the mainstream environment.
- No requirement for capital expenditure.

- It tends to be a long term relationship.
- Learning from the experience of the host company.
- Can lead to transition to open employment.
- Opportunities for host companies to recognise the potential of the disabled work force.

### Strategic Alliances

Strategic alliances enable organisations to work with others to achieve a common or mutually beneficial goal. They may involve either a formally legal binding agreement or operate as an informal partnership arrangement. For this method the main advantages are:

- Combines and co-ordinates the efforts and resources for both partners.
- No complex equity or financial involvement.
- Flexible and easy to adjust to reflect changing circumstances.
- Advantages of scale and greater influence.

### Sub-contracted Manufacturing

Sub-contracting in manufacturing is the most widely used method of providing work places for people with disabilities. It has the following advantages:

- Low capital expenditure.
- Does not require a Research & Development department.
- Does not require substantial technical experience.
- Does not require sales and marketing of products.
- Operates through simple straight forward contracts.
- It produces ideal work for low-skilled as well as high-skilled disabled people.

However, competition from countries with low labour costs is making it increasingly difficult to manage this type of business. In

a competitive global economy, organisations cannot depend on long term commitments from customers.

### Sub-contracted Services

The service sector is fast growing and provides many opportunities for sub-contracting. The advantages of sub-contracting in this sector are:

- Employment in an open and integrated work environment.
- Help in developing social skills.
- Raises disability awareness amongst service users.
- Provides good opportunities due to labour shortages.
- Provides flexible and part time work opportunities.
- Low capital investment.



## 2.7

## 2.7 Threats

In a time of rapid economic and social change, all our businesses face new threats. It is important that we recognise them and adopt suitable strategies to deal with them. Many of the traditional sector businesses in Europe are under pressure or in decline. This has been caused by a combination of circumstances including:

- Competition from countries with lower labour and production costs.
- Rapid changes in economic cycles.
- Higher costs due to environmental and social legislation and regulation.
- Resources being absorbed by new economy businesses.
- Globalisation of work trade.

## 2.8

As most work places for people with disabilities are in the traditional sector, they are subject to the general economic threats listed above. In addition, there are specific threats directly related to the employment of people with disabilities, which are:

- Increasing pace of work.
- Higher skill requirements.
- Increasing rate of change.
- Need for life long learning and re-skilling.
- Higher demand for shift work.
- Increasing stresses and pressures at work leading to burn-out and the other health risks.

The best way for traditional businesses to counter these threats is to participate in some of the new sector opportunities listed above. However, these new opportunities can also bring their own risks and threats.

It is essential to carefully evaluate each new opportunity to identify all the risks associated with it. These risks, which may not be obvious to managers from a traditional business background, include:

- Short product life cycles.
- High capital costs.
- High depreciation rates.
- Competition from new alternative suppliers (e.g. E-businesses).
- Obsolescence of skills.
- Risk of commercial partners exploiting the disabled workers.
- Risk of disagreement with business partners.
- Risk of dispute with Trade Unions.
- Commercial objectives could overshadow the personal development needs of the individuals with disabilities.
- Intimidation and bullying of disabled workers in integrated work places.

## 2.8 Conclusion and Recommendations

The opportunities and threats of new business sectors and methods are essentially the same for organisations involved with the employment of persons with disabilities as they are for any commercial organisation. In a climate of rapid economic change, traditional businesses must adapt to new technologies and new commercial organisations.

While these changes present significant threats to all businesses, they also open up new opportunities to those organisations which are able and willing to meet the challenge. The single greatest threat to any organisation is its own inability to recognise and respond to the need for change.

All organisations involved in the provision of employment of people with disabilities should develop a strategy which includes the following:

- Examination of change in the environment.

- Constant re-evaluation of new business opportunities.
  - Openness to rapid change of products, service and business sectors.
  - Openness to developing of new forms of relationships with commercial and other partners. These relationships may include joint ventures, strategic alliances and other forms of co-operation.
  - Commitment to the development of new skills in management and workforce including disabled workers.
  - Opportunity to exchange information and learn from similar organisations in other countries; to participate in networks and organisation such as the EUROPEAN Group - IPWH and IPWH internationally.
2. *Report by Patricia Thornton in the task of ILO, International Labour Organisation, Geneva, 1998.*
  3. *Mainstreaming Disability within the EU-Employment and Social Policy, A DG V services working paper, 5 /99.*
  4. *Association of German Main Welfare Offices, Annual report 1997/98.*
  5. *National and international development tendencies in the commercial employment market, Ulrich Scheibner, Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Werkstätten für Behinderte e. V. (BAG WfB - Federal Association of Sheltered Workshops for severely disabled People), December 1999.*
  6. *Questionnaire of EUROPEAN Group - IPWH Working Group requested to all member organisations of EUROPEAN Group - IPWH.*

## 2.9 Research Sources

1. *'Employment performance in the member States, European Commission, Employment & Social affairs', Employment rates report, completed 1998.*
7. *Inquiry to IVWL (Isar-Würm-Lech) - Werkstätten gemeinnützige GmbH (Sheltered Workshop) Non-Profit Ltd.*
8. *Website of West-Eifelwerke GmbH (Sheltered Workshop) Non-Profit Ltd.*

2.9

## 2.10 Members of the Working Group

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2.10

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# Adapting to the New Trends of Mainstreaming and Social Inclusion

# 3

## 3.1 Introduction

3.1

This report explores the theme 'Adapting to the new trends of mainstreaming and social inclusion' as applied to supported employment agencies.

Working Group members were required to use their longstanding experience of creating paid jobs for people with disabilities and examine the ways that mainstreaming affects EUROPEAN Group - IPWH member organisations and how they should respond. We found that the impact of mainstreaming varies according to the different socio-economic situation in our countries.

Our 'Mainstreaming Working Group' comprised nine members representing seven member countries of EU. (See page 67).

The Working Group held three meetings. In May - June 2000, members of the group participated in two major European seminars on mainstreaming and social inclusion. The first was organised by EUROPEAN Group - IPWH under the title 'Positive action for jobs for disabled people - the continuing challenge' (Brussels 25th/26th May 2000). Delegates included EUROPEAN Group - IPWH members and representatives of key players in the field of



disability: politicians, European Commission, UNICE, ETUC, EDF, organisations of people with disabilities, government ministers and others. The second seminar was a joint meeting of EDF and EUROPEAN Group - IPWH on 'Mainstreaming and Non Discrimination Legislation - Strategies for achieving Paid Jobs for Disabled People' (Brussels 4th June 2000). The Working group has also consulted organisations of people with disabilities, trade unions and EUROPEAN Group - IPWH members.

We decided to examine 'mainstreaming and social inclusion' through a questionnaire with 7 questions (See page 69). But first we had to establish acceptable general definitions of the terms we were to use.

## 3.2 Defining Mainstreaming

'Mainstreaming' and 'social inclusion' are now fundamental concepts for the formulation and development of EU policy on disability. 'Social inclusion' - as the opposite of social exclusion - is generally understood to be a path to full participation and equal opportunities for persons with disabilities. 'Mainstreaming' is less easily understood, as it is not a term used in many European languages. Generally speaking, mainstreaming is a socio-economic condition in which each sector of society takes responsibility for, and meets the costs of, making that sector accessible for those who traditionally have been excluded, including people with disabilities. We found a number of EU-strategy and working papers and European Disability Forum (EDF) statements provide useful illustrations of the term 'mainstreaming'.

In its paper, 'Equality of Opportunity for People with Disabilities - A New Community Disability Strategy' (1996) the European Commission summarised 'mainstreaming' as entailing:

'... the formulation of policy to facilitate the full participation and involvement of people with disabilities in economic, social and other processes, while respecting personal choice. It also means that the relevant issues should no longer be considered separately from the mainstream policy-making apparatus, but should be clearly seen as an integral element.'

*'This approach applies to - and has benefits for - all people with disabilities regardless of the kind or degree of severity of disability in question.'*

EU Commission documents express 'Mainstreaming' for people with disabilities in the following:

### Mainstreaming disability issues

People with disabilities should have equal access to mainstream services that serve the whole population, while ensuring that these services are delivered in a way which recognises and accommodates the specific needs of disabled people. This approach is the way towards the elimination of segregation in the labour market, better access to labour market measures including training, better involvement in decision-making and the strengthening of the conditions in which equal rights can be exercised.' (Raising employment levels of people with disabilities the common challenge, Commission Staff Working Paper 22.09.1998).

EDF has applied the mainstreaming perspective on employment in the document EDF Core Policy Document: Proposals for action to improve the employment of disabled people in the EU (EDF 00/01 Feb2000):

*'Ensuring that disabled people have the same rights and opportunities as other people, and that public and other organisations at all levels within the European Union adopt an 'inclusive' approach towards disabled people are essential elements in the overall approach to the development of citizens' rights within the EU. Disabled people should be guaranteed access to 'mainstream' activities for improving employability, and to employment in the open labour market. Those disabled people for whom this is not a suitable approach, but who, nevertheless, want to enter or remain in the labour market, should be able to access provision which is designed to meet their particular needs.'*

### 3.3 The Importance of Mainstreaming

The Working Group believes that there are some fundamental reasons why mainstreaming will be important in shaping future policy on employment for people with disabilities:

1. The expectations and demands of disabled people.
2. The wish of society to include all its members. This implies recognition of the right for everyone to be included and of the value of the contribution that everyone can make to the social community.
3. The current low level of employment for people with disabilities.

In spite of many measures taken over recent years, the disabled people remain disadvantaged in the labour market. There is still a big gap between the employment rate for people with disabilities and the rest of the population. People with disabilities constitute a significant and growing part of the EU's population. Studies from some countries show that as much as 10-20 percent of the EU's population, corresponding to 20-40 million people between the ages of 16 and 64, has some form of disability. The employment rate among this group of people is 20-30 percent below the rate for the rest of the population. At the same time the average age of the workforce is rising in all EU countries.

The following examples illustrate the situation in UK and Sweden:

#### Sweden



In 1998, Statistics Sweden (SCB) conducted a survey of disabled people in the Swedish labour market.

It showed that 17% of the Swedish population in working age (16-64 years) say that they have some kind of disability. 11% say that the disability limits their working-capacity. This corresponds to a total of 583,000 people of working age.

Among this group of 583,000 with disabilities and a limited working-capacity, 62 % (361,000) are in the labour force (328,000 employed + 33,000 in the official unemployment system) compared with 78% among non-disabled. Of the 328,000 in work, 81,000 are employed by Samhall (27,000) or supported by wage-subsidies (54,000). That means that one in four disabled people in paid jobs are employed within the special labour market policy programme for people with disabilities. Every month, about 50,000 (13%) of job seekers (in open unemployment or in temporary labour market policy programme) applying to the Swedish authorities are registered as job seekers with occupational disabilities.





3.4

UK



A UK Labour Force Survey (LFS Summer 1999) shows that people with disabilities account for nearly a fifth of the working-age population, but for only about one eighth of all in employment. There are over 6.5 million people with a long-term disability or a health problem that has a substantial adverse impact on their day-to-day activities or limits the work they can do.

In the UK people with disabilities are over six times as likely as non-disabled people to be out of work and on benefits. In all, there are over 2.6 million people with disabilities out of work and on benefits, of whom over a million want to work. People with disabilities are only half as likely as non-disabled to be in employment. There are currently around 3.1 million people with disabilities in employment, which corresponds to 12% of all people in employment. When employed, people with disabilities are more likely to work part-time or be self-employed. Approximately 22 000 people with disabilities are employed in supported employment arranged by Remploy, Shaw Trust and others.



### 3.4 What Do Mainstreaming and Social Inclusion Mean When Applied to the Employment of People with Disabilities?

In its Core Policy Document, Proposals for action to improve the employment of disabled people in the EU, EDF emphasises the need for a wide variety of employment opportunities for people with disabilities:

*'Employment in inclusive employment situations (i.e. together with non-disabled people) in either the public or private sectors should be available as the first choice for disabled people whenever appropriate to their needs and aspirations. However, it is recognised that employers cannot be expected to employ disabled people unless their skills and other work related attributes bring an 'added value' to the organisation. For some people, employers may also reasonably expect to receive support e.g. to purchase aids or equipment; or, as in some models of supported employment, through the provision of personal support while a person settles into his/her new job, or of compensation for reduced levels of performance.'*

*'Support must also be given for organisations which are set up specifically to provide 'special employment' for those people who are unable (because of the severity of their impairments) to find work elsewhere. Employees within such organisations must benefit from the same terms and conditions as apply throughout the labour market.'*

*'Equally, a wide range of training opportunities and other active measures need to be provided in order to'*

*accommodate disabled people. These should primarily be available within mainstream services, but through special arrangements wherever this is more appropriate to their needs.'*

Our Working Group supports mainstreaming as an objective for the employment of disabled people for the following reasons:

- Mainstreaming leads to full participation in the society.
- It results in social inclusion.
- It meets individual needs and expectations.
- It allows for individual choice.

But mainstreaming requires supported employment organisation to provide a wide range of employment opportunities, training, and other measures to people with different kinds and severity of disabilities.

How our organisations will respond to this requirement will vary according to the approaches taken to supporting disabled people in employment within individual EU countries. There may also be differences in interpretation of the term 'mainstreaming'. Working Group members represent organisations from seven EU member countries. Their views given below illustrate various opinions of the effects of mainstreaming and the conditions required to make it work.

## Austria



*'It means providing the same working conditions, labour relationships and work opportunities for disabled persons as for non-disabled persons; and giving them the right individual support to take these same opportunities.'*

A view-point from the Upper Austrian Association of Persons with disabilities.

*"Mainstreaming is important and the greatest challenge facing the established institutions for persons with disabilities. Much energy is spent on discussions but produces little action or change."*

## Finland



*'Our position was taken after consultation with a working group of severely disabled youngsters, advising our vocational rehabilitation Foundation and the National Disability Board of the Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.*

*"Mainstreaming means providing necessary support to enable disabled people to participate in society, including employment, according to their own choice and capacity like everyone in society. Support services are provided by the mainstream structures of society. There are as few support structures as possible, and every one respects the disabled person's human individuality and dignity.'*

## Netherlands



*'Adaptations will occur at different levels:*

*'At national/labour market/policy level we require repositioning of the social security system (re/integration, prevention), the divisions between public and private sector and the allocation of labour markets, and financing.*

*'Organisations need to develop personal project plans based upon the potential, wishes and opinions of the disabled person involved. Type and level of placement (training, work experience etc.) are not automatically defined by the interest (continuity, market position and availability*

of vacancies) of the service provider. Individual project plans therefore can have no fixed outcome. The plans may lead to work in the regular labour market or, if necessary, to work under adapted and/or sheltered conditions.

'The regular labour market will organise facilities to overcome barriers to participation. These facilities will be:

1. Based on individuals' needs and motivation.
2. Flexible so they can be removed, adapted or extended when and as long as necessary.

'Both Dutch national organisations for disabled people (the Nederlandse Gehandicaptenraad and Federation of Parents' Associations) lobby for two main objectives: quality and freedom of choice.

'It is important for people with impairments to achieve the fullest development, by facilities that not only reflect the client's needs and wishes, but are also flexible to meet those needs and wishes.

'Participation and economic independence can be realised through fairly paid work (although voluntary work should stay an option). In institutionalised facilities, crowding out of 'weaker performers' must be prevented.

'Support should be demand and not supply orientated, and should optimally relate to the wishes and potential of the people involved.'

## Portugal



'Mainstreaming means that the policies of creating job opportunities for disabled people be included in, and derived from, the global and national employment policies. Instead of using diverging strategies according to the specific needs of different target groups, the converging measures are taken for the total problem of unemployment. For obvious reasons, mainstreaming favours integrated or normalising situations, which means finding job solutions in the open market. The same logic applies to social inclusion - that is, all groups disadvantaged by exclusion processes are put in the same problem-level. Perversely, some of the more disadvantaged groups, such as those with a mental disability, have fewer opportunities to 'compete' with other 'unprotected' groups due to lack of facilities.'

## Spain



'Good practice in the disability sector applies to general inclusion policies. Advances made in the fight against discrimination of disabled people serve to avoid errors in integrating other groups of people at risk of social exclusion.

'In recent years, in the Basque Country, European Horizon funds have been spent in the creation, maintenance, and consolidation of advanced programmes for transition to the open labour market from sheltered employment.

'Other organisations with target groups of people at risk of social exclusion have not yet contacted us, because general public policy on mainstreaming has been somewhat backward and is only now being brought up-to-date.'

## Sweden



*'The employment of people with disabilities is crucial for their participation in society. Basic principles of equal rights, equal opportunities and full participation must apply in employment. A labour market for all recognises both human values for the individual and economic values for the society. Employment of disabled people also contributes to the diversity of working life and of society.'*

*'Like everyone else, people with disabilities, are individuals with different abilities, different needs and different expectations. Mainstreaming must be combined with measures that meet individual needs.'*

*'There are at least four levels of mainstreaming in the employment area:*

1. People with disabilities must have equal opportunities for employment and participation in working life. That means equal rights, non-discrimination and social inclusion.
2. People with disabilities must be included in all mainstream employment policy programmes.
3. There is a need for different labour market, training, support and other programmes to meet the special and individual requirements of disabled people to enable them to participate equally in working life. Employers must be supported by compensation for employing people with limited working capacity. All these programmes should be part of the labour market policy.
4. Disabled employees working in supported employment should have the same rights and terms of employment as other employees.

*'The Swedish organisations of people with disabilities as well as the Swedish trade unions strongly support the idea of a society and a labour market for all, which includes*

*people with disabilities. As yet, there is no far-reaching discussion on mainstreaming in Sweden. But among younger representatives of disabled people's organisations, the mainstreaming perspective and criticism against special measures are growing.'*



UK



*'Mainstreaming could mean making services available to the 'general population' better equipped to deal with all members of society - including marginalised groups.*

*'In theory, this should make the issue relevant to a greater number of people rather than the preserve of specialist agencies and providers.*

*'Social inclusion should be the end result of this process, with the employment of disabled people not regarded as special or different.*

*'The more society is 'exposed' and gains experience, the more able it should be to meet different needs. Isolating or promoting needs as 'special' creates barriers to learning and experience for all.*

*'Whoever can work in the open labour market should be accommodated as a priority. Support is provided to allow disabled people to enter and stay in open employment. Open market strategies and procedures must be designed to support the entry of disabled people, removing barriers that prevent or hinder this process.'*

GMB UK (the Trade Union representing employees in supported employment) states:

*'In reality, the term mainstreaming when applied to the employment of disabled people, seems to translate as integration into open employment. It is a mistake to use the term in this narrow sense. Mainstreaming of disabled people in employment should mean allowing them to play a full and active part in society and the world of work, be it in open or supported employment. Mainstreaming should be inclusive of all forms of employment and should not seek to 'ghettoise' supported*

*employment factories which have an enduring and important role to play in providing employment and training opportunities for disabled people.'*

RADAR (the Disability Network of Organisations of People with Disabilities in UK) says:

*'RADAR advocates that the greatest number of disabled people should have access to the widest range of educational and employment opportunities. It supports the Government's Welfare to Work programme, believing that getting disabled people into employment aids inclusion and enhances independence by reducing dependency on income replacement benefit. RADAR also recognises that for some disabled people employment will never be a realistic or appropriate option. For others the amount of disability related support makes open employment impossible.*

*'RADAR believes that a range of provision is required to ensure that every disabled person has the opportunity to fulfil his or her potential. This continuum of provision would retain specialist provision but the emphasis would be on progression, with disabled people having access to the diverse range of activities that can lead to employment.'*



### 3.5 The Role of Supported Employment Organisations Within Mainstreaming

Our Working Group supports the EUROPEAN Group - IPWH 3-step model as a continuum including specially organised workplaces. However, members of our Group hold different views on the future role of specially organised workplaces for people with disabilities within mainstreaming. As two common general statements we would emphasise:

1. Not every disabled person with the capacity to work is able to cope with the open labour market.
2. Some people with disabilities need special training and work experience before they can enter open employment.

From that standpoint, we think that specially organised workplaces play an important role in supporting the development of mainstreaming in the labour market. The different views of Group members are shown below:

#### Austria

*'In a long term visionary view, it may be possible to have no specially organised workplaces but many special institutions to support mainstreaming in the labour market. But in the meantime - if we see the unemployment of disabled people rising - we should accept specially organised workplaces as one opportunity within working life.'*

#### Finland



*'Yes, we do need them. The role of specially organised workplaces is firstly to train, educate, motivate and encourage severely disabled people towards the labour market. However, there certainly will be some people whose disability prevents their achieving open employment. They should have the opportunity to use their working capacity in a sheltered environment.'*

#### Netherlands



*'Yes we still need them, - for as long as groups of people need temporary or structured support within a protected or adapted environment for them to learn or execute a job, and that cannot be provided the general labour market. They can be the beginning, half-way point and/or the end of a career path. However, the special work conditions required do not have to be organised on the premises of these workplaces. The work unit can also develop, arrange and supply facilities and support needed to enable placement in open employment.'*

#### Portugal



*'I don't think so. We need to strengthen some mechanisms before and after work placement, including resources, preparation and follow-up after placement. In some way, the special organisation of jobs contradicts the logic of mainstreaming.'*

#### Spain



*'Currently specially organised workplaces are sheltered workshops. Mainstreaming does not mean treating everyone the same. It just means different treatment for different situations to reach real equal opportunities.'*

*'People with severe disabilities will always need specially organised workplaces, because normal environments are not ready to recruit massively from that group. Our organisations are now fighting for transitions from sheltered workshops to open employment, but we are not talking about withdrawing sheltered workshops from the market.'*

## Sweden



*'Yes, we need them for the foreseeable future. But it is a question of how they are organised and how they are developed. These workplaces must offer modern forms of work and really be a part of the labour market.'*

3.6

## UK



*'Specialist organised workplaces are not an end in themselves but are possible, a preparation and stepping stone into the open labour market. Progression and transition from these workplaces to open labour market are measures by which these can be judged and valued.'*

*'Different people will need to stay different periods of time in these workplaces, not because of commercial considerations, but because of the time it will take to achieve a successful progression or transition.'*

*'We have a long way to go before we reach the point of not requiring specially organised workplaces. Everything we develop and plan for future services should seek to diminish the need. We should be contributing to a process that will eventually result in the demise of our organisations - because true social inclusion has been achieved.'*

*'We should consider how we provide in-going support people to make the transition from segregated 'supported*

*workshops' to open employment.*

*'Another point to consider is that moving existing 'supported' employees into mainstream employment would provide us with the opportunity to employ others who are currently excluded from supported employment.'*

*'We could also consider using special workplaces to help integrate disadvantaged minorities other than the disabled groups, thereby reducing segregation and enhancing inclusion.'*

## 3.6 How Can Our Organisations Support Mainstreaming

The Working Group identified a number of our organisations' strengths and opportunities for them to use their vast and valuable range of experience to support mainstreaming:

### Strengths

- A longstanding track record with great experience.
- Well resourced and well-managed organisations.
- Some organisations have a good national infrastructure with production and service units.
- Can be highly innovative.
- Ability to successfully manage different kinds of business, different kinds of disabilities.
- Close relations with the rest of the labour market and other companies as business partners, sub-contractors and other partnerships.

- Good knowledge of the local labour market.
- Wide range of placement and transition opportunities.
- Good relations with other employers, trade unions and organisations of people with disabilities.
- Networking with training institutions, sectional organisations and industrial circles.
- Work closely with local and/or central Governments.
- Have skill and experience in business management and development, personnel development, training programmes, work adaptation and elimination of obstacles arising from disability.
- Ability of meeting individual needs and provide customised services.
- Experience of management and motivation of small work teams with a high degree of responsibility and self-determination.
- Experience of and practise in social competence.

### Opportunities

- Mainstreaming is central to EU and, sometimes, national policy.
- There is a shortage of labour in the labour market.
- Mainstreaming focuses the need for real paid jobs for people with disabilities and offers a more integrated and individual approach to meeting needs etc.
- We have the incentive to be more open as organisations.
- We can market our knowledge and experiences.
- We have the possibility of extending our range of services to other disadvantaged groups.

- We have an opportunity to unite marginalised groups and to challenge the processes and forces that create social exclusion.
- We can develop a more active collaboration with all support systems within the labour market. It is especially important that we create a strong partnership between workshops and supported employment. Together, we can form a continuum from the 'sheltered' to mainstream employment.
- Collaboration with other players to develop good quality employment and training services create new opportunities. Recent developments in the social security systems have hugely increased the 'buying-power' and potential for reintegration services.





## 3.7 What are the Challenges to our Organisations of Mainstreaming?

The biggest challenge our organisations face is that specially organised workplaces (whatever they are called and irrespective of the quality of employment they offer) are regarded by many interested parties as the opposite to mainstreaming. But there are other weaknesses and threats:

### Weaknesses

- The workplaces are 'special'.
- They serve only one target group.
- Many people misconstrue our fight for strengthening employment for people as a fight for our organisations.
- When disability is seen as a mainstream rather than specialist issue, the specialist organisations' expertise becomes less necessary.
- Although transitions are a main part of our activities, we do not have access to all the possibilities in the mainstream labour market. Overall levels are low.



- There is also a view that we retain the 'best' employees for ourselves.
- Our organisations have been mostly 'supply-led' instead of 'demand-led'.
- Because they have to show a return on investments, our business structures can be inflexible, highly protective and conservative.
- There is insufficient support for an employee when moving to the regular labour market.
- The quality of workshops differs greatly (e.g. terms of employment, working conditions etc). A 'negative' opinion based upon the worst creates a negative image for all.

### Threats

- There is less emphasis, and possibly fewer resources, for specialist provisions.
- Special needs can be undervalued, hidden and forgotten.
- Mainstreaming can result in loss of focus and staff commitment and loss of a specialist identity.
- Combined with government budget deficits, it can result in considerable financial cuts for specially organised workplaces without providing attractive and suitable alternatives for the most severely disabled people.
- Some politicians consider that traditional special employment should be a kind of 'last resort', and offer its services only to the people who need far reaching work adaptations that cannot be provided for practical and financial reasons in the regular labour market.
- Other vulnerable groups (elderly, immigrants, young people with social problems and lack of education etc.) could be employed to the disadvantage of disabled people. This is specially a risk for people with severe disabilities.

## 3.8 Adapting to Mainstreaming

The Working Group identified a number of changes needed at national policy level and amongst our organisations to adapt to mainstreaming.

### National level

**National governments must develop clear policies and systems that support the principle of mainstreaming. For example:**

### Netherlands



In the Netherlands, the new REA-Law (July 1998) complements the Sheltered Employment Act. REA provides lump sum grants to employers who recruit disabled people. During a disabled person's first year of employment, the employer receives an equivalent of about Euro 5450. For the second year it is Euro 3640 and for the third Euro 1820. Employers can use this money to adapt the work place, provide necessary support or subsidise wages.

Linked to REA, the so-called 'Pemba' instrument encourages employers to employ or retain workers with a labour impairment. Pemba is an acronym of 'Differentiation of Premium and Market Performance in the Disability insurance'. Introduced in 1998, it appeals to employers' sense of economic and social responsibility towards disabled people. Premiums for sickness benefits insurance contain one fixed (about 7%) and one variable, differentiated component. The variable part is calculated according to the individual employee's performance and the recorded loss to the firm arising from the risk. As an incentive, the employer receives a discount on the insurance premium compared to the average in his business sector. He is also assessed for investments in safety and

prevention and for the re-engagement of temporarily disabled people. If the company neglects its responsibilities, or fails to succeed, the insurance premiums will rise accordingly.

### UK



A number of initiatives have been taken recently to support mainstreaming. Disabled people on benefits moving into work can receive tax-credit and so fulfil the Government's commitment to 'make work pay'. Disabled people who move into work can return to the same benefit position if the job is lost within 12 months. Significant development is announced on supported employment.

### Ministerial statement on modernising supported employment (UK):

*'Supported employment has always been about helping disabled people to take their place in working life. We need to modernise the programme to reflect the ambitions of disabled people; to increase the number of disabled people in work and to respond to the changes in today's labour market. In particular we want employers to play a greater role in offering new opportunities for people with disabilities, so that they can develop the skills and personal qualities valued in mainstream employment. In doing this we intend to safeguard the position of people currently employed in supported employment programme, although they will be able to take advantage of the new opportunities the programme will offer. Our new approach to eligibility will focus on people who would benefit from the unique support offered and who are:*

- Former supported employment employees who lose their jobs in mainstream employment within two years of progressing.
- On incapacity benefit.
- People with disability on Jobseekers Allowance for 12 months or more.

*'...Remploy now has the opportunity to become a showpiece for the modern supported employment, reaching new standards in developing individuals and their subsequent progression to mainstream work.'*

## Finland



As a part of Government plans to develop and broaden the model of supported employment, the Finnish National Action Plan in 1995: guidelines of employment policy based on the EU principles introduced the concept of 'job coaches'. National job coaching quality criteria have been drawn up, and a manual of total quality improvement will be completed in autumn 2000. Completion of the proposed training programme will give 18 credit units towards a qualification.

Since 1st August 1999, people on disability benefit have been able to suspend payments for 6 - 24 months, if they find suitable employment. (This applies to disabled people on full disability pension whose pension has been awarded for reasons other than 100% visual or mobility impairment.) For this period, their regular earnings will be supplemented by a cash benefit equal to the special disability allowance. If they become unemployed, they can reapply for the return of their disability benefit. The aim is to improve the level of earnings of the group of disabled people defined above, whereas before there has been a statutory limit to the earnings allowed before the risk of loss of benefits.

## Sweden



On 1 August 2000, a new activity guarantee was introduced for people aged 20 and above who are, or are in danger of becoming, registered as long-term unemployed. It is expected to have major



significance for the different disadvantaged groups on the labour market, and should mean that few persons need to be unemployed for more than two years. The guarantee is to be based on individual action plans.

The Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications has initiated a special diversity project to survey and describe how considerations of gender, age, class, ethnic origin, sexual orientation and disability affect an individual's opportunities in working life.

## Spain



As a way towards mainstreaming, ONCE/Fundosa uses funding from the national lottery to buy private businesses to employ people with disabilities.

The Spanish National Plan on employment includes supported employment as a mainstream concept.

## Quotas

In some countries, including Germany, France and Austria, quota-legislation is used as a way for mainstreaming into the regular labour market. However, opinions differ as to how far quotas are effective.

## National Action Plans

Existing National Action Plans on employment include many different measures to improve employability and employment among vulnerable groups in the labour market.

## EUROPEAN Group - IPWH

In its programme Paid jobs for people with disabilities (1999), EUROPEAN Group - IPWH recommended a three-step model to strengthen opportunities for disabled people to enter the labour market. They may be summarised as follows:

1. Work in the regular labour market on equal terms with others.
2. Economic incentives and support for employers of people with disabilities.
3. Organisations that provide specially organised workplaces for people with disabilities.

EUROPEAN Group - IPWH stresses the importance of integrating disability-related issues in all four pillars of EU guidelines for the national employment action plans. At the same time, EUROPEAN Group - IPWH would emphasise that this form of mainstreaming must not obscure the need for - or result in a weakening of - special measures - for people with disabilities.

Our Working Group thinks that the three-step model can be developed to describe a continuum of employment for people with disabilities (see annex 3). Movement along the continuum should take place in either direction according to individual need.

## Organisational level

Our member organisations have many opportunities to develop activities that can support the mainstreaming idea. For example:

### A) RELATION WITH EMPLOYERS

We must develop close and integrated partnerships with other employers in all sectors for staffing, supported placements, group placements etc. We can offer them a range of possibilities including business-models as joint ventures, subcontracting arrangements, partnership to transitions, placements and different support-models for individual employees. We can share our experience, knowledge and expertise with them, perhaps developing and marketing an educational and consultative role as a business opportunity for ourselves.

## Sweden



### Samhall Resurs AB

Samhall is a group of companies, employing a total of 27,000 disabled people in different production and service units.

Samhall Resurs AB is an independent self-financed company within the Samhall Group that develops and sells work-oriented rehabilitation and personnel development services. Its target groups include people on long-term sick leave, young people, immigrants seeking entry to the labour market, and employees who need support in facing restructuring and long-term unemployment. Its customers are employers and social insurance offices. During 1999, about 1350 persons completed various programmes within Samhall Resurs. Samhall Resurs also conducts socio-economic and business economic analyses.

### **B) INVOLVEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS**

Our organisations depend on many important and different stakeholders. In adapting to mainstreaming, we must maintain and develop close ties with organisations of people with disabilities, trade unions, politicians, employment services, vocational rehabilitation agencies, employers' federations, governments, municipalities, and other organisations in the field of disability and employment.

## Austria



### **BBRZ**

BBRZ is an integration project for young people with disabilities, which combines natural support with supported employment. At the beginning of a child's last year at school, a supporting circle is formed. It consists of the young disabled person, her/his parents or guardian, the integration teacher, relatives, family friends, and a BBRZ-GW vocational trainer. This circle profiles the talents, strengths and limitations of the disabled child, whilst its participants use their social contacts to find individuals and organisations that are able to assist in the child's progression.

During their final school year, disabled children receive in-depth vocational awareness through work-experience days in several companies (accompanied by a vocational trainer) and vocational related lessons at school. On leaving school, they receive a three months work assessment in a commercial company. When an assessment is successful, they then enter long-term employment with support from our organisations. A young person should be completely included in the enterprise's working process and workforce, with one workplace volunteer acting as his/her carer.

The vocational trainer continues to provide the young disabled person with coaching and work assessments in their subsequent

employment. The detail and time-scale of this support are tailored to her/his requirements.

BBRZ proposed that regional governments should take responsibility for this scheme. Government officials have agreed in principle, although they cannot guarantee financing. It is expected that a pilot project will start the middle of next year.

Specifically, we have to involve and work closely with the organisations of people with disabilities so that we can meet the expectations and demands of disabled people themselves. We must also disseminate information and influence attitudes by describing what specially organised work is and can offer. To that end, it is important that we influence parents' associations so that they see our workplaces as a step to employment in the open labour market.

## Spain



### **Lantegi Batuak**

Lantegi Batuak is a German company based in Spain and employing 290 people in the manufacture of cutting tube tools. It has reached an agreement with our GUREAK Group to provide in-house operational enclaves in their factories for people with learning difficulties.

Collaboration between the employer, represented by the general manager, the trade unions with representation in the Social Committee of the company, and our organisation, acting to promote the process of supported integration have made this scheme successful. Together, we have plotted the paths for transition from regional sheltered workshops to mainstream employment in the factories.

Once the trade unions understood and agreed to the scheme they disseminated its

benefits to other trade unions who have persuaded other companies in the region to repeat it.

In addition, employing people with mental disabilities outside sheltered workshops has increased our knowledge of their working capacities/capabilities.

### **C) TRAINING AND PREPARATION - IMPROVING EMPLOYABILITY**

We have to take a more positive approach on transitions, and at the same time show that we can offer real job-opportunities for people with severe disabilities, including those who previously have been excluded from the labour market. For some people, working in our organisations need only be a short-term measure. For others, it will represent a major personal development.

We must be better at meeting individual needs; but we have to focus on improving employability for all. Our workplaces are one step in the continuum of development and career building for the individual. The step can be short or long. But groups with different individual goals have to be accommodated within all the production/service-units to avoid categorisation and segregation of employees. Workplaces must be arranged to meet the requirements of individual disability and combine vocational training with personal development.

## Austria



### **BBRZ**

Our organisations have introduced a systematic personal development procedure for our disabled employees. It includes an annual meeting between the disabled employee, his/her social worker and line manager, which clarifies medical or therapeutic needs and defines the next steps for the individual's development.



These steps combine measures to increase social skills such as self-responsibility or independence with vocational training programmes. The meeting also assesses whether the employee wants to transfer to a commercial enterprise and, if so, whether such a transition is possible.

After a further year, the employee's progress is reviewed and new steps agreed.

### **D) REAL WORKING ENVIRONMENTS - REAL JOBS**

We have to offer real paid jobs based on professional business development. The working conditions (wages etc.) must have the same standards as for all other employees. Working environments must be adapted for individual needs, but they have to be real. The use of new technology including IT has to be increased. Other kinds of support related to living, leisure time etc. should be organised and offered by other providers.

UK



### Remploy Interwork

Remploy has 87 factories, located around England, Scotland and Wales. These employ an average of 6,500 disabled people in a full-time manufacturing environments.

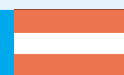
Remploy Interwork supports an average of 3,900 disabled people in work outside the Remploy factory environment in manufacturing, retail, and services. The number of disabled people who have progressed this year from supported to unsupported employment is over 500.

#### E) JOB TASTER

Job tasters - such as work experience or job introduction in the regular labour market - can be used to stimulate and motivate employees in specially organised workplaces to consider the transition option.



Austria



### BBRZ

In March 2000, our organisations rented a buffet in a public office building in Linz-Urfahr. It is run by one outside specialist and three disabled employees. The location of the buffet in a public office building enhances the integrative nature of this project. Three disabled people have gained employment and are being educated in the catering business. In addition to the practical training they are given two hours a week theoretical vocational lessons.

#### F) SAFETY NET

Any transition/progression process must provide safety. Employees have the right to feel secure and know they can return to sheltered employment (for example within a period of 12 months). This encourages an employee to try a transition. 'You can always come back and you can try again as many times as you like.'

#### G) SUPPORTING EMPLOYEE IN TRANSITIONS

UK



### Remploy Supported Employment Development Initiative

The Remploy Supported Employment Development Initiative is a submitted proposal with a projected start date of 1 June 2000 and lasting 2 years. It requires a £2m budget to develop, monitor and evaluate specified elements of Supported Employment (SEP) development with emphasis towards people progression.

#### Specifications

The project will examine and assess

- Person and job profiling to support

progression.

- Flexibility in workplace support.
- Support after entering open employment.

### Partners

UK Employment Service, MENCAP, RNIB, Stockport LA, WISE Group, Action for Blind, Camden Society, Manpower, St Loyes College and others.

### Project aim

To promote a culture of progression within the workplace, including into open employment.

### Features

- Partnership.
- Extensive range of support options tailored to the individual's needs.
- Testing supported employment qualifications for special employment providers and employees.
- Out of working hours support.
- Employer support to maximise sustainability.

### Outcome volumes

- 104 progressions from supported employment factories to external supported placements including Remploy schemes.
- 40 progressions from unemployment to employment.
- 43 progressions from supported placements (including Remploy) to open employment.

Systems have to be created to give the employee the support and encouragement to be able to stay at her/his new workplace. These can include financial incentives. Models with job-coaches, case-managers or personal advisers can be developed to give each individual the appropriate support. A follow-up procedure can be introduced to gather information on the transition and how the support models can be further developed.



## Finland



Pekka, has been working as a shop assistant in Helsinki since 1995. He is 38 years old and has a mental disability. He had previously worked in a sheltered workshop but the monotonous tasks did not give him work satisfaction. The decisive step towards the open labour market came with his involvement in a supported employment project, which included the services of a job coach. She recommended him to a shop manager, who was ready to employ him on the basis of a tailored job description, employment contract, normal wage and continuous support by the job coach.

Pekka is now, to use his own words, very happy with his life and job. Without a job, he would spend all his time wandering the streets. It is also important for him to earn money to pursue hobbies and leisure activities.



## Spain



### Lantegi Batuak

Cromoduro is an important company within the automation sector, employing 350 people. We began by integrating three people with mental disability into Cromoduro's plastic transformation factory. Before they started working in 1999, we reached an agreement with trade union representatives from the factory committee, explaining the objectives of the transition process. In the second year of contract, the trade unions took the initiative by proposing that the company provide new opportunities for disabled people in the future. We acted as intermediary between the company, the trade unions and people with disabilities, and promoted the agreement that was finally reached.

This example is really useful for us, because it involved the participation of all players within the process. Cromoduro is an important company in our community and their example has produced a multiplication effect.

#### H) TRANSITION INCENTIVES FOR ORGANISATIONS

The whole organisations must adopt a culture of transition. Procedures for transitions have to be established and followed. The costs have to be identified and budgeted for. Output funding might be a possibility for financing transitions.

## Austria



### BBRZ

Rehabilitation and work preparation activities in the workplace are run in Cupertino between BBRZ-GW (Centre for Vocational Education and Rehabilitation providing specially organised workplaces) and Caritas (an employment agency for

disadvantaged persons run by the Catholic Church).

Caritas was created to increase transition of persons with disabilities from our organisations into the regular labour market. Caritas contacts commercial enterprises, seeking potential workplaces. They also recruit disabled people who want to change from specially organised workplaces or vocational training into regular labour market.

After one or two weeks at BBRZ-GW to finalise practical arrangements such as health and social insurance, the disabled person works in a commercial enterprise, receiving a wage from that host employer. He or she can then either remain in employment with the enterprise or return to our organisations.

#### I) RETENTION SERVICES

In mainstreaming, the question of retention (i.e. the chances for a disabled employee to remain employed in the regular labour market) becomes increasingly important. This presents our organisations with an opportunity to offer retention services to both employers and employees.

## UK



### Personal Adviser Service - Shaw Trust

In April 1999, Shaw Trust was successful in securing the lead role in two of the UK's 12 Personal Adviser (PA) service pilots.

Shaw Trust's PA pilots are now running in Newham (East London) and Gateshead (South Tyneside) as a part of the Government's New Deal for Disabled People, which aims to assist disabled people into work and help employers retain valued employees who become ill or disabled at work.

**J) INDIVIDUAL CHOICE**

When considering individual needs and demands we must also take account of individual choice. As we move towards mainstreaming, we will find that are employees who have been employed for many years in our organisations and who do not want to leave a good working situation. This matter has to be managed carefully.

## Netherlands



Based on an estimate of support requirements (maximum 15% of working time), Elly was assessed as a candidate for the new Supported Employment Program offered by the Sheltered Employment Act (Wsw). She chose to participate in the programme rather than take an internal or external placement arranged by the sheltered workshop.

Last autumn, she began as an assistant receptionist in an old people's home, where she was contracted for 24 hours regular working per week. During the introductory period, Elly worked alongside a job coach, until she felt secure enough and knew what to do. The job coach will continue to support her at any time she needs help. Because of her chronic back injury, she uses an adapted chair and is allowed to make walking rounds through the buildings for small delivery jobs. An arrangement with her superior allows Elly to work at her own pace. The institution receives a wage subsidy for the lower performance. All these facilities (job coach hours, work adaptations, wage subsidy) are financed from the Wsw-budget. After two years, Elly will be re-assessed to see if she is still within the Wsw target group and needs this facility.

To promote this supported placement option, the national government has set an annual target to all sheltered employment organisations. In 1999 and 2000, for every four vacancies that are filled, one has to be a supported employment placement, outside sheltered employment.



## Finland



Four years ago, Eija, a mental health trainee of over 40 years, was referred by her employment agency to a sheltered workshop in South West Finland. She had tried to do practical training in the open labour market but had difficulty in understanding her tasks. She decided to try again and was admitted to a support project for mental health trainees, financed by the Finnish Social Insurance Institution, which includes job coaching. The project aims to build self-confidence and improve social skills. She met with a setback in rehabilitation but did not give up. In autumn 1999, she took the opportunity opened to her and got a regular job as packer in a bakery.

Eija's own actions played an important role in her employment process: she was always ready to meet new challenges. In her opinion, employment was comparable to a Lotto win. Her economic situation improved significantly, but the job also brought benefits for her social and family life.

## 3.9 Should we Broaden the Target Group?

Many of us associate mainstreaming in employment solely with measures to adapt the labour market and make it more accessible to people with disabilities. The logical outcome of mainstreaming is that there will be no need for special measures or activities reserved for people with disabilities. We should then ask: should we open our organisations to broaden the target group? There are some examples of organisations (e.g. Gandon Enterprises in Ireland) which have chosen a kind of fifty-fifty work employment, with disabled and non-disabled working side by side. Is this mainstreaming or a way to mainstreaming?

Our Working Group members have different opinions on this matter. Some say no, some say yes and some say perhaps.



### Austria



*'In my experience, having a heterogeneous group of employees (disabled persons; former jobless people; non disabled persons) within specially organised workplaces gives greater opportunities because it enables these different groups to combine their different strengths together. The threat is that a broader target group brings a range of different individual problems, which cannot be managed. We would have to adapt our support for different target groups.'*

### Finland



*'There is an increasing need to broaden the target group. This could be regarded as one way of mainstreaming. As a benefit: maybe it would help us to get total funding for broader service packs. As a threat: there might be a risk of losing the special skills we have to promote disabled persons to the labour market.'*

*'We should only adapt to other groups marginally so that disability issues will still be our main focus. There certainly are many similar methods to supporting these groups. Maybe the difference is only found in the intensity of the individual support and training required.'*

### Netherlands



*'We need to broaden our target group. The benefits for the organisation are:*

- *Securing continuity of our business when a smaller and also weaker, less productive target group will be referred.*
- *Prevention of under-utilisation of the facilities.*
- *Expertise needed for integration of disabled people is similar to that needed to support other groups.*

The benefits for the individual are:

- More integration possibilities, less stigmatisation.
- Increasing numbers of flexible (temporary) placement opportunities combined with adapted training.

Threats for the organisation are:

- Possible evaporation of specialist knowledge of certain disabilities.
- We become less recognisable to job seekers, social security organisations etc.
- It needs organisational changes and changes in work process, external relations, financial sources etc.

Threats for the individual are:

- Crowding out of the less productive members of the target group.
- Co-existence in the workplace with people on different service conditions (career perspectives, wages etc.)'

## Portugal



'The main benefits, although relative, would be the optimisation of resources and increasing the number of beneficiaries of the services. From the beneficiaries' point of view, it is obvious that the more seriously disadvantaged groups will be prejudiced in the end, because of a more competitive environment and a fall in the level of support specific to their requirements'

## Spain



'The next European initiative EQUAL, is trying to promote the association of different organisations to include actions for all groups at risk of social exclusion. This should involve local governments, trade unions, employers' associations, non-profit organisations, etc.

'There may be economic benefits in opening our organisations to other groups, but they are not guaranteed at this moment.

'At present, we are not ready to include people from these groups, because they are not defined and there is not sufficient legislation - at least in the Basque Country and Spain - to include them in our structures. Apart from this, our organisations are not ready, because this is not our current mission.'

## Sweden



'This is a very important but difficult and sensitive question to answer. As Samhall is a government owned company, our mission to employ people with disabilities is given by the government through parliament. This means that it is, in the end, a question of political priorities. But there are some benefits and threats.

'Benefits are: greater inclusion, mainstreaming and diversity. Our special workplaces cease to be so 'special'. We achieve integration instead of segregation. Our knowledge and experiences can be used for those other vulnerable groups on the labour market. Employees with different abilities can support each other. We could build small work teams around employees with different abilities. It would be easier to replace employees who move on to other employers.

'Threats are: a risk of segregation within our organisations with A, B, C teams etc. Production may depend more on employees with a high working capacity and the employees with disabilities, especially with severe disabilities, will be marginalised. The owners/government/contributors will regard the organisation as a 'normal' economic enterprise and will expect economical profit. This again may lead to a production that is more adapted to other groups than to employees with severe disabilities.

3.10

*'I really cannot see that Samhall needs to be specially adapted to other groups. As long as we are organised to meet different individual needs etc., that is not a problem. Some of the needs of different groups are similar (or, at least, comparable). For example, you need training in social skills at in work whether your problem in the labour market stems from disability, age, social problems, etc.'*

UK



### Remploy

*'Integration of other disadvantaged groups into organisations like Remploy could increase diversity, improve inclusion and create social awareness.'*

*'The potential benefits would involve strengthening our forces to combat inequality and resulting exclusion. Currently, organisations tend to focus on the issues specific to their target group, whereas the barriers created by society are broadly similar. This may help to focus efforts on challenging the barriers rather than seeing the 'problem' resting with the client group. It would also enable us to gain greater insight and experience. We would need to adapt and improve our knowledge of others disadvantaged groups concerned.'*

*'Remploy has a history and commitment to work with disabled people. Including people from other groups would require a change of brief from Government, which is to provide supported employment for disabled people.'*

*'Our identity with and Mission for the employment of disabled people have existed for 50 years. Many people working in our organisation do so because they are strongly committed to the principle of enabling disabled people.'*

## 3.10 Conclusions and Summary

The Working Group made the following conclusions on adapting to the new trends of mainstreaming and social inclusion:

- We generally welcome the EU decisions to develop a mainstreaming and social inclusion policy.
- We also welcome the fact that different EU member states are now devising a wide range of initiatives, appropriate to their national circumstances, in support of EU policy.
- We strongly welcome the diversity of initiatives, and suggest that these should be carefully monitored and evaluated.
- The trend of mainstreaming will present our organisations with many challenges, which have to be managed successfully.
- All our organisations see real opportunities for them to contribute to mainstreaming.
- The great range and depth of experiences in training and employing people with disabilities will mean that our organisations will be key players in making the mainstreaming policy work.
- People with disabilities must be fully involved in the development of our activities and any new services.
- An outstanding question is: how much personal choice will disabled people be allowed to exercise in the mainstream labour market?



take account of several important conditions that are linked with the mainstream idea.

Inevitably, some will have to make choices as to whether or not they enter the 'new era' of mainstreaming and social inclusion.

Group members are aware that every policy or organisational change that is made in their sector, will (and should be) weighed against the contribution it makes to the mainstream trend. There is a risk that the value and the meaning of special organised workplaces will diminish if they stick to a traditional role. They must invest in a new mission and policy, qualitative organisation forms, performance standards and working methods. It is inevitable that part or all of the workforces will be only temporarily involved in what used to be a 'stable' work environment.

Our awareness of, and ability to cope with, these conditions will, in the near future, have a great effect on the viability, positioning and size of the specially adapted work sector as a whole.

### 3.11 A Summary

Considerable changes will have to be made to adapt our organisations to mainstreaming. These will be more profound in some countries than in others. They should reflect and be reflected in the environment in which our organisations operate, e.g. national policies, local labour market conditions. Adaptations will have to

3.11

### 3.12 Members of the Working Group

Tim Papé (Chair from 3/00)	Shaw Trust	UK
Gerhard Larsson (Chair 12/99 to 03/00)	EUROPEAN Group - IPWH	
Leif Alm (Secretary)	Samhall	Sweden
Iolanda Brito	FENACERCI	Portugal
Txema Franco	Lantegi Batuak	Spain
Heleen Heinsbroek	NOSW	Netherlands
Christoph Jungwirth	BBRZ	Austria
Stuart Knowles	Remploy	UK
Marjatta Varanka	FPED	Finland

3.12

3.13

### 3.13 Definition of Terms

The group agreed that the goal of specially organised employment providers should be:

To enable those people with disabilities who are able to achieve a greater financial independence and an increased level of social integration to do so.

3.14

This goal must be achieved with the co-operation and active participation of disabled people.

The consensus around this goal enabled to focus on the primary purpose for disabled workers to achieve progression within and transition from specially organised employment.

The group then defined a continuum of employment for disabled people:

- Individuals should enter and leave this continuum at a point appropriate to their needs.
- Movement along the continuum should take place in either direction, according to individual need.

Progression can mean either movement within specially organised employment, towards regular employment, or movement from specially organised employment to regular employment.

Transition is progression from specially organised employment into regular employment. The EUROPEAN Group - IPWH has identified a 3 Step Model to strengthen opportunities for persons with disabilities to enter the labour market.

Transition has been defined as movement from stage 2 to stage 1, movement from stage 3 to 2, and movement from stage 3 to stage 1, although this definition does vary from one country to another.

### The 3 Step Model

1. Work in the regular labour market on equal terms with others.
2. Support for employers
3. Specially organised workplaces  
(Gerhard Larsson, Chairman EUROPEAN Group - IPWH - EUROPEAN Group - IPWH Newsletter, March 1999)

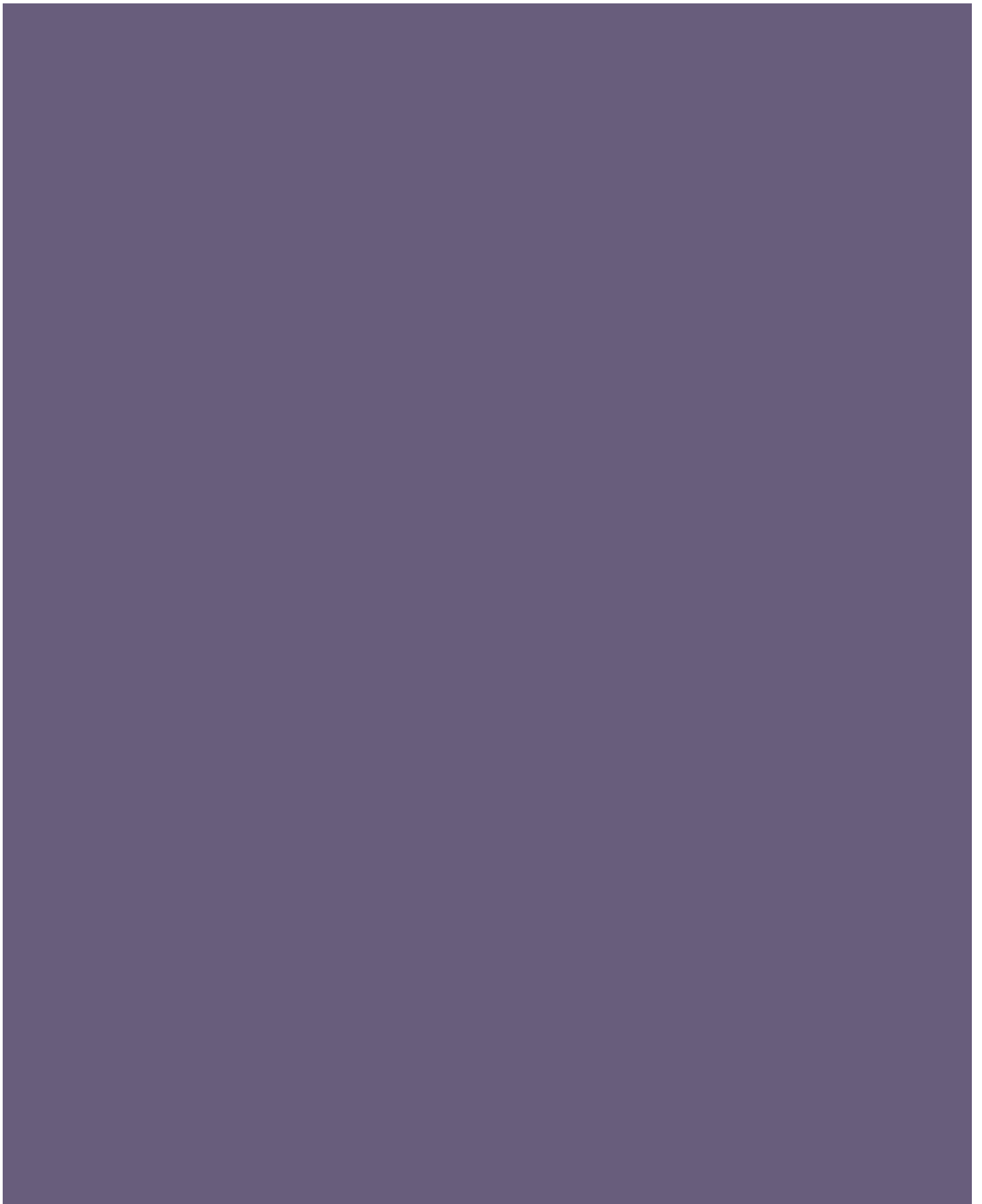
### 3.14 References

8. *Equality of Opportunity for People with Disabilities - A New Community Disability Strategy 1996.*
  9. *Raising employment levels of people with disabilities the common challenge; Commission Staff Working Paper 22.09.1998.*
  10. *Europe's undervalued workforce- EUROPEAN Group - IPWH programme 1999.*
  11. *Towards a barrier free Europe for people with disabilities - communication from the commission to the council, the European parliament, the economic and social committee and the committee of the regions; European Commission, 12.5.2000.*
  5. *Proposal for a council directive establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation, Commission of the European Communities, 25.11.1999.*
- Communication from the Commission to the member states establishing the guidelines for the Community Initiative EQUAL concerning transnational co-operation to promote new means of combating all forms of discrimination and inequalities in connection with the labour market (Brussels 14.04.2000).*

“ADAPTING TO THE NEW TRENDS OF MAINSTREAMING AND SOCIAL INCLUSION”  
**QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. What does mainstreaming and social inclusion mean when applied to the employment of disabled people?
2. Taking into account mainstreaming, do we need specially organised workplaces?
3. What are our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats as results of European “mainstreaming” employment and support funding policies?
4. How do our organisations need to adapt to the mainstreaming?
5. What are the implications of non-discrimination legislation for our organisations?
6. Do we need to broaden our target group and include other groups in risk of social exclusion? What are the benefits and the threats of such an approach?
7. Do our organisations need to adapt in order to include people coming from these groups?







## Members Contact Details

### Austria



Berufliches Bildungs-und  
Rehabilitationszentrum Linz (BBRZ)

BBRZ works with the employment services, social insurance agencies and the Austrian Provincial Governments to offer vocational rehabilitation for people with disabilities. Training programmes are geared to the labour market and last for a maximum of 2 years. Training is tailor-made for technical and commercial vocations, often enabling clients to achieve relevant qualifications. BBRZ runs Rehab College, provides placement support and offers specialist services such as medical, psychological, social work, rehabilitation technology, accommodation, client service and counselling. It is contracted to the Upper Austrian Provincial Government to operate sheltered workshops, providing a wide range of trades to manufacture products for the industrial, trade and agricultural sectors.

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### Belgium



Vlaamse Federatie van Beschutte  
Werkplaatsen (VLAB)

VLAB aims to represent the interests of Flemish sheltered workshops and co-ordinate their activities and development. VLAB works to achieve these objectives by: promoting the development and exchange of knowledge and information on sheltered employment; co-ordinating joint activities organised by the Flemish sheltered workshops; organising surveys and publishing the results, as well as by gathering and spreading information; defending the interests of sheltered workshops where the problems are common to all; acting as a consultative organisation for others active in the field of sheltered employment.

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## Finland



### Foundation Promoting Employment for People with Disabilities (FPED)

FPED was established in 1993 as a co-operative and represents 24 bodies, including the major national disability organisations. It aims to promote the employment of the disabled people by developing programmes within the public and private sectors that address individual rehabilitation and social needs. The Foundation achieves this by developing employment models including sheltered workshops, arranging expert information services and influencing the labour market. FINSE (the Finnish Network of Supported Employment) was formed by FPED in 1995 to promote training and awareness for supported employment, and has 130 members. SOFI (the Finnish Network of Social Firms), established in 1998 has 100 members.

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## France

### GIRPEH Ile de France

GIRPEH was established in 1977 by a group of leading employers to promote the mainstream employment of disabled people. Its mission is 'To assist employers in managing the integration of their disabled employees; to promote the professional integration of disabled people and to develop close links between the sheltered employment sector and the other non-sheltered sectors.' GIRPEH represents 50 large enterprises, professional organisations

and agencies concerned with services to disabled people. Through a programme of identification, selection and training, it helps disabled people to find suitable jobs. It also organises and conducts research through working groups and makes proposals to authorities.

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## France

### SNAPEI

SNAPEI was created as a representative union of Union Nationale des Associations des Parents d'Enfants Inadaptés, which is a federation, representing 330 associations of parents of people with mental disabilities. Each association may manage several institutions, from special education centres to workshops or housing facilities. SNAPEI negotiates with employees' unions for wages, application of labour laws, regulations, etc. It represents member institutions in liaison with related groups (e.g. the visually impaired, GIHP), and provides them with technical assistance and guidance on legal and regulatory matters. It also runs a seminar programme for institutions managers and employees, conducts research and publishes documentation on mental disability.

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## Germany



### Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Werkstätten für Behinderte (BAG Wfb)

BAG was established in 1975 as a voluntary non-profit association of organisations providing workshops for severely disabled people. Its members operate 600 main and 720 branch workshops, employing 195,000 disabled people. BAG's main objectives are to promote the interests of sheltered workshops at national, European and international levels; further the efficiency of sheltered workshops in providing employment, training and personal development for severely disabled people; influence the political and law making processes; organise national events; facilitate the exchange of information and experience; undertake a range of consultancy assignments and provide public relations service for membership.

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## Iceland



### The Icelandic Union of Special Employment and Training (SVV)

SVV is a national co-ordinating federation of 20 members comprising independent organisations, training institutes and sheltered workshops providing work for disabled people.

The workshops are owned either by the state, regional governments or by independent organisations for disabled people. Some workshops connected to the

hospital system are not members of SVV. The aim is to stimulate co-operation between members, represent their views, promote education, and act as a channel for information. SVV's 20 workshops receive a government subsidy and provide work for over 600 people with a range of disabilities. Specialist workshops provide employment for blind people.

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## Ireland



### THE REHAB GROUP

The Rehab Group is an independent organisation, delivering training, employment, social care and commercial services to promote equality. With more than 100 locations throughout Ireland and the UK, it trains over 24,000 people and employs 1,800 of whom 20% are people with disabilities. Its National Training & Development Institute provides training and job placements for 2,500 people in Ireland. 231 disabled people are employed within the 9 commercial companies comprising the subsidiary, Gandon Enterprises. RehabCare provides a range of community social care services for 1,500 disabled people and their carers. UK Rehab's Training & Business Group provides training for 14,000 long term unemployed, whilst Rehab Scotland has pioneered vocational training after brain injury.

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## Netherlands



### Nationaal Overlegorgaan Sociale Werkvoorziening (NOSW)

NOSW is the umbrella organisation for sheltered employment in the Netherlands. It includes 97 companies employing approximately 90,000 disabled people, of whom 12% are in external placements. 53% work in manufacturing, 33% in environmental services and construction, and 14% in printing and administrative services. Dutch sheltered employment organisations are professionally organised and are mainly sub-contractors working in joint ventures with mainstream companies, but also produce and sell their own products. At local level, they work closely with day care centres and other enterprises for the integration of disabled people.

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## Norway



### ArbeidsMarkesBedriftenes Landsforeing (AMB)

AMB is an association of 93 labour market companies (semi-sheltered workshops), employing over 5,250 vocationally disabled people, and offering vocational rehabilitation through guidance, job-training and skill-upgrading programmes. The goods and services produced compete in the open market and range from engineering to childcare. Employment contracts are time limited, as the objective is to help disabled people achieve work in the open labour market. AMB companies are joint stock enterprises with local government authorities the majority shareholders. AMB

represents members in agreeing service terms and conditions with trade unions, and collaborating with central government on vocational rehabilitation issues.

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## Norway



### ArbeidsSamVirkenes Landsforening (ASVL)

ASVL is a nationwide organisation representing 163 companies providing work opportunities for approximately 4,000 occupationally disabled people. Local authorities, mainly at municipal level, are the major company shareholders. Besides operating sheltered working units, the companies provide services for support employment and training. ASVL negotiates pay scales and service conditions with the Unions representing the companies' employees. It also lobbies to improve the rights and status of the companies and the disabled people ASVL works for. The companies receive a government subsidy, but earn approximately 40% of their income from the competitive commercial sale of goods and services in the open market.

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## Poland



### Central Institute for Labour Protection (CIOP)

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## Poland



### Polish Organisation of Disabled People's Employers (POPON)

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## Portugal



### FENACERCI

Founded in 1985, Fenacerci is a federation representing almost 50 co-operatives engaged in the education and rehabilitation of approximately 7,000 people with learning difficulties or multiple disability. It works to promote the rights of citizens with learning difficulties, ensure they receive appropriate care with legislative and financial support from government and other organisations, and to change attitudes to enable their integration into work. It offers a range of support and information services, conducts research, training and seminar programmes, and liaises with interested organisations, nationally and internationally. It has recently created specialist departments for Self-Advocacy, Early Intervention and Education, Training and Employment, Occupational Centres and Residences.

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## Rumania



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## Spain



### FUNDOSA GRUPO SA

Fundosa Grupo is the holding company that the ONCE Foundation created in 1989 with the mission of training and creating employment for people with disabilities, while generating its own resources. Fundosa Grupo is composed of subsidiaries and joint ventures, operating in a wide range of business sectors throughout Spain. The group as a whole employs 11,873 people, of whom 70% are disabled. In 2000 Fundosa Grupo generated sales of more than 136 million Euros.

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## Spain



### GUREAK / EHLABE

Gureak is part of Ehlable, The Association of Sheltered Workshops in the Basque Country, which exists to promote jobs and training for people with mental disabilities. Since 1975 Gureak has worked to socially integrate disabled people through job placement. The Group employs 2,500 people in over 21 modern, technically advanced work centres. 1,500 work in the Industrial Division which is divided into 3 companies undertaking mainly sub-contract work; Gureak Protected Workshops doing electronic assembly, packaging and filling; Nassermo, engaged in industrial contracting; Goiplasatik dedicated to plastic injection moulding. The Services Division employs 1,000 disabled workers and operates 8 businesses in the Services Sector.

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## Sweden



### SAMHALL AB

Samhall is a state owned company that exists to create meaningful and developing employment for people with occupational disabilities, wherever the need exists. It consists of a parent company and 4 subsidiaries, whilst its business operations are divided into 5 business areas. Together they are Sweden's largest sub-contractors for goods and services. Samhall has about 30,000 employees of whom 27,000 have some form of occupational disability. It also supports approximately 800 disabled people

in work placements throughout Sweden.

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## Switzerland



### Institutions Sociales Suisses pour personnes handicapées (INSOS)

INSOS is the nation-wide association of institutions for people with disabilities. Its membership of approximately 450 mainly comprises private organisations and foundations from over 850 locations throughout Switzerland. They provide just under 30,000 adult persons with assisted residential accommodation, training, and work places in sheltered and supervised environments. INSOS supports the development of higher quality and efficient fulfilment of the aims of its members, with the needs, freedom of choice and basic rights of disabled people given the highest priority. The association is financed by membership contributions, government authorities and, in the case of special projects, sponsorship.

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UK

**REMPLOY LIMITED**

Founded in 1946, Remploy exists to expand the opportunities for disabled people in sustainable work, both within Remploy factories and externally. Remploy employs more than 6,000 disabled people in its 87 industrial units and over 4,000 working with external employers under Remploy's Interwork supported employment programme. Its Commercial Business produces a wide range of high quality products and has an expanding contract manufacturing business. In 2000, sales totalled £165.6 million. The Employment Development operation directs the Interwork programme, co-ordinates the recruitment and progression of disabled employees, and offers advisory services to other employers.

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UK

**SHAW TRUST**

Shaw Trust is a national charity that provides routes to work for people who are disadvantaged in the workplace due to disability, ill-health or other social circumstances. Each year, Shaw Trust supports over 10,000 people across England, Scotland and Wales through job preparation, job finding, job support, job retention and job creation. To achieve this, the Trust provides rehabilitation, training, work tasters, employment support and occupation for disabled people. It supports and advises employers in the employment of people

with a disability; works with Social Services, Health Services, Training and Enterprise Councils, government departments and voluntary sector partners to help disabled people find employment.

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UK

**Ulster Supported Employment (USEL)**

USEL was formed in 1962 to provide employment under sheltered conditions for disabled people. Today, USEL employs approximately 65 disabled people in its manufacturing operation. In 1980, USEL pioneered a successful Supported Employment Programme in Northern Ireland, which now supports over 600 placements. It is a not for profit organisation, has charity status and, as a Non Departmental Public Body, is fully funded by Government.

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European Community

*With support from the European Community - Actions in favour of Equality of Opportunity for People with Disabilities. The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect the position or opinion of the European Commission.*

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