

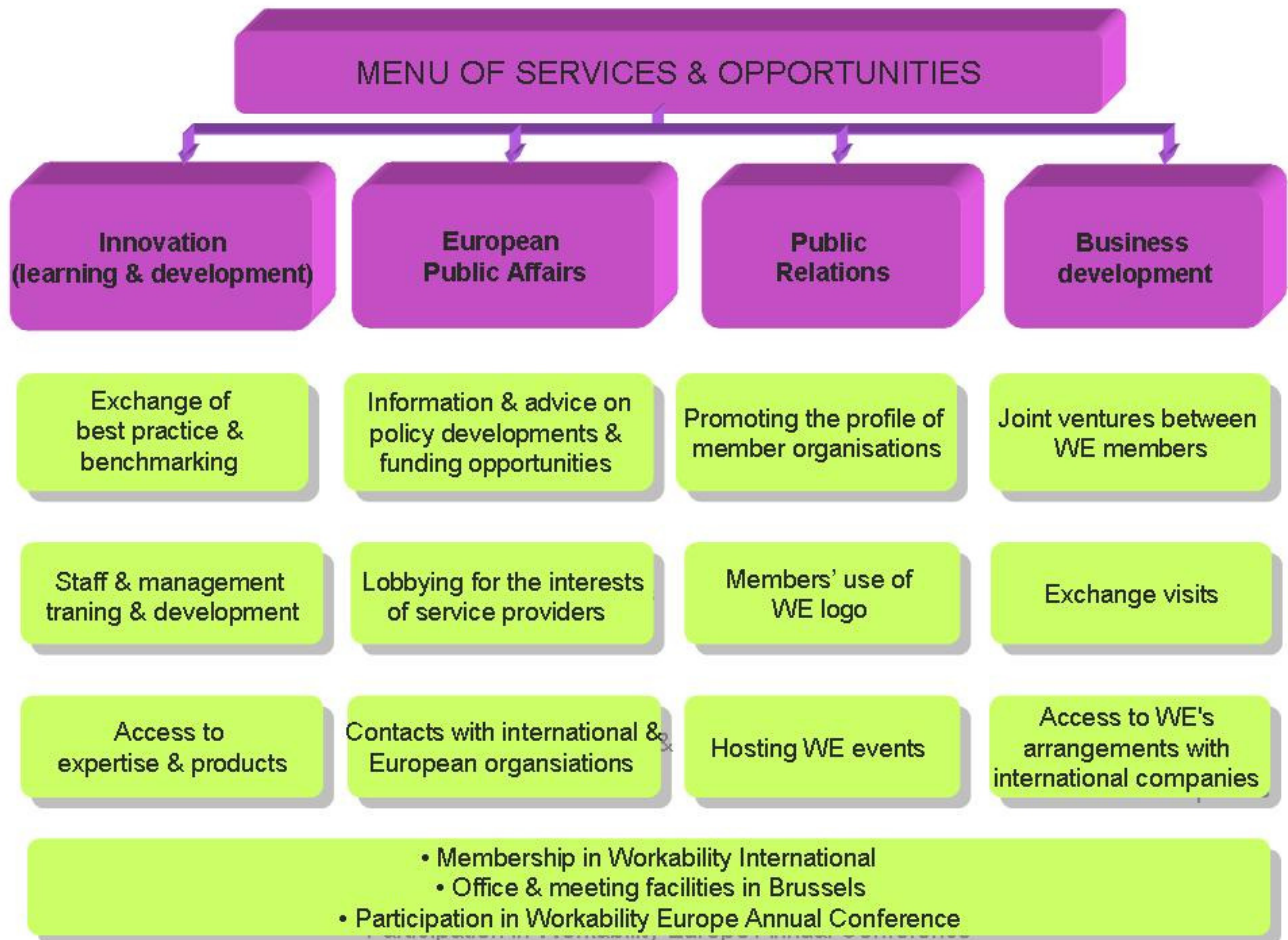
**ADDED VALUE FROM
WORKABILITY EUROPE
MEMBERSHIP:**

*menu of
services & opportunities*

Menu of standard services & opportunities

The cornerstone of a customer-oriented approach to membership in Workability Europe is an increased set of concrete services and opportunities that can generate tangible outputs. The below diagram illustrates four categories of services that lead to benefits to member organisations. It is important to stress that this is a readily available *menu* of services and opportunities from which members can pick and choose the ones they want to use according to their needs, interests and strategic objectives. The menu provides the answer to two fundamental questions:

1. "Why join Workability Europe?" and
2. "How can Workability Europe support the operational business of a service provider organisation?"



The following pages describe the concept behind each service included in the boxes of the above diagram.

Innovation (learning & development)

Innovation in Workability Europe context relates to enhancing the expertise of staff (learning) on the one hand, and the improvement/introduction of services and management strategies (development) on the other hand. Thus, innovation can be both a product and a process. Innovation should enable a service provider to increase its quality, cope with the challenges the social employment and rehabilitation sectors have to face, and prepare the organisation for a European market of rehabilitation services. Innovation is in this way conceived as a continuous variable which equals invention + exploitation. To remain on the cutting edge of service development is the ultimate goal.

- *Exchange of best practice & benchmarking*

Workability Europe's membership encompasses a diversity of vocational rehabilitation and employment service providers. All kinds of models and types of organisations are represented. Workability Europe members employ people with every type and severity of disability. This diversity allows Workability Europe expert teams to work across the board in developing programmes, processes and best practices that directly innovate and improve employment and rehabilitation systems and lead to the increased employment of disabled people.

The goal of benchmarking performance between individual members, on the other hand, is to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of services within the Workability Europe network by comparing performance and learning from each other.

- *Staff & management training & development*

Workability Europe regularly organises targeted training seminars and workshops on topical issues in the social employment sphere. These events spotlight on-the-ground operational issues or concepts and are relevant for both top management as well as frontline professionals. External guest speakers or organisations are frequently invited to offer their perspectives and expertise. Workability Europe also facilitates staff exchange and internships for members who are looking to spend a period of time abroad to acquire new skills and experience.

- *Access to expertise*

A central factor of cooperation within the Workability Europe network is that all members have agreed to expose their expertise to the each other. This means that Workability Europe members can without costs obtain hands-on expertise such as management systems, training specifications and employment/rehabilitation methodologies and products. This free access to direct and proven expertise in some of the biggest employers of disabled people in Europe is a very valuable asset that cannot be provided by any consultancy company.

European Public Affairs

Included under the item European Public Affairs are a range of services that support organisations in their international activities. The viability of today's organisation depends on its ability to operate within a positive public policy environment that establishes the framework of the marketplace of goods, services, ideas and issues. An incisive and comprehensive Public Affairs strategy can create decisive competitive advantage and open market opportunities.

- *Information & advice on policy developments & funding opportunities*

One of the most important benefits of belonging to Workability Europe, is that it has its "ear to the ground" and is able to detect trends at an early stage. Such information is vital for member organisations, giving them time to position their organisations to meet new concepts and requirements. Thus, on a regular basis, Workability Europe distributes via e-bulletin to all members an update of the latest European developments in the disability and social policy field. The information includes policy developments as well as events, positions of various stakeholders and funding opportunities.

Workability Europe also facilitates members' access to EU funding. Via regular funding alerts members are informed about interesting funding opportunities. Advice is also provided on writing project proposals and helps members identify partners for the project consortium. In this way, each member might be able to get more EU project funding to finance new activities and international initiatives. Also, members may be included as partners or subcontractors in Workability Europe projects and as such generate additional funding for their activities.

- *Lobbying for the interests of service providers*

By joining forces with other European networks, Workability Europe actively lobbies to ensure that the interests of service providers are reflected in the formulation of EU social policy and legislation. Workability Europe represents the sector and its entire membership at various key events at European level. This representation includes the organisation's presence at standing committees as well as participation in conferences and important meetings. In addition, Workability Europe can upon request represent or promote the interests of an individual member.

- *Contacts with International & European organisations*

Over the years, Workability Europe has built up a database with about 4.000 contacts in the field of disability throughout Europe. Members can apply on this database for finding international partners, for marketing purposes or for tracking specific expertise. Workability Europe invests in resources in building up personal relations with people and offers to facilitate the first contact for members whenever needed.

Public Relations

Public Relations includes the concepts of marketing and promotion. It basically represents ongoing activities to ensure the organisation has a strong and positive public image. Building good relationships with the organisation's various publics by obtaining favourable publicity, and building up a good "corporate image" is considered very important today. A healthy Public Relations strategy must therefore permeate all aspects of the business. Public Relations is most effective when it is viewed as a strategic management function supporting the business goals of the organisation.

- *Promoting the profile of member organisations*

Although Workability Europe does not initiate large marketing campaigns, it undertakes positive actions to increase the profile of its member organisations at European level. Examples are: the issuing of "Certificates of Membership"; the presentation and distribution of promotion materials of member organisations at major European events in the disability and social policy field; presenting the logo of the members on the Workability Europe website (with direct link); and listing the Workability Europe members on the Workability Europe brochure and Annual Review that are distributed all over Europe

- *Members' use of Workability Europe logo*

Members are eligible to use the brand value of Workability Europe membership as an extra asset in their relations with clients, funders and partners. In applications for EU funding, the membership of Workability Europe is used as an extra argument to add value to the application. Members can make reference to their Workability Europe membership in all documents (including electronic documents and websites), and are also provided with Workability Europe leaflets, other promotion materials and PowerPoint presentations.

- *Hosting Workability Europe events*

Hosting a Workability Europe event (e. g. Board Meeting, Conference, Seminar, Workshop) can be an excellent tool for raising the prestige of the hosting organisation. It is an opportunity to highlight the international activities of a Workability Europe member to the partners and stakeholders in the home country, and to demonstrate that it has a presence at European level in the disability and social policy field. Press conferences, bilateral meetings and other PR activities can be linked to the organisation of such an event to make maximal use of the opportunity.

Business development

Workability Europe promotes and facilitates the exchange of experiences and expertise in business initiatives between its members and external companies. The key objective of Workability Europe in the area of Business is to identify and make contact with appropriate companies committed to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Workability Europe negotiates agreements on a pan-European basis on behalf of members thereby maximising their purchasing power for products and services.

- *Joint ventures between Workability Europe members*

One of the most important opportunities offered by Workability Europe in the field of business development is to find partners within the Workability Europe network. In this respect, the role of Workability Europe is to offer a platform or forum where professionals from various levels have the opportunity to meet, discuss and cooperate with colleagues from other organisations. This facilitates and stimulates the establishment of joint ventures between members to commence a business relationship or to create joint service provision.

- *Exchange visits*

Exchange visits regularly take place between members of Workability Europe. Such visits give professionals the opportunity to share and obtain practical learning from concrete experiences on the ground, talk about similar cases, see related situations, and discuss advocacy strategies. By visiting the field, they allow professionals to see actual changes and strategies at the operational level. They are also very energising and give confidence and greater drive and impetus for learning, and for putting that learning into practice, upon returning home. A number of Workability Europe members have also set up deeper partnerships - "twinning" - in the frameworks of EU-funded projects or government sponsored programmes.

- *Access to Workability Europe's arrangements with international companies*

Workability Europe collaborates with some of the leading international companies for the purpose of promoting and improving employment opportunities for persons with disabilities and other socially disadvantaged groups. Agreements/partnerships are in place for example with IT hardware and software manufactures, recruitment agencies, hotel and restaurant chains. Workability Europe members can exclusively avail themselves of these preferential agreements to generate attractive savings and open up business opportunities.

HORIZONTAL BENEFITS

In addition to the above described categories of added-value in the menu, there can be listed at least three more horizontal benefits.

- *Membership in Workability International*

Workability Europe members enjoy automatic membership of Workability International – the world's largest body representing providers of work and employment services to people with a disability with over 100 members across all continents. This relationship gives Workability Europe members access to a multitude of other models, legal systems and experience both in the developed and less developed world.

- *Office & meeting facilities in Brussels*

Workability Europe has an office with meeting facilities in downtown Brussels. Members are welcome to use these facilities whenever they have business to do in Brussels. The secretariat can also provide support with reservations for hotels, catering, preparation of documents, etc.

- *Participation in Workability Europe Annual Conference*

Members can send as many representatives as they wish to the Annual Conference and for this event Workability Europe has been trying to lower or completely remove the registration fee.

- YOUR NEEDS ARE OUR PRIORITIES -