



Workability Europe e-bulletin

April 2008

Championing the right to work of Europeans with disabilities

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EDITORIAL

Dear Members of Workability Europe,

We are pleased to issue the first edition of our internal e-bulletin for 2008. In this Editorial, we bring to you some highlights from our past activities and look ahead to our work in the coming weeks and months. As usual, you will find more information elsewhere in this edition and on our website or alternatively you may wish to contact us direct.

Firstly, we wish to remind you about our upcoming **Annual Conference** taking place between 20 and 23 May 2008 in San Sebastian, Spain and hosted by EHLABE. The theme we explore this year as you know is "Innovation". We are currently busy finalising all the elements of the programme. We aim to deliver an event which includes a good mix of political and strategic presentations from both the National and the European level but also foresees visits to services as well as social activities. Our programme, the fine weather at this time of the year and the beautiful location all promise a successful event. However, achieving an interesting and interactive event depends on your active participation too! Therefore, we encourage you to register early.

The Annual Conference is the central event for our network but definitely not the first for us this year. In February, we held our first **Board Meeting** of the year, hosted by e-ISOTIS in Athens. While in Greece, we took the opportunity to participate in a Seminar on the project *Check and go* whose aim is to enhance access to workplaces for people with disabilities. With regard to Board membership, we are happy to note that a couple of new persons have expressed interest in joining our Board and will be put forward for approval at our AGM in May.

As regards **professional development activities**, in January, the Services Development Group members took part in an International Conference in Poland exchanging ideas on different models for successful integration in employment of people *with* disabilities. In February, several of our members participated in a Seminar on the theme of *Ageing Workforce & Disability* organised in Brussels. Then, in March we delivered a Seminar on State Aid and online training for our Polish members. It is important that we visit this country regularly in order to stay closely connected to our several members there and to respond to their needs.

In the **Public Affairs** field, in January, WE hosted a Working Seminar focused on the issue of *Social Services of General Interest (SSGI)*. We also responded to two important consultations of the Commission: on the State Aid General Block Exemption Regulation – where we have already reached some tangible improvements – and on taking further the Active Inclusion of People Furthest from the Labour Market. Finally, our President Hans Vrind, together with Leo Kooyman, met the new Head of the EC Disability Unit, Mr Johan Ten-Geuzendam to describe the activities of WE and to suggest how we can contribute to the EU Disability Strategy. Our President also represented us at the Social Platform's General Assembly held recently in Brussels.

In relation to our ongoing involvement in European **projects**, the *Validating Mentoring 2* project held its second Transnational Meeting in Edinburgh in April. Recently we also activated the National Steering Group in Belgium whose members will provide recommendations on Mentoring programmes and approaches. Our Matra-funded project "Disabled at Work" in Turkey is going well too. A number of capacity-building and PR events have already taken place. One concrete result from this project already has been that the Denizli Municipality who is a main partner in the project has become an associate member of WE.

I would like to end on one positive but challenging note. Our network continues to enhance its visibility and impact at European level, to expand its membership and to get involved in new areas of work. This requires a professionally-run, sufficiently-resourced and dynamic organisation in order to maintain the current momentum in our development, to provide value for money to our members and to meet the expectations of the stakeholders. Together with our members we are confident that we can meet the challenges facing us if we make the right strategic choices, diversify our sources of funding and keep a high motivation and belief in the mission of Workability Europe.

Looking forward to seeing you all in San Sebastian next month,

With best wishes,
Bertie Hunt, General Secretary

NEWS FROM THE SECRETARIAT

WE is recruiting a Public Affairs Officer

In light of the imminent departure of our Public Affairs Officer, Martin Ohrdski to join the European Commission services, WE will be recruiting a new person to join the secretariat during June 2008.

Deadline for applications is 12 May 2008.

The full advert including instructions how to apply is available on our website at <http://www.workability-europe.org/index.php?page=open-positions&hl=en>

Municipality of Denizli joins Workability Europe

At its last Board meeting in February in Athens, the WE Board approved the application for associate membership of the **Municipality of Denizli**, the main partner in the WE-Cedris Matra project in Turkey called "Disabled at Work!" For more information on the Municipality, please visit:

<http://www.workability-europe.org/uploads/Members%20description.pdf>

WE responds to the European Commission consultation on the Draft General Block Exemption Regulation for State Aid

As you recall, the Commission launched in April 2007 a consultation on draft rules for the new **State Aid General Block Exemption Regulation**. This Regulation will replace the existing General Exemption Regulation from June 2008. Since the first draft was issued, Workability Europe has responded with three position papers. We are pleased to see that our lobbying efforts have resulted in a much improved draft already.

Find our position papers at <http://www.workability-europe.org/index.php?page=publications&hl=en>

WE responds to the European Commission consultation on taking forward the active inclusion of people furthest from the labour market

The EU envisaged action in this dossier will constitute the adoption of common principles for three key strands – (i) income support sufficient to avoid social exclusion; (ii) link to the labour market and (iii) link to better access to quality services. In this position paper WE concentrates on the two strands which fall more within its core area of work, namely **link to the labour market** and **access to quality services** for people with disabilities as a group that is one of the furthest from the labour market.

Find our position paper at <http://www.workability-europe.org/index.php?page=publications&hl=en>

* Includes WE events outside the framework of specific Development Group meetings.

PAST EVENTS*

✚ WE co-organises Working Seminar on Social Services of General Interest

In January, WE co-hosted a Working Seminar focused on the issue of **Social Services of General Interest (SSGI)**. The Seminar brought together several partners of the informal network of NGO social service providers that WE has joined.

The Seminar was organised in follow-up to the EC Communication on SSGI adopted in November 2007. Debates focused on the SSGI which refer to enhancing legal certainty in the field of SSGI and to the promotion of quality. The partners also reviewed two accompanying documents concerning the application of state aid and public procurement rules to SSGI.

Following the event, WE has produced an extensive Analysis Report on latest developments around SSGI. You can find this paper on the WE website at <http://www.workability-europe.org/index.php?page=publications&hl=en>

✚ WE organises Conference on Integrating disabled people into mainstream employment: Learning from European models and practices

In January 2008 in Warsaw, Poland, WE and several of its Polish members organised the first of a cycle of Conferences presenting **European systems of vocational rehabilitation for people with disabilities**. The main goal of these Conferences is to raise awareness about different European systems and models of vocational rehabilitation programmes for people with disabilities and to reflect on their respective advantages and disadvantages.

The full Report and presentations delivered are available on the WE website at <http://www.workability-europe.org/index.php?page=events-2&hl=en>

✚ WE organises Training Seminar on State Aid and Effective Management of Online Resources

In March, WE held a **Training & Information Seminar** in Warsaw, Poland. The Seminar was organised upon the request of WE Polish members but was **open** to all members. Over 15 participants coming from EKON, KIG-R, CIOP and Integracja attended and contributed actively. Martin Ohridski, WE Public Affairs Officer, acted as trainer.

The Programme of the day was divided into two parts. In Part I the participants had an in-depth discussion about the new State Aid Block Exemption Regulation currently being prepared by the European Commission. Part II of the Seminar consisted of an interactive training session on using effectively EU's online resources.

The full Report and presentation delivered is available on the WE website at <http://www.workability-europe.org/index.php?page=events-2&hl=en>

WE organises Training Seminar Ageing & Disability Seminar

In February, WE organised a one-day Training Seminar in Brussels on the theme of '**Ageing Workforce & Disability**'. The Seminar was attended by 25 participants from 13 countries. It was facilitated by Dr Richard Wynne from the Work Research Centre in Ireland. The collected Evaluation forms indicate that participants were satisfied with all aspects of the event: practical organisation, trainer and content.

The full Report and presentation delivered is available on the WE website at <http://www.workability-europe.org/index.php?page=events-2&hl=en>

UPCOMING EVENTS*

Workability Europe Annual Conference (20 – 23 May 2008) coming up!

With our Annual Conference next month fast approaching we are pleased to inform you that plans are well under way to bring you a successful event. We are finalising the programme, the inputs of the speakers, the arrangements for the visits and all practicalities. We are happy to see that we are getting good interest from both Spanish representatives and from our membership. Many thanks to those of you who have already registered. Those who have not, we wish to remind that the **deadline for sending in your Registration form is 30 April 2008**.

All information about the Conference is available at <http://www.workability-europe.org/index.php?page=annual-conference&hl=en>

Please do not hesitate to contact the organisers should you require more information at this stage.

Looking forward to meeting you in beautiful San Sebastian,

The Organising Committee

PROJECTS

Validating Mentoring 2

The project **Validating Mentoring 2** held its second meeting in Edinburgh, UK on 15 and 16 April 2008. The main items of discussion during the first day included update presentations on the partners' activities during the first six months of the project, learning how to set up and operate Mentoring programmes, a revision of the Code of Practice for Mentoring and investigation of the possibility of setting up a European Quality Mark in Mentoring. The second day focused on administrative and financial issues and quality management.

Bertie Hunt, WE General Secretary and Martin Ohridski, WE Public Affairs Officer represented WE at the meeting. Martin Ohridski stated: "This was our second meeting in the VM2 project and this time we really went into content issues about the demands and dynamics of Mentoring programmes. It was interesting to see how the different partners - each in their own way but very effectively - have approached subjects such as dissemination, setting up National Steering Groups and looking for mentors and mentees."

* Includes WE events outside the framework of specific Development Group meetings.

The next VM2 project meeting is scheduled to take place in Turkey on 22-23 September 2008, hosted by Bolu Research and Guidance Centre, one of the six project partners.

For more information, please visit the project website - <http://www.vm2-project.eu/> or to contact Martin Ohrdski at publicaffairs@workability-europe.org

NEWS FROM THE DEVELOPMENT GROUPS

Network Development Group (NDG)

The Network Development Group held a coordination meeting on 1 April 2008 in Brussels. The full-day meeting tackled a busy agenda composed of communication, Public Affairs, financial, project-related and strategic items.

The **next meeting** of the Network Development Group will take place on **23 May 2008** in San Sebastian, Spain in the framework of the WE Annual Conference.

> For more information contact the Co-Chairs Tim Papé sandy.evans@shaw-trust.org.uk or François Kuentz fegapei.kuentz@wanadoo.fr

Services Development Group (SDG)

On 10-11 January 2008, several SDG members participated in a Conference in Warsaw entitled "Integrating Disabled People into Mainstream Employment: Learning from European Models & Practices" and hosted by EKON. The Report from the Conference is available on the WE website at <http://www.workability-europe.org/index.php?page=events-2&hl=en> The SDG also had a meeting whilst in Poland and took the opportunity to visit some local services. Then, in March 2008, the SDG held a tele-conference. Highlights of future planned activities include the following:

- SDG will be presenting a Seminar at the Annual Conference in San Sebastian on Transitions. An input questionnaire has been circulated to the WE members to help prepare better the Seminar. A short discussion on Public Procurement is also planned.
- The next conference call will be on 7 May 2008 at 10.00 CET and there will be a meeting of the SDG in San Sebastian on 21 May 2008.
- Input has been made to the current draft of the new EU State Aid rules
- The SDG has welcomed new members from Italy and Greece

> For more information contact the Co-Chairs Leif Alm leif.alm@samhall.se or Nigel Hopkins nigel.hopkins@remploy.co.uk

NEWS FROM WEB BV

- **Microsoft Academic Licence** - Microsoft is very keen to move forward with Workability Europe. It is now time for an extension of the General Agreement. ALL members entitled to use Academic Licence should apply for this as soon as possible. Place order via your HP SLMS country contact or your other software supplier if you are under contract with another SW supplier!
- General agreement has been signed with **Corporate Express** one of Europe's largest suppliers of Office Supplies. This is a cost-saving agreement for WE members that you can start using.
- Offer has been received via **Kuwait Oil** for Fuel, first offer to the BeNeLux countries.

- A number of **Business Objectives** started; Automotive, Environmentally friendly products-services, Temporary Staffing and WEEE.
- A number of WE-members in partnership with WEB BV have reported that they are interested to explore "**own products**" for a better market position. If interested, please contact the WEB BV executive Director.

WEB BV website

A dedicated website for WEB BV has been launched, please visit www.webbv.eu The website will be used as a strong promotional and communication tool of the business concepts developed by WEB BV.

Any questions?

If any members have questions regarding agreements, how to apply to obtain access or have other ideas of how we can strengthen our common position by working in partnership, do not hesitate to get in contact with Lars Lindblom, WEB BV's Executive Director at director-web@workability-europe.org

WHAT'S NEW ON THE WEBSITE?

New items posted on www.workability-europe.org include:

Vacancies section:

- Advert Public Affairs Officer

Publications section:

- WE Public Affairs e-bulletin January, February, March editions 2008
- WE internal e-bulletin April 2008
- Position paper: State Aid Reform: Draft General Block Exemption Regulation (Version 3)
- Position paper: EC COM - Modernising social protection for greater social justice and economic cohesion: taking forward the active inclusion of people furthest from the labour market
- Analysis report: Services of General Interest and Social Services of General Interest after the Lisbon Treaty and the EC COM "Services of general interest, including social services of general interest: a new European commitment"

News section:

- *Update on Validating of Mentoring 2 project*

Annual Conference section:

- All documents about the upcoming WE Annual Conference in May in San Sebastian

Events section:

- Report from Training Seminar "Ageing & Disability: strategies & services to meet demand"
- Report from Seminar "State Aid (Part I) & Effective Management of Online Resources (Part II)"
- Report from the Conference "Integrating Disabled People into Mainstream Employment: Learning from European Models & Practices"

Description of members:

- Details of new WE member – *Municipality of Denizli, Turkey*

NEWS FROM THE MEMBERS

Shaw Trust supports delivery of Government's New Deal for Disabled People Job Broking programme

Shaw Trust has recently been appointed preferred provider for 17 out of 19 contracts throughout the UK to deliver the Government's New Deal for Disabled People (NDDP) Job Broking programme. NDDP Job Broking helps people who are claiming incapacity benefits back into the world of work. Shaw Trust has had great success in delivering this programme since its inception in 2001. By working in partnership with employers and other complementary organisations, Shaw Trust aims to match clients to local vacancies and local vacancies to clients.

Stuart Knowles, Executive Director of Shaw Trust Employment Services said: "We know that people lead complicated lives, so at the heart of our successful delivery of this programme is our individualised approach. To ensure all clients access what they need to meet employers' requirements and pursue individual goals, we provide a flexible range of menu options including: confidence building and financial support; assisted job search; condition management and access to general health and wellbeing advice. The right combination of support helps to address the whole person and move individuals swiftly into employment and onward progression."

News from: evelyn.okeefe@shaw-trust.org.uk

UNEA publishes the first book dedicated to adapted companies.

The "Union Nationale des Entreprises Adaptées" (National Union of Adapted Companies) has published a unique edition of a specially dedicated to the mission and activities of adapted companies in France. Adapted companies are critical as they allow disabled people to build a professional life and to achieve a real life project. Although they are recognised by law, adapted companies are still unknown. This book pays tribute to all the managers involved in the fight against exclusion. It demonstrates how fundamental the role of adapted companies is in the social economy.

Et pourtant elles tournent! Les Entreprises Adaptées, une logique économique, une mission sociale, une nécessité citoyenne (Preface: Simone Veil)

News from: info@unea.fr

Hungarian employers found MAÉSZ, Lux-Tex leads the way

MAÉSZ (Magyarországi Akkreditált Munkaadók Országos Érdekvédelmi Szövetsége), or in English (Association of Hungarian Accredited Partner Employers – AHAPE), was founded on 19 December 2007. AHAPE was formed by 15 accredited professional employers dedicated of integrated open labour market employment of more than 4,500 disabled people in Hungary. LUX-TEX Ltd, one of 15 founders, will provide office place for the Secretariat of AHAPE.

"The need to create AHAPE has been driven by the fact that accredited employers of more than 1,500 workshops employing about 25,000-30,000 disabled employees have no adequate legitimate representation of their interests," underlined Mr László, FONAI President. "According to a relevant survey the number of partner employers of AHAPE will exceed 100 within a short time, representing about 14,000-15,000 disabled employees in the network", stated Mr Sándor Tasnadi, Vice-President. "The website www.maesz.eu operated by MAÉSZ and a monthly e-bulletin will provide up-to-date information for partners to interpret regulations, legal changes and give tips how to keep permanent conditions of accreditation", pointed out Mr Zoltán Bodnar, Vice-President.

AHAPE's mission:

As a vocational umbrella association of accredited employers, AHAPE focus activities are to prepare and to train employers and employees taking into consideration their vocational requirements for open labour market integration. The target of AHAPE is to deliver services not only for employers but for employees as well based on consultative dialogue. The lobby association aims to represent all interests by making multilateral contacts with State Ministries, legal stakeholders and state-subsidised employers. AHAPE is

interested in learning from best practices in Europe, taking over valuable experiences from international partner organisations. AHEPE is seeking international partner associations to built partnership on the base of vocational cooperation.

(Budapest, 19 March 2008)

News from: bodnar.zoltan@luxtex.hu

News from The Friends of Integration Association

- On 27 March 2008 in Warsaw *The Friends of Integration Association* in cooperation with ASHOKA Innovators for the Public, organised a Conference “Employing Disabled People - What Remains To Be Done”.
- The Friends of Integration Association has summed up activities financed by the ESF:
 - Call Centre ‘Able at Work’ (0-801-801-015) for disabled citizens and their employers. Since April 2007 the Call Centre was contacted by 35,000 clients;
 - Integration Centres established in several Polish cities to provide information and help disabled people to develop skills necessary to become more independent and active on the labour market and involved in social life. In 2007 the Centres offered information and support to over 10,000 people and helped 1,000 disabled citizens to find a job;
 - ‘Employment’ – supplement for ‘Integracja Magazine”, which encourages disabled citizens to become active on the labour market and convinces employers to hire disabled workforce. It has issued nine supplements and has circulated 15,000 copies.
- Achievements of job activation have been presented to representatives from Ireland (ASHOKA), India, Argentine and Germany and representatives of Polish government and state organisations representing disabled people.

News from: maciej.flasinski@integracja.org

MCA implements project on Assistive Technology Vocational Education and Training

Since 2007 Marie Curie Association adopted a new course of development in its organisational portfolio. The innovation is a set of European projects targeted at ICT and Assistive Technologies for people with disabilities. One of the projects presented below is ATVET.

The project is funded by the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Commission, Transfer of innovation. ATVET (Assistive Technology Vocational Education and Training) aims to address the fact that a significant proportion of individuals abandon AT devices, citing lack of support during introduction and use amongst contributing factors. To counter this problem, Hereward College, in collaboration with UK partners in the public and private sectors developed a nationally accredited qualification that focuses on the individual user of AT. With guidance and support from Hereward College, the ATVET project partners will oversee the creation of country-specific VRQ Level 2 (equivalent) vocational qualifications following the developed model. Due to the nature of candidates and their work patterns, the delivery of learning materials and course content will be via an online, country specific Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) provided by Marie Curie Association, as well as through the development of a course handbook by each partner country. The outcome of the project will impact on AT professionals, the users of AT in all 5 partner countries and on the Vocational Education and Training (VET) systems of each country. AT professionals will be better able to support the appropriate AT for individuals’ needs, users will be empowered to make better decisions ensuring their independence and well-being and VET systems will be enhanced through the availability of a new qualification which will fit within the European Qualifications Framework. More information soon on www.atvet.org

News from: petia@marie-curie-bg.org

e-ISOTIS latest news

- e-ISOTIS is participating in the EU4ALL project (European Unified Approach for Accessible Lifelong Learning). The aim of EU4ALL is to improve the efficiency and efficacy of implementing open e-learning service architecture for ALL. To achieve a wide impact the approach taken is not to develop a single EU4ALL system but a standards based framework that facilitates the integration of the approach with a wide range of eLearning systems. The project’s target group comprises: a) End-users: Adult learners with disabilities, teachers, and tutors b) System-users: Providers of eLearning

systems, content and services. This project is a European one that comprises 13 organisations from 7 different member states. To learn more, please visit <http://www.eu4all-project.eu/> or contact eu4all@e-isotis.org

- e-ISOTIS invites you to join the project's Special Interest Group on "Higher Education Accessibility", fostering the discovery and dissemination of high quality research in Lifelong Learning, Accessibility and Higher Education. In addition to the open arena, e-ISOTIS will recognise and reward the efforts of registered SIGS over the EU4ALL project duration. Therefore at the end of the project, e-ISOTIS will look to nominate the SIG that has made the most outstanding contribution to higher education accessibility. The winner will receive an award and be asked to present at the EU4ALL conference which will take place in September 2010.

News from: nikoletta@e-isotis.org

FAB extends Supported Employment Service

Recently the FAB service for Supported Employment has been extended. It has been shown, that this instrument for placement and integration of persons with disabilities into (regular) mainstream Labour market proved its worth, so that it could be successfully extended – both in quantity and on regional matters. FAB has changed his trade name for "FAB Sheltered Workshop" to *FAB pro.work* and since a few month FAB also is certified according to ISO regulations 9001:2000.

News from: josef.stockinger@bbrz-gruppe.at

Cedris publishes Annual Report 2007

Cedris has published its Annual Report 2007. It is available on WE's website at

News from: lkooyman@cedris.nl

Remploy news

- Bob Warner Remploy's Chief Executive has announced his retirement at the end of November 2008.
- Remploy's modernisation plan as announced in November 2007 is progressing on track with all the affected people being looked after as planned.
- Transitions into mainstream employment will be c. 6,500 in 2007/8 up by 1,200 on 2006/7

News from: Nigel.Hopkins@remploy.co.uk

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2008*

Date	Event	Location	Contact person
7 May 2008	Services Development Group tele-conference at 10.00h CET	-	Leif Alm leif.alm@samhall.se Nigel Hopkins nigel.hopkins@remploy.co.uk
19 May 2008	WI Board Meeting	San Sebastian, Spain	Alain Rialland workability.international@wanadoo.fr
20 May 2008	WE Board Meeting WEB BV Meeting	San Sebastian, Spain	Bertie Hunt secretary@workability-europe.org
21 May 2008	WE Annual Conference Day I	San Sebastian, Spain	Kizkitza Zabaleta ehlabe@ehlabe.org Bertie Hunt secretary@workability-europe.org
21 May 2008	Services Development Group Meeting	San Sebastian, Spain	Leif Alm leif.alm@samhall.se Nigel Hopkins nigel.hopkins@remploy.co.uk
22 May 2008	WE Annual Conference Day II	San Sebastian, Spain	Kizkitza Zabaleta ehlabe@ehlabe.org Bertie Hunt secretary@workability-europe.org
23 May 2008	Network Development Group Meeting	San Sebastian, Spain	Tim Papé sandy.evans@shaw-trust.org.uk François Kuentz fegapei.kuentz@wanadoo.fr
23 May 2008	WE AGM	San Sebastian, Spain	Bertie Hunt secretary@workability-europe.org
8 September 2008	WE Board Meeting	Sapporo, Hokkaido island, Japan	Bertie Hunt secretary@workability-europe.org
9-12 September 2008	WI Annual Conference & AGM	Sapporo, Hokkaido island, Japan	Alain Rialland workability.international@wanadoo.fr
22-23 September 2008	Validating Mentoring 2 Project Meeting	Istanbul, Turkey	Martin Ohridski publicaffairs@workability-europe.org
17 November 2008	WE Board Meeting WEB BV Meeting	Rome, Italy	Bertie Hunt secretary@workability-europe.org

*List of events as known at the moment. Other events may be added and will be advised. Always confirm dates and location with the Development Group Chair(s) and/or secretariat prior to attending.

Editorial note:

This E-bulletin is issued three times a year exclusively to Workability Europe members. Readers are invited to reproduce the information provided the source is quoted.

Editors: Bertie Hunt (General Secretary) and Martin Ohridski (Public Affairs Officer). We welcome your questions, comments and contributions.

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