



Workability Europe e-bulletin

December 2006

Championing the right to work of Europeans with disabilities

Workability Europe, Rue de Spa 15, B-1000, Brussels, Belgium
Tel: +32 2 235 66 64, Fax: +32 2 736 8622, Website: www.workability-europe.org
Emails: secretary@workability-europe.org and publicaffairs@workability-europe.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Editorial	page 1
News from the Secretariat	3
Past events	4
News from WEB BV	5
News from the Four Strategic Pillars	6
News from the members	9
Calendar of events 2006-2007	12

EDITORIAL

Dear Members of Workability Europe,

The months since the summer holidays have been busy and active and we are pleased to share with you some of our more important activities and developments in this last edition of our e-bulletin for 2006.

WE Board Meeting in Washington welcomes new members

The Workability International Annual Conference in September took place in Washington DC and was hosted by Workability Americas. The European delegates who attended the Conference took advantage of having a Board meeting, an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) and Pillar IV Meeting. In Washington, the WE Board of Directors welcomed five new members – ACORD and Motivation from Romania, Marie Curie Association, Bulgaria, VSZOSZ (National Federation of Companies Providing Sheltered Employment), Hungary and (DPREUG) Disabled People's Rehabilitation and Employment Union of Georgia. To learn more about the new members please refer to <http://www.workability-europe.org/Members%20pages/Description%20WE%20members.pdf> Given that WE network had no previous involvement with Georgia, Tim Papé, the Chair of the Enlargement Pillar, and I visited the country on a fact-finding mission in August where we had the opportunity to meet with Members of Parliament, Governmental officials, national NGO's and to visit a number of services. In this developing economy there are many obstacles to be overcome including access to programmes and services facilitating integration of people with disabilities and

it is DPREUG's opinion that membership of Workability Europe will assist them in developing quality services for their clients.

At the EGM held on 7 September 2006 the vacancy on the Board was filled by Mr C Hagens representing Cedris from the Netherlands.

WEB BV established

The Board approved the establishment of WEB BV as a new legal entity to negotiate and transact all commercial agreements with external companies to the benefit of all members of WE. The Supervisory Board appointed are: Tim Papé, Chairman, Shaw Trust, UK; Frank Flannery, Rehab Group, Ireland; Francois Kuentz, FEGAPEI, France, Hans Vrind, President of WE and Juan Antonio Gonzalez from Fundosa Group, Spain. WE appreciate the generosity of Samhall, Sweden in providing the services of Lars Lindblom as the Executive Director of WE BV. See the special feature on WEB BV in this bulletin.

Budapest Conference

On 10 and 11 October 2006 Workability Europe organised a successful Conference in Budapest, Hungary on the theme *Expanding employment opportunities for people with disabilities: Ensuring viable state subsidies for employers across the EU*. The Conference was co-hosted by VSZOSZ and Lux-Tex and was attended by other UK, French, German, Dutch and Swedish members of Workability Europe and a large national audience of more than 70 persons. The two-day programme offered an interesting mix of activities including business meetings, a press event, plenary sessions and high-profile exchanges with Hungarian state officials. You can read more about this event further in this e-bulletin.

Workability Europe Strategic Plan 2007-2010

Over the last months, the Secretariat have been busy summarising all of the key conclusions and recommendations emerging from our Annual Conference in Amsterdam in May and shaping them into a single Strategic Plan. This Draft Plan was discussed at the WE Board of Directors meeting in November. The secretariat will now incorporate the comments and additions made by the Board and the Plan will be circulated to all members who will have until 18 January 2007 to send their feedback and comments. The revised Plan will then be presented again to the Board at its February Meeting in 2007 and any final remarks made by the Board will be included. The final Strategic Plan 2007-2010 will be put forward for approval at the Workability Europe AGM which will take place in Cologne, Germany on Friday, 25 May 2007.

New services to members

With a view to increasing the package of services offered to our members as from November, we have started issuing a *Public Affairs e-bulletin* with relevant news from the areas of social affairs, employment, education and research and innovation at European level. We will also be sending you more extensive *European Reports* on interesting topics/issues from relevant areas. For further information about these publications please see the News from the Secretariat section in this e-bulletin.

Next Year's Annual Conference

Looking towards our Annual Conference in 2007 in Cologne, Germany we were delighted to learn from our host BAG: WfbM that confirmation has been received that Vladimir Spidla, European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities has become the patron of the Conference. The outline programme will be published in the next issue of our e-bulletin.

I take this opportunity to wish you and your families a peaceful and enjoyable Christmas and Best Wishes for the New Year. I look forward to meeting you with renewed energy in 2007.

Bertie Hunt
General Secretary

NEWS FROM THE SECRETARIAT

New services to members

- **Public Affairs e-bulletin**

In addition to this internal WE e-bulletin which we issue three times a year, WE has started sending you at the end of every month a Public Affairs e-bulletin with relevant news from the areas of social affairs, employment, education and research and innovation at European level. The edition will also include information on upcoming funding opportunities as well as a calendar of events that may be of interest to you. We are currently also able to offer the e-bulletin in German language and next year we will be exploring possibilities to issue it in other major European languages too if resources allow us.

- **European Reports**

Four times a year, we will be sending you more extensive European reports on interesting topics/issues from relevant areas. The first such report focusing on the so-called 'e-issues' relevant to the rehabilitation and social sectors has already been circulated out to you. We are able to offer these Reports in German language too. We welcome your feedback on this Report as well as ideas for topics that we could cover in next editions. All publications will be posted on our website in due course.

Workability Europe organises Specialised English Language Course for Rehabilitation Professionals!

In an era of increasing mobility and international cooperation, it is important that people from different national backgrounds are able to communicate properly. English is today the main language of communication not just in the Workability Europe network but also globally.

For this reason, Workability Europe has teamed up with its partners to organise a Specialised English Language Course for Rehabilitation Professionals during two weeks in the summer of 2007 in Malta. We have the pleasure to offer a comprehensive tailor-made programme combining study of general and specialised rehabilitation English as well as exciting social, cultural and learning activities. You will be pleased to know that specially discounted prices available exclusively to WE members have been negotiated.

Download:

- The Draft Programme of the Course including full details and prices at <http://www.workability-europe.org/News/Draft%20programme.pdf>
- A summary PowerPoint presentation giving you an overview of why we have chosen Malta as a destination for studying English and providing you with some highlights from the Programme at http://www.workability-europe.org/europe_news.html

For more information contact: Martin Ohrdski, on tel. +32 2 235 66 64 or by email at publicaffairs@workability-europe.org

Call for good practices in mainstreaming disability: REMINDER

The CEP-CMAF Disability Group – a partner structure of Workability Europe – is issuing a **Practical Guide on Mainstreaming Disability** and has approached Workability Europe with a request to contribute to this guide.

The Practical Guide will include guidelines, tips and examples of good practice on how social enterprises and other businesses can successfully integrate people with disabilities in their organisations and activities. The main idea is to show that, although for some groups of disabled people it is quite difficult or even impossible to achieve full integration, organisations can often help by using the mainstreaming approach.

In particular, information is requested on organisations/initiatives that promote the access to goods and services for people with disabilities and help to meet the needs of disabled customers. This can be done by:

- Ensuring that goods and services are fully accessible (including physical and non-physical aspects)
- Involving people with disabilities in the design, production and dissemination of goods and services
- Raising awareness and training staff to deal with people with disabilities

Apart from contributing to the work of a partner structure, **your contributions will be published in the Guide thus offering you the opportunity to give visibility and promote the work done by your organisations.** The Guide will be widely disseminated at European level.

In this respect, Workability Europe members who would like to share their relevant good practices are requested to send them to Martin Ohriski at publicaffairs@workability-europe.org There is no pre-determined format for the contributions. Please send your contributions **by the end of 2006.**

PAST EVENTS*

Workability Europe, organises major International Conference in Hungary

On 10 and 11 October 2006 Workability Europe organised a successful Conference in Budapest, Hungary on the theme *Expanding employment opportunities for people with disabilities: Ensuring viable state subsidies for employers across the EU*. The Conference was co-hosted by VSZOSZ and Lux-Tex and was attended by other UK, French, German, Dutch and Swedish members of Workability Europe and a large national audience of more than 70 persons. The two-day programme offered an interesting mix of activities including business meetings, a press event, plenary sessions and high-profile exchanges with Hungarian state officials.

Day I (10 October) opened with two meetings of the Enlargement and Communications & Networking Pillar Groups. These were followed by a press event and a reception at which Dr Judit Székely, Hungarian State Secretary of Social Affairs and Labour and Zoltan Balogh, President of VSZOSZ greeted the members of Workability Europe and exchanged views with them on a broad range of issues concerning employment of people with disabilities in different European countries.

The plenary sessions during **Day II (11 October)** successfully combined presentations on national employment models and practices, information about Workability Europe's ambitions and activities and inputs by policy-makers.

* Includes WE events outside the framework of specific Pillar Group Meetings.

The Hungarian presenters set the tone of the day by giving an overview of the current state of affairs of disabled people on the labour market in the country. This was followed by an engaging presentation by an expert from the International Labour Organisation (ILO) who gave the policy-makers' perspective on what constitutes successful work and employment programme development for disabled people. Next, three presenters from Workability Europe – Hans Vrind, President, Tim Papé, Chairman of Enlargement Pillar Group and Martin Ohridski, Public Affairs Officer –presented various aspects of the network's engagement at European level including lobbying activities, strategic profiling as well as services to the member organisations. Finally, representatives from Samhall, Sweden (Birgitta Böhlén, CEO) and BAG: WfbM, Germany (Thomas Umsonst, International Department) explained the policy of state subsidies in their respective countries.

The day concluded with a visit to the fascinating venue of the Hungarian Parliament where Dr Katalin Szili, the House Speaker of Parliament hosted a reception and dinner for the Conference participants.

Speaking after the Conference, Bertie Hunt, General Secretary of Workability Europe, stated "This was a highly successful event combining many elements in a relatively short space of time and special thanks must go to the organisers from VSZOSZ, and especially to Zoltan Bodnar from Lux-Tex, for pulling off such an ambitious programme. We were also delighted to formally welcome VSZOSZ as a full member of Workability Europe. I am certain VSZOSZ will make a valuable contribution to our work as we had the chance to witness that they are indeed an active and influential player on the national scene. We look forward to cooperating with VSZOSZ's Executives and members in the future."

NEWS FROM WEB BV

As you know the board of Workability Europe has decided to form a legal company, Workability Europe Business BV (WEB). The company is to handle the business and procurement agreements on behalf of WE. At the WEB Board meeting in September, the Chairman of the Board confirmed that Lars Lindblom (see an extract from his CV on next page) has accepted the position as Executive Director with full support from his employer - Samhall. Lars has been working in the B2B Pillar as Samhall's representative and is well-known by many of our members.

"I am delighted that Lars has agreed to be the WEB Executive Director", says Tim Papé, WEB Chairman, "Lars has considerable knowledge and experience of handling business contracts in Sweden and is just the right person to lead the business development of WEB. I know that, with me, you will all want to wish Lars every success and support him in any way you can. "I would also like to thank Fundosa Group, Spain, for its leadership of the B2B Pillar from which WEB was created. It is intended to keep a forum open chaired by Fundosa that allows members to feed in ideas and contacts that WEB can carefully consider and follow up where possible."

Lars produced a first draft of a business plan and budget for WEB at the Board meeting in November to be confirmed at the next meeting in London in the middle of December. About my priorities for WEB Lars says: "My intention is to build an "operational team" and to address certain questions/areas to a certain person/group of persons as "producer(s)". These persons will be "the operational WEB-team" and depending on what areas we are focusing on the team may, and will, change over time. I also would like to have a discussion with these persons about how the operational team should work to achieve cost reductions/profit for the members and a back commission for WEB for cost covering. I also want WEB to be seen as a positive, well respected company. I am planning to visit a number of members for a personal presentation and discussion of their expectations and my intentions for the forward plan.

As networking is an important part of the forward plan, I would like to see people positively involved in the work. WEB is not in a strong position to pay external consultants at the moment and my intention is to bring eventual consultants' involvement down to an absolute minimum and use "in-house" experts from the WE members instead. We need to focus on results. We now concentrate our efforts on the procurement areas hardware and software where we have achieved substantial agreements which already have proven to cut the costs for our members. The latest agreement is signed with Lenova (former IBM) and allows members of WE to have direct access to purchase business computers at significant savings. Lenova, Microsoft, HP, etc, have criteria that we have to fulfil, e. g. to obtain Academic Licence.

"I am very positive about our forward plan and I hope that I will contribute to substantial cost savings and business development for the WE members", says Lars who is working part-time in WEB and part-time in Samhall with all costs covered by Samhall for the time being. "The next area for our attention and work is Cars and Fuel (Gas) which has great potential for cost savings for the members". WEB will have an established web page, web address and office up and running shortly. The company is officially registered in Netherlands, Amsfoort and the visiting office is located in Ludvika, Sweden.

Lars Lindblom – Summary CV: Lars Lindblom is a Swedish national. He graduated as Bachelor of Social Work in 1978 and is also a graduate from the Swedish School of Market Economics in 1985. He joined Samhall in 1984-85 and has been working within the Business segment of the company since 1987. In Samhall, Lars Lindblom has held the positions of Workshop Manager, General Manager of Industry (Region & Samhall) between 1988-2000, GM Industry and Services between 2000-2002, and General Manager Production since 2002. He is the Samhall representative and Member of Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences and the Business Executives Council. Lars Lindblom is also External Board Member in Väsman Invest Ltd with sub-companies. Lars Lindblom is married and has two daughters.

NEWS FROM THE FOUR STRATEGIC PILLARS

Pillar I: Business to Business & Corporate Social Responsibility

Currently Pillar I is involved with two areas of work:

- **Central purchasing:** Pillar I is trying to develop new ways of raising funds for WE through the rebates included in the purchasing. In this respect, a preferential agreement has been signed between WE and LENOVO (formerly IBM). This contract will allow members of WE to have direct access to purchase business computers at significant savings. As in the case of HP, there will be a web page via which each organisation will manage their purchasing. With regard to Microsoft, three WE members (Samhall, Fundosa and USEL) are fully approved for Academic License and other WE members are in the process of obtaining this type of preferential Licence. Negotiations are ongoing with other companies as MacAfee and Symantec with the aim of obtaining preferential prices.
- **Business opportunities for WE members:** an opportunity for exclusive services has emerged with Techsoup. Since September 2006, Technosite (subsidiary of Fundosa Grupo) is involved in "the DONO project", a software distribution programme donated by Microsoft for NGOs, foundations and non-profit associations in Spain. In January there will be the global launch with Microsoft products and in early spring, Cisco and Symantec products will be joined. A project with ProtectIT started in January as a pilot phase with Gandon Enterprises and Shaw Trust. Another opportunity has emerged with Samhall due to they have an agreement with Shell and they are interested in expanding this at a European level in possible business activities as well as in CSR policies, with the aim of hiring people with disabilities.

For more information contact the Chair Mercedes Ramos: mramos.fundosa@fundaciononce.es

Pillar II: Enlargement

An Enlargement Pillar Meeting was held in Budapest on 9 October 2006. Pillar II was made most welcome by Zoltan Bodnar, Lux-Tex and other Hungarian members of Workability Europe. Once again WE was updated on the present situation in Hungary regarding the employment of disabled people. Workshop providers in the country are facing reductions in funding and consequently many workshops had to close.

WE discussed the Enlargement Pillar future strategy recognising both the achievement of an increase in WE membership within East Europe, but also the need to find members in Greece, Italy, Denmark and other East Europe countries. In many countries there are only one or two WE members. "Should WE have a strategy for broadening the membership base?" was one question asked.

Another important issue discussed was how new members, especially those from Eastern Europe, could become more actively involved in WE. There needs to be more cost effective ways of joining meetings, such as telephone conference arrangements. It was agreed that priority should be given to creating opportunities for greater involvement. Whilst it was agreed that WE should work in partnership with African potential members, a clear strategy was yet to be worked out. As the Communications and Networking Pillar Group was meeting in Budapest on the same day, there was the opportunity for members of each Pillar to join and participate in the meetings. This was seen as beneficial and could be developed more in the future.

No specific dates or locations were set up for the Pillar II meetings in 2007 but Tim Papé, the Chair, mentioned the possibility of having a meeting in the margins of a large Baltic Conference (including also Finland and Russia) to which he expects WE to be invited. Organising meetings in Bulgaria and Romania are other options. Tim Papé will keep everyone updated on plans for the next meetings.

For more information contact the Chair Tim Papé: sally.clark@shaw-trust.org.uk

Pillar III: Communications & Networking

As mentioned above, WE's Communications and Networking Pillar Group held a meeting in Budapest on 9 October 2006, hosted by Lux-Tex. The Group members had a thorough discussion on the Pillar's Strategy and Action Plan after 2006. Firstly, they reviewed the document Summary of Actions for 2006-07. Secondly, they analysed the conclusions and recommendations emerging from the WE Annual Conference 2006 and went through the relevant points for Pillar III. The main items discussed were: making the WE website more visually attractive and dynamic by investing in new design and technical features; dissemination and translation of the WE internal e-bulletin and promoting more use of the WE PowerPoint Presentation. It emerged from the meeting that, the four main points on which Pillar III should build its strategy post-2006 are:

- Maintaining effective internal and external communication
- Developing a strong brand identity and image
- Arriving at a common message and sound strategic positioning
- Engaging in proactive lobbying

Pillar III will hold its next meeting on: 23 January 2007 from 10.30h to 16.00h, hosted by FEGAPEI at 7/9 Rue La Boétie, Paris, France.

For more information contact the Chair François Kuentz fegapei.kuentz@wanadoo.fr

Pillar IV: Routes to Employment & Best Practice

The key areas of work over the last two months and for the forthcoming meetings are to agree and implement Pillar IV's new strategy. There are several key themes to this:

- Developing employment models in New EU Member States and Accession States through seminars and exchange of best practice
- Lobbying for favourable new State Aid regime and maximising funding streams for routes to employment
- Establishing business partnerships
- Engaging with key stakeholders
- Countering the threats of globalisation
- Investigating opportunities for diversification of service markets
- Optimising the relationships and transitions between sheltered, supported and mainstream employment models
- Stimulating progression and development of employees with disabilities
- Ensuring the full involvement of people with disabilities
- Investigating how "Self-Employment" options

The main challenge for Pillar IV is to leverage its experience in the old EU Member States into the New States. A two day meeting was organised in Bilbao on December 13 and 14 2006. Nigel Hopkins, Co-Chair of Pillar IV, said after the meeting, "I now feel that the new approach and development of Seminars on the different themes we identified will benefit all members. This is a major step forward for Pillar and Workability Europe. There is a lot of work still to do but this was a very good start."

In early 2007, Pillar IV will be rolling out its Draft Programme for future Seminars and will be seeking the active feedback from the members.

Pillar IV is planning a Seminar on Service Provision in Business and Public Procurement from 28 to 30 2007 in Helsinki, Finland, hosted by VATES, and of course open to all WE members.

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

NEWS FROM THE MEMBERS

Shaw Trust's receives high recognitions

Shaw Trust heads towards its 25th year with endorsements from: JobCentre Plus who have given the charity certification for its efforts to promote diversity; UK Newspaper The Guardian, which has named Shaw Trust one of Britain's Top Employers 2007; Olympic athlete Colin Jackson, who presented the prizes at Shaw Trust annual Achievement and Recognition (STAR) Awards in November.

News from: julian.burnell@shaw-trust.org.uk

News from Integracja

- The Friends of Integration Association opened two Integracja Centres in Zielona Góra (West Poland) and in Gdynia (North Poland) in November. Both centres provide vocational and employment support to the disabled people.
- Integracja started publishing supplement "Employment" to "Integracja" magazine.
- The Integracja website www.niepelnosprawni.info reached 200,000 users per month.
- In cooperation with over 100 cities from all over Poland Integracja started in mid-year an all-Polish campaign that aims at preventing able-bodied drivers from parking in disabled parking bays (a TV spot promoting the campaign has been awarded EFFIE 2006).
- On 1 December 2006 the annual Integracja Gala evening took place with 3,000 people invited to one of the biggest concert halls in Warsaw.

News from: [magdalena.sulek@integracja.org](mailto:magdalenasulek@integracja.org)

Marie Curie Association develops DVD "Mentoring for employability"

The international team of experts in the field of Vocational training and employment for people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups, developed a DVD "Mentoring for employability" aiming to be in favour of stakeholders, interested in the implementation of such types of programmes. The product is part of transnational project "Validation of Mentoring" funded by "Leonardo da Vinci" Programme of the European Commission. The DVD provides information about the following topics: Mentoring in the context of European policy on employment, training and disabled people; Database of current and previous mentoring programmes in Europe; Manual for good practice in the development of mentoring programmes. The DVD will be provided to the professionals from Europe, willing to use mentoring programs as an instrument for successful support of career development for disabled and disadvantaged people.

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

Remploy promotes Healthy Minds At Work project

Healthy Minds At Work is a Remploy led Wales based project supported by ESF which aims to combat discrimination in the workplace and to improve the job retention for people with mental health problems. A job retention pilot is in progress, a Centre of Excellence for Mental Health has been established along with new training and support for individual beneficiaries, groups and for employer partner organisations. Remploy's transnational work with Sweden, Slovakia and Netherlands is focused on four work streams: Policy & Standards, Empowerment/Self-Management, Cross structural cooperation and Prevention.

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

ONCE I+D Awards: a useful value

The IV International ONCE Award of I+D in New Technologies has gone to a project from the company Robotiker-Tecnalia. This edition has shown significant news, focusing on technological researches to improve blind people's daily life. The value of the prize is 240.000€ and the winner of the project has been the creation of a "display reader" (generally used in DVD, washing machines,

sound system, fridges, etc). The aim of this display reader is to make the information accessible to the people with visual disabilities, so they can manage easier with the big amount of electronic devices we use everyday. In a couple of years, if this project turns to a tangible reality, people who suffer from visual impairments could have full access to these displays. These awards pursue to improve the life quality of the blind people and also the global accessibility to the new technologies.

News from: mrmos.fundosa@fundaciononce.es

News from INSOS, Switzerland

• INSOS pays visit to Samhall, Sweden

During the summer, 45 Directors of INSOS (30 Swiss German and 15 Swiss French), representing the rehabilitation, educational and sheltered workshop fields, were invited to visit Samhall's Headquarters in Stockholm. They were welcomed by Leif Alm, Deputy Director of Samhall, who organised a really good programme. The Directors spent half a day learning about the Swedish system for disabled persons and were introduced to the infrastructure of Samhall. They were particularly interested by disability policy in Sweden which states that everything touching the sphere of disability and disabled persons must be comprised in all politics and in the public life - the principle of mainstreaming. A visit was also organised to several sheltered workshops in town. At one place, the INSOS representatives witnessed, 70 miles south of Stockholm, a modern workshop focusing its activities on the fabrication of electronic equipments. This interesting and valuable study trip ended up by a cruise to Tallinn.

• INSOS explores opportunities of Joint Purchasing

Negatively affected by a drastic cut of government subsidies, INSOS is very interested in implementing WE's B2B business in Switzerland. In the country, there are more than 800 centres which could benefit from financial advantages buying hardware and Microsoft licences. Due to the large number of associations, the advantages of joint purchasing are obvious. That is the reason why the newly-appointed Director of WEB, Lars Lindblom, WE's European General Secretary, Bertie Hunt, and Leo Kooyman, were recently invited by INSOS to share information on Workability Europe's initiatives in this area.

A one-day meeting took place in Geneva in November, where Yvo Lötscher, the new Chief Executive of INSOS, Fabio Gossweiler, former Committee Member and Marc Chabanel, INSOS representative for international matters, had the chance to learn more about the conducting of purchasing affairs. After a thorough briefing, the management of INSOS have decided to go ahead and try to run this business in Switzerland. They firmly hope to benefit from the Dutch experience and are optimistic to generate some funds to widen their international activities and perhaps partly compensate for the reduction in public grants.

News from: m.chabanel@bluewin.ch

Award to Hlutverk (The Icelandic Union of Special Employment and Training) on 3 December 2006

On December 3, the International day of People with Disabilities, The National Federation for the Aid to People with Learning Disabilities awarded persons and institutions for breaking barriers in the year 2006 and for changing attitudes and creating grounds for new or improved rights for People with Disabilities. Awarded were:

- A young woman Freyja Haraldsdóttir who despite hers severe disability has lectured in schools around Iceland. The heading for her lecture is "The privilege to live with disability".
- Hlutverk – The Icelandic Union of Special Employment and Training and The Icelandic Conferderation of Labour - received awards for the first agreement signed in Iceland that secures the salaries, rights and status of People with Disabilities in special Employment organisations. This agreement was signed at the Annual meeting of Hlutverk last May. The awards were presented by Magnús Stefánsson the Minister of Social Affaires in Iceland.

News from Kristjan.Valdimarsson@smfr.is

News from BAG:WfbM

- **Vladimir Spidla will be patron of the European Conference in Cologne 2007**

The former Prime Minister of the Czech Republic and current Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities Vladimir Spidla has taken over the patronage for the European Conference in Cologne 2007. The Conference contributes outstandingly to the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All. It promotes participation rights to all citizens whatever their disabilities. The Commission has allowed BAG:WfbM to use its logo with the additional phrase: "Under the patronage of Vladimir Spidla, Member of the European Commission."

- **Hungary is the guest of honour at our workshop fair**

Next year's workshop fair will take place from 22 to 25 February 2007 in Nuremberg. Hungary will be BAG:WfbM's guest of honour. 13 Hungarian workshops will present themselves and their products at a shared stand. BAG:WfbM's partner organisation VSZOSZ will explain the Hungarian way of participation in work life. Furthermore, planned are Hungarian music and some other cultural highlights. Should you require further information about the fair or if you have any suggestions or remarks, questions please do not hesitate to contact either c.zyzik@bagwfbm.de or t.umsonst@bagwfbm.de or the fair directly at cerstin.probst@nuernbergmesse.de. BAG:WfbM is looking forward to welcoming you at the fair next year in Nuremberg.

Business proposals from DPREG (Disabled People's Rehabilitation and Employment Union of Georgia)

Workability Europe's new member in Georgia DPREG has immediately been active in putting forward some business offers to the members of the network. DPREG would like to inform that it searching for business partners to:

- Export Georgian wine and mineral water
- Export wood framing details for constructional, reconstruction and trimming works and for furniture produced by a Georgian company

DPREG are also looking to acquire at best possible terms medical equipment for examination of people with disabilities. The specification given is: "portable ultrasonographic apparatus with colour Doppler and three (3) Transducers (Liner, Convex and Trans Vaginal Transducers). The devices with such indexes are 'Sonsite 180+', 'Sonosite Titan' and 'GE Logiq Back'." Form more information, please contact Sergo Grdzlishvili, Director, DPREG at sergo.ge@gmail.com

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2006-2007*

Date	Event	Location	Contact person
13-14 December 2006	Pillar IV: Routes to Employment & Best Practice meeting	Bilbao, Spain	Leif Alm leif.alm@samhall.se Nigel Hopkins Nigel.Hopkins@remploy.co.uk
23 January 2007	Pillar III: Communications & Networking meeting	Paris, France	François Kuentz fegapei.kuentz@wanadoo.fr
28 February 2007 (AM)	WEB BV Board Meeting	Paris, France	Bertie Hunt secretary@workability-europe.org
28 February 2007 (PM)	WE Board Meeting	Paris, France	Bertie Hunt secretary@workability-europe.org
February / March 2007	Pillar I: Business to Business & CSR	Date and location to be confirmed	Mercedes Ramos mramos.fundosa@fundaciononce.es
February / March 2007	Pillar II: Enlargement meeting	Date and location to be confirmed	Tim Papé sally.clark@shaw-trust.org.uk
28-30 March 2007	Pillar IV: Routes to Employment & Best Practice meeting Seminar on the theme "Service provision as business"	Helsinki, Finland	Leif Alm leif.alm@samhall.se
22 May 2007 (AM)	WEB BV Board Meeting	Cologne, Germany	Bertie Hunt secretary@workability-europe.org
22 May 2007 (PM)	WE Board Meeting	Cologne, Germany	Bertie Hunt secretary@workability-europe.org
23-25 May 2007	WE Annual Conference	Cologne, Germany	Thomas Umsonst t.umsonst@bagwfbm.de
25 May 2007	WE Annual General Meeting (AGM)	Cologne, Germany	Bertie Hunt secretary@workability-europe.org
10 September 2007	WE Board Meeting	Stockholm, Sweden	Bertie Hunt secretary@workability-europe.org
11-14 September 2007	WI Annual Conference	Stockholm, Sweden	Alain Rialland workability.international@wanadoo.fr

*List of events as known at the moment. Other events may be added and will be advised. Always confirm dates and location with the Pillar 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 Ohrdski (Public Affairs Officer). We welcome your questions, comments and contributions.

Address: Workability Europe, Rue de Spa 15, B-1000, Brussels, Belgium; Tel: +32 2 235 66 64; Fax: +32 2 736 8622

Website: www.workability-europe.org **E-mails:** publicaffairs@workability-europe.org and secretary@workability-europe.org