
November 2009

Policy news



Historic ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by the European Community

On 26 November, the EU Council of Ministers approved a decision for the EU to accede to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This is the first time a regional organisation has acceded to a UN human rights convention. The Convention will provide a clear framework for improving protection and realising the rights of people with disabilities in the EU. Today's decision is an important step forward for EU human rights policy and a sign of the importance the EU assigns to the rights of people with disabilities.

The Convention was signed by the EU in March 2007 and is the first UN human

rights convention that allows the possibility for regional organisations to accede. The Council decision means that the EU will present its formal accession instrument as soon as agreement has been reached in the EU on the institutional arrangements. EASPD warmly welcomes this development. The EU now has an opportunity to take the lead with regard to the implementation of the UN Convention. We hope that this will lead to an empowered High Level Group with all stakeholders on Board.



Lisbon Treaty ratified

The Lisbon Treaty has finally been fully ratified, eight years after European leaders launched a process to make the EU "more democratic, more transparent and more efficient".

Under EU rules, the treaty had to be ratified by all 27 member states before coming into force. The last country to ratify the treaty was the Czech Republic, which completed the process on 3 November

2009. The treaty is expected to officially become law in December.

Under the Lisbon treaty, several new measures will be established, for example:

- National parliaments will have greater involvement in the EU
- The European Parliament (directly elected by EU citizens) will gain new powers in the decision-making process
- The 'Citizens' Initiative', will allow one million citizens from across Europe to call on the Commission to put forward new proposals
- The role of NGOs will be acknowledged through the principle of participatory democracy

- European rights and values of freedom, solidarity and security will be further promoted through the introduction of the Charter of Fundamental Rights into European primary law

Regarding disability, the Lisbon treaty inserts a new clause on discrimination which states that:

"In defining and implementing its policies and activities, the Union shall aim to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation" (Article 5b, Treaty of Lisbon)



New social care TV channel launches

A new online social care TV service was launched at the end of October by the Social Care Institute for Excellence with a brief "to stimulate debate about the big issues in the sector "

Social Care TV programmes aim to bring real world examples to social care staff, managers, commissioners and trainers. Already up on the site are 25 videos covering topics such as dementia, personalisation and safeguarding vulnerable children, with more in the pipeline.

SCIE chief executive Julie Jones said the social care workforce were in for a "treat".

"Along with the accompanying care and support information on the web pages, the films are thought-provoking, interesting and full of strong messages about delivering good quality, personalised social care," she said.

Find more info on:

<http://www.scie.org.uk/socialcaredv/default.asp>

EASPD news



A school for all: EASPD launches Dublin Manifesto on Inclusive Education

On the occasion of the conference “Salamanca - 15 years on Inclusion – A school for all” that took place on 12-13 November 2009 in Dublin, EASPD adopted its manifesto on Inclusive Education, stating that all children and adults have an equal right to high quality and appropriate education in an inclusive environment. This right requires a reorganisation of the education system and cannot be realised in the mainstream schools as they are today.

Franz Wolfmayr, President of EASPD, declared *“we demand the development of a policy and legal framework to promote inclusive education, emphasising the importance of a strong cross-sectoral, multidisciplinary cooperation. This should be done in co-operation with all key stakeholders. Furthermore, a positive approach towards inclusive education needs urgently to be developed at European level, as part of the EC and CoE strategies”*.

The 300 representatives attending the event were actively engaged in debates on the key question of the conference ‘How can we include all children in mainstream schools, without losing the expertise available in special schools?’, and chose

overwhelmingly to support EASPD’s manifesto.

Promotion of positive attitudes towards education at all levels

The manifesto clearly stresses the importance of a person-centred approach for each child/student, and highlights the necessity of setting up and further developing stronger support networks. Equal emphasis is placed by the manifesto on the promotion of positive attitudes towards inclusion at all levels of education, and the need to provide support for staff, management, parents and students on specific programmes.

In his closing words, the chair of EASPD’s Standing Committee on Education, Phil Madden, summarised: *“Inclusive education is a fundamental component of a global commitment to achieving quality education for all. As a consequence, the education system reflects the society we want to live in. Inclusive education can only flourish in an inclusive society. An inclusive society needs inclusive education.”*

The full manifesto will be available on www.easpd.eu by 3rd December 2009.



Mapping exercise on the use of Person Centred Technology for people with disabilities

Let us know how and to what extent your organisation uses ICT and Assistive Technology and contribute to a Europe-wide research on PCT for people with disabilities by completing the following online questionnaire:

<http://easpd.hft.org.uk>

The survey is available in English, French, Dutch, Finnish and Portuguese, and will only take approximately 20 minutes to complete. The results of the surveys will be used as part of a research that has the aim of understanding the current situation in Europe in terms of where and how person centered technology is used. The results will be used to feed into political debates and to promote the use of

technology to improve people's quality of life.

Please also note the following:

- The survey does not have to be completed all at once. If you start the survey and then return to it later it will remember your answers. However once the survey is completed through to the last page you cannot get back into it to change your answers.
- Participants should not change language while they are completing the survey as this will cause problems.

Please don't hesitate to contact Miriana Giraldi in case of questions, at miriana.giraldi@easpd.eu



EASPD Secretary Luk Zelderloo elected new Board member of GPDD (Global Partnership for Disability and Development)

Luk Zelderloo, Secretary General of EASPD, was elected new Board member of GPDD during their last Annual meeting that took place in Turin (Italy) on 14-16 October 2009.

The Global Partnership for Disability and Development (GPDD) is a dynamic new initiative to accelerate inclusion of people with disabilities and their families into development policies and practices.

The GPDD was formed to increase collaboration among development agencies and organizations to reduce the extreme poverty and exclusion of the substantial number of children, women and men with disabilities living in poor countries.

For more information on GPDD, please visit: <http://www.gpdd-online.org/>

EASPD's Policy Impact Group will hold its annual seminar in the afternoon of 4 December 2009 at Liaison Office Bruxelles-Europe, Avenue d'Auderghem, 63, 1040 Brussels.

This year's event will focus on the topic of quality of social services, and it will analyse what role can be expected for the EU to play after the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty. The objective of the meeting will be to offer an opportunity for reflection and exchange on the meaning of quality of social services for all parties concerned and to share ideas on the role of European legislation in upholding quality of services.

Ms Mineke Hardeman, Chair of the EASPD Policy Impact Group, will chair the seminar that will feature a range of speakers from different countries and backgrounds. After a welcome from EASPD's President, Mr Franz Wolfmayr, Mr Conny Reuter, Secretary General of SOLIDAR and President of the Social Platform, will give an introduction focusing on EU legislation on quality of services in Europe. His intervention will be followed

by presentations from Mr Jos Theunis, from Flemish Agency for People with Disabilities and Mr Klaus Candussi, Atempo, who will illustrate the point of view of service users. Ms Eveline Gommers will present the perspective of service providers and will also introduce a quality assurance system, while Ms Annie Gunner Logan will discuss the point of view of staff, and outline the connection between service cost and service quality: The proceedings will also include ample time for debate and discussions.

Interested participants should register via e-mail to Patricia Murray at easpd@easpd.eu, by 30 November 2009.



semaine du handicap
week van de handicap
30/11/2009 - 04/12/2009

0800 18 811
egalitedeschances@brucity.be - gelijkemansen@brucity.be
www.bruxelles.be - www.brussel.be

Une relative du Conseil consultatif de la Personne handicapée de la Ville de Bruxelles
een relatieve van de Adviesraad voor Personen met een Handicap van de Stad Brussel
Kluisje: E-mail de 'Egalité des Chances, Niveau 11, 4700
Scrijven van Gelijkemansen - Escritorio de Inmigrantes, Nivel 11 - 1050 Brussel, België

The UN Convention on the Rights of persons with Disabilities promotes, protects and ensures the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities and promotes respect for their inherent dignity. People with disabilities are persons with rights, and they should be capable of claiming these and making decisions for their lives. Full and effective participation and inclusion in society is recognized in the Convention. We are committed to the values of self-determination, empowerment, active inclusion, equal opportunities, lifelong learning and freedom of choice. The UN Convention and all these values should be real also for persons with high support needs. The conference speakers from across Europe and beyond will explore ways to promote these principle values and to make UN Convention real in the lives of persons with high support needs.

In the conference we are approaching this through three main themes:

- Communication and interaction
- Active support
- Citizenship and inclusion

The goals of the conference are:

- to find out ways to promote the core values of UN Convention
- implementation of UN Convention for persons with high support needs
- to discuss, share and learn from each other about best practices
- establishing a network
- Declaration and Action Plan

Who should attend?

- Professionals, service providers
- People with disabilities and their families
- Researcher, educators
- Politicians

Organizers: EASPD, NVC, Service Foundation for Persons with Intellectual Disability, FAIDD, Finnish Network on Intellectual Disability

Conference venue: Scandic Continental, Helsinki, Finland

Hotel: information will be available on www.easpd.eu in due time

Registration: information will be available on www.easpd.eu in due time

EASPD activities: Saturday 5th June 2010

Conference languages: English-French-Finnish

Project news



Accreditation and Certification of basic vocational education for disadvantaged people via NQF

The aim of the project "NQF Inclusive" is to work towards achieving the official accreditation and certification of basic vocational training, within the system of the National Qualification Framework (NQF) of every partner country.

The NQF project will offer non-formal training programmes the possibility of being integrated into officially accredited systems of education. Presently many EU member states are developing their NQFs, but most are mainly concerned with the transfer of accredited educational programmes (school degrees, VET, university level etc). As a result, non-formal training and the target groups of people with learning difficulties and other forms of disabilities, as well as those from sectors of society where educational achievement is low are not always taken into account.

For these disadvantaged groups the ability to provide potential employers with readily

available accredited proof of competencies is essential. The integration of these training programmes into official national qualification systems would therefore be an important step towards normalisation and equalisation of opportunities, and would allow participants in such training programmes to graduate from accredited courses, and to receive official certification of their skills.

This 2 year EU project will try to establish this. The project is coordinated by Chance B has partnerships in Belgium, Slovenia, Malta and Sweden.

The kick-off meeting took place 9 and 10 November in Maribor, Slovenia.

A project website will be developed soon. For further information please contact Marion Bock marion.bock@chanceb.at or Sonia Staskowiak sonia.staskowiak@easpd.eu