

NOVEMBER 2011

EASPD celebrates its 15th anniversary at the European Parliament with more than 200 supporters and friends

To celebrate its 15th anniversary, the European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities invited all its members and friends on the 9th November 2011 to the European Parliament.

The event was hosted by Dieter Koch, MEP, with the support of other leading MEPs and with special guests such as Commissioner László Andor, Yannis Vardakastanis (President of the European Disability Forum), Brigitte Grouwels (Member of the Government of the Brussels Region, and in charge of disability issues), Johan ten Geuzendam (Head of Unit for the Rights of People with Disabilities, European Commission) and Thorsten Afflerbach (Head of Integration of People with Disabilities Division, Council of Europe). Video messages from Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council, and Viviane Reding, Vice-President of the European Commission opened the ceremony.

Since 1996, EASPD has brought together 10.000 service providers from all over Europe and beyond: 15 years of decisive achievements and flourishing activities.

Luk Zelderloo, EASPD Secretary General and one of the

founding fathers, stated during the event: *"Together with representatives of persons with disabilities and inspired by the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, we hope to contribute to the development of a more accessible, social and caring Europe which respects and empowers people in need. Our major challenge is to bring the support as much as possible to the people instead of bringing people to the support. Therefore we will build new relations with mainstream services. These stakeholders such as schools, employers, municipalities, etc. will become our new indirect clients, in addition to persons with disabilities. We will use our experience and skills to help them support people in an appropriate way to build inclusive communities and empowering services."*

During these years, EASPD has endeavoured to represent and fight for the needs of the sector at all levels, to inform its members about European and international policy developments as well as to support them to innovate their services for the benefit of persons with disabilities. However, technology developments, demographic change, new needs and wishes of persons experiencing disability have already a strong impact on our daily work and they will increa-

singly challenge our structures and methods. Franz Wolfmayr, President of EASPD firmly declared: *"Today, on the basis of our experience and commitment, it is the responsibility of the service providers to be at the forefront of innovation in order to shape the future rather than to passively suffer the consequences of major societal changes. Join us in building services of tomorrow for the people of today. We want to use this celebration as a lever for a better quality of life in a Europe valuing diversity!"*

For further information, have a look at: www.easpd.eu

In this issue

- EASPD CELEBRATES ITS 15TH ANNIVERSARY AT THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT
- EASPD'S BOCKETT ON "TOMORROW'S SUPPORT FOR TODAY'S PEOPLE: MOVING TOWARDS A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON SERVICE DELIVERY" IS OUT NOW
- THE PROJECT ABI IS COMING TO ITS END



EU-Commissioner Laszlo Andor at EASPDs 15th anniversary

EASPDs booklet on “Tomorrow’s support for Today’s People: Moving Towards a new Perspective on Service Delivery” is out now

What are the main challenges for the services of tomorrow? How to be inclusive and innovative at the same time? What is the role of technology in improving the lives of persons with disabilities? The 2011 booklet of the EASPD analyses the future of services by bringing together key actors, policy-makers and users on their idea of the future of services to people with disabilities.

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The project ABI is coming to its end

The Partnership of the ABI EU countries: Center Zarja (Slovenia) - lead partner, Center Korak (Slovenia), Center Naprej (Slovenia), Occupational activity and disability in the training and education centre Nova Gorica (Slovenia), Arceau-Anjou (France), BBRZ Linz (Austria), RSZFK (Hungary) and EASPD (Belgium). The Europe Ministry of labour, family and social affairs of Slovenia joined the project as associated partner in order to contribute to the improvement of the project impact on their target groups and to ensure the project sustainability.

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The ABI project aimed at persons with ABI, developed building better lives for and successfully tested a people with ABI and those basic training programme. affected by it by improving The ABI training programme the quality of care and will provide staff working or support given to them. During seeking to work with persons the two years of the ABI with ABI the specific skills, project the Partnership has, knowledge, attitudes and in response to the specific responsibilities necessary to needs and issues faced by offer the highest standard of staff in their every day work care and support possible. and in collaboration with

For further information regarding the project and its activities visit the project website at: www.abi-project.eu.



Conference announcements

23-26 May 2012

European conference on **"ME AND ME - Mental Health and Intellectual Disabilities: Dual Diagnosis?"** in Ljubljana, Slovenia

The conference will be organised in close cooperation with the Slovenian umbrella organisation SOUS and two of its member organisations Zveva Soncek and CUDV Draga.
Venue: Austria Trend Hotel, Ljubljana, Slovenia

12-15 September 2012

Final conference of the European project Pathways to Inclusion **"Inclusive education and learning: challenges and opportunities"** in Budepest, Hungary
Venue: Hotel Ramada Resort

More information can be found on the EASPD website in due time.

