



# 10 BEST PRACTICES

IN EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT FOR  
PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

SELECTED  
FOR THE 2013  
EASPD  
EMPLOYMENT  
FOR ALL  
AWARD



With support from the European  
Union Progress Programme.



IMPROVING SERVICES  
IMPROVING LIVES

European Association of Service  
providers for Persons with Disabilities





This award is organised by the European Association of Service providers for Persons with Disabilities in cooperation with the Ministry of Family and Social Policy of Turkey and in in close co-operation with ISKUR, the RACE consortium and Dolunay Association. With the support of the Council of Europe and the European Commission.

AWARD CEREMONY: 27th September 2013 during the Istanbul conference on: Employment of persons with disabilities. Raising awareness & employment opportunities.

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“As member of the jury it was a pleasure for me to read so many good practices. For EASPD, it is important to know such examples and to learn from them for policy evaluation and concrete projects. It was good to see, that many enterprises take their responsibility to employ staff with disabilities and create the needed supportive environment.”

**Franz Wolfmayr**, EASPD president

# Foreword

I am delighted to introduce this booklet which celebrates the initiatives that were recognised this year. This is the third occasion that the European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD) has organised an international conference on employment of people with disabilities but it is the first time the EASPD has presented its Employment For All Award for showing how employment and career opportunities of disabled people can be supported, on an equal basis with others.



This award is not just about celebration, it is also about inspiration.

We face difficult times. The sustainability of our social systems was already increasingly challenged by an ageing population. And on top of this came the financial crisis which soon turned into a social crisis in many countries, with rising unemployment and growing risk of poverty, social exclusion and discrimination. Besides an improvement in the overall economic situation, we also need to look at how our social systems can be better equipped to face today's and tomorrow's challenges. In line with the Commission's February 2013 Social Investment Package, Member States need to modernise their social systems to address more efficiently and effectively the needs of society and people with disadvantaged background. It requires investment in human capital via innovative social policy instruments. The best practices presented in this booklet can be an inspiration in this regard.

The projects presented in this booklet provide a wealth of ideas for making workplaces better places to work, not only for disabled and older people, but for all of us.

I warmly congratulate all the organisations featured in this booklet and I encourage all of you within and beyond Europe's borders to learn from and share your achievements.

**László Andor**, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

# Executive summary

The overarching objective of **the EASPD EMPLOYMENT FOR ALL AWARD** is to promote the implementation of Article 27 of the UN CRPD. This article recognizes and stresses the right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others. This includes the right to gain a living by work, freely chosen or accepted in a labour market that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities.

**The basic selection criteria for this award.** We received a long list of eligible best practices, that will soon be made available on the EASPD website at [www.EASPD.eu](http://www.EASPD.eu). From this list we chose 10 Best Practices for this publication based on criteria which includes the following:

- ★ Is it an active best practice, bringing evidence that it has improved or supported conditions for integrated work -and career- opportunities.
- ★ Are there positive prospects for future activity?
- ★ Is it part of the organisation's operations or is the practice otherwise mainstreamed?
- ★ Does it receive structural funding or benefits from authorities or employers?
- ★ Does its activity promote and support the improvement of employment and career opportunities including the promotion of an environment that is empowering and promoting autonomy?
- ★ Is the method, tool or procedure transferable to other countries and regions? What can we learn from the model?

## Raising Standards ?

The nominated 'best practices', the winner and the organisations having delivered them will receive considerable yet well-deserved media attention. This will allow to create even more positive media attention for both the best practices and the subject matter as a whole.

This is not only the case for the nominations selected in this brochure but for the whole 21 organizations being selected for the long-list. The high quality of the applications is testimony to the hard work that many organizations are doing out there to improve conditions regarding the integration of persons with disability into the open labour market

Giving attention to the best practices of today raises the standards for all. We certainly hope that we all can learn from the best practices presented in this document.





# Introduction

**Why and how did we proceed for this Award.** EASPD's tagline "Improving services, improving lives" was our 'leitmotiv', as was promoting cooperation to achieve some of Europe's and the United Nation's goals.

One of the aims of the EASPD - Employment for all - Award is to promote the implementation of Article 27 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD). This article recognizes the right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others, including the right to gain a living by work, freely chosen or accepted in a labour market that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities.

On the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> September 2013, EASPD and its partners are co-organizing the conference on "**Employment of persons with disabilities. Raising awareness & employment opportunities**" to promote the realisation of employment

and career opportunities for all within the framework of UN CRPD Article 27. This publication and the award will support all stakeholders in doing so.

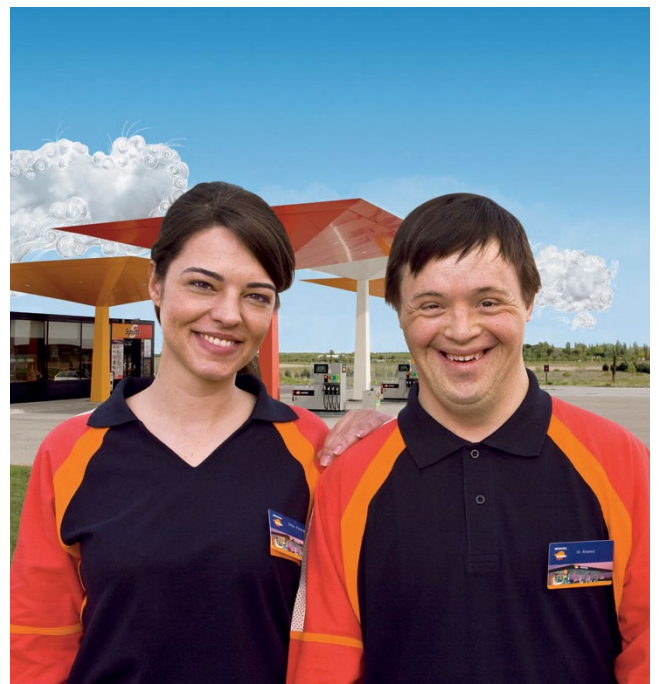
The best practices provided us with ideas, examples and arguments for the 'Employment for all' conference, as well as for the EASPD Standing Committee on Employment for years to come. They will be discussed in many fora and result in the dissemination of the best practices for the support of people with disabilities. We also hope that they will be of use for the people with disabilities as well as for the organisations supporting them.

We wish to thank all participants, jury-members and people who have contributed to this awarding process and this brochure and hope that you will find some inspiration too. Above all, the best practices presented will inspire us "improving services, improving lives" of people with a disability.

## On best practices

What makes a practice a best practice? A best practice should be a method or technique that has consistently shown results superior to those achieved with other means. But even a "best" practice can evolve to become better (as improvements are discovered).

Considered by some as a buzzword used to describe the process of developing and following a standard way of doing things that multiple organisations can use, best practices are used to maintain quality as an alternative to mandatory legislated standards and can be based on self-assessment or benchmarking. And that is what precisely the EASPD – Employment for all-Award is all about. Sometimes a "best practice" is not applicable or can be inappropriate for the needs of a particular organisation. A key strategic talent required when applying best practice to organisations is the ability to balance the unique situation and qualities of an organisation with the practices that it has in common with others.



## Categories in “Best Practices”

- ★ **Research Validated Best Practice:** program, activity or strategy that has the highest degree of proven effectiveness supported by objective and comprehensive research and evaluation.
- ★ **Field Tested Best Practice:** A program, activity or strategy that has been shown to work effectively and produce successful outcomes and is supported to some degree by subjective and objective data sources.
- ★ **Promising Practice:** A program, activity or strategy that has worked within one organisation and shows promise during its early stages for becoming a best practice with a long-term sustainable impact. A promising practice must have some objective basis for claiming effectiveness and must have the potential for replication among other organisations.



None of these categories have been excluded. We added extra focus, asking for best practices to have proven their merits in improving support conditions for integrating work and career opportunities for persons with disabilities. We particularly emphasised on practices that were active, integrated and on-going, promoting autonomy or an empowering environment, quality in work and better career perspectives.

## From good practices to “Best Practices”

Organising this award was a challenge, but not only because it was EASPD’s first award on employment. It was also a challenge considering the evolution so many of our organisations have already been through in the last thirty years. Looking back it looks like the arrival of the sixties generation in the support sector did **‘put the wheels in motion’** for a seemingly endless and drastic (r)evolution in our ways of working. We have all been adapting to effects of several paradigm shifts. Accordingly governments changed their regulations to which we also had to adapt to. Our first practices were those that ‘seemed to work out’. Later on, organisations found more good practices in projects and other organisations and copied them, adapting them slightly to the needs of their own organisation, the people they work with and the situations they were in.

Most of us incorporated in our networks, systems and procedures ‘good practices’ resulting from successful European Social Fund or other transnational projects. We learned from

the insights found by Supported Employment ‘disciples’ and followers of other Employment Support-methods.

Today, generally speaking, the formula of a “best practice” can only said to be successful and effective in that particular organisation. As a result it has become more challenging to learn from others best practices. Copying is no longer advised. We need to analyse a best practice carefully whilst also taking care of the existing situation and the many elements such as the stakeholders involved, government regulations, economic situation and relevant dynamics. As such, it is important to choose what we like from a particular best practice and decide on how to best implement it within another organisation. All of this is what keeps our jobs challenging. Learning from other “best practices” is and will continue to remain an interesting exercise.

Rudi Wouters.



**“It is not only in the Olympic games that participating is a good practice.**

It was nice to meet everyone involved in this ‘temporary virtual circle for excellence’. Thanks for allowing me to work on this award.”

**Rudi Wouters**, EASPD- Award development. Senior staff member at Job-Link

# In the framework of the European Union: a European Disability Strategy

For many people with disabilities, service providers are key enablers of their rights. EASPD therefore plays a key part in the implementation of the European Disability Strategy

## European Disability Strategy

Similarly to most if not all social policies, the competence on the field of disability is officially placed at national level. Nevertheless, the role of the EU is of increasing importance as it allows coordinating national policies under a common framework towards a joint goal.



Following this logic, the European Union adopted the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 (EDS) in 2012, to complement national efforts with a European-wide framework. The EDS' main aim is to allow persons with disabilities to have the right to participate fully and equally in society and economy. The strategy reflects the same values as mentioned in the Convention.

## EASPD Position on EDS

Generally speaking, EASPD welcomed the strategy which facilitates the full implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). We believe that it provides for a wide framework which is both clear and binding for all involved, consequently leading to further impetus for progress across all European institutions and member states.

However, we believe that service providers for persons with disabilities –as experts on the matter- should be more involved in the implementation of the European Disability Strategy.

In our service perspective on the EDS dating back to July 2012, following extensive consultation with our members, EASPD provided the European institutions with 4 key issues upon which we believe service providers could bring an added-value to the implementation of the strategy:

- ★ **Innovation**, by contributing our expertise on delivering individualised community-based services
- ★ **Research**, by proposing methodologies for the monitoring of the strategy's implementation process
- ★ **Internal implementation** of the EDS in the European Commission bodies, by offering our know-how to enhance the inclusiveness of the European bodies
- ★ **External implementation** of the EDS, by helping to monitor how the EDS is being implemented throughout the EU.



" Since the 25 or more years that Supported Employment was introduced its effect was a positive change in the life of many persons with disabilities.

Supported Employment has contributed in the realization of jobs on the open labour market for those individuals who were previous not seen as eligible for paid work. Through Supported Employment, persons with disabilities get integrated and have become active participants in society."

**Michael Kamp**, chair of the Global Applied Disability Research and Information Network on Employment and Training (GLADNET). Secretary-general of the World Association for Supported Employment (WASE)



# The Jury selection

★ The selection of the best practices happened in 3 steps. The first Jury selected , based on eligibility & basic criteria, 21 practices.

BE	Passwerk where autism S.D. becomes an ability instead of a disability	Passwerk
SGP	Enabling the disabled with a virtual organization	Genashtim, Singapore
MA	A success story	Empower cooperative Ltd.
SV	Work practice abroad for persons with special needs	Activa foundation
LUX	ADEM contact center	Ministère du travail&l'emploi
BE	Support @work (traffic victims)	Vzw Rondpunt
AT	SPAGAT for a life with autonomy	Inst. Sozialdienst Vorarlberg
IT	SIIL Servizio Integrato Inserimento Lavorativo	Fare Comunita Societa.Coop.
BE	WOC	Zonnestraal vzw
BE	Duoday building bridges between employers & PWD in Flandres	GTB
USA	Youth transition program	Oregon youth trans. program
UK	ABLE Autism Building links to employment	Orchardville society
USA	SEARCH	Cincinnati children hospital MC
RO	Step to step to independent living	Found."Pentru Voi" Timisoara
FR	Occupational Integration by social support for mentally handicapped	ADAPEI 33 Bordeaux
ES	Professional Integr.of PW Different abilities in Repsol Service Stations	REPSOL SA
RO	ALPHA TRANSILVANA	Fundatia Alpha Transsilvana
BE	Life-course model: a way to work with people with a disability	De PLOEG
AT	SPAR-CARITAS Apprenticeship Markets	Caritas Linz
FR	Cap Vae Project (Paris area)	Centre de la Gabrielle
NL	Pameijer works	Pameijer

★ In a second selection, we chose "10 of the best practices of today in their context" for this brochure.

★ In a third step the Grand Jury selected 3 Nominees and the winner.

★ These 3 nominees will be invited to present their best practice in the 2013 Istanbul "Employment for all" conference;

★ **ifs SPAGAT** For a life in Autonomy – work in open labour market.

Institut für Sozialdienste Vorarlberg gemGmbH (ifs) Austria

★ **Integration of people with disability** (people with different abilities). Training Program for People with different abilities to help their professional integration at Repsol Petrol stations.

REPSOL Spain.

★ **Passwerk**. Where an autism spectrum disorder becomes an ability instead of a disability. Passwerk cvba met so Belgium

*And both the winner of the 2013 EASPD Employment for All award and the winner of the audience award are...*



*... to be disclosed during the Istanbul conference.*

# EASPD - Employment for All Award - The Grand Jury



**Mr Bruce Roch FR**  
Adecco-group France,  
CSR MANAGER,  
AFMD President  
(French Association of  
Diversity Managers).



**Mr Alexander  
Preobrazhenskiy RU**  
Council of Europe,  
Programme Officer,  
Directorate General of  
Democracy.



**Ms. Kamile Canbay TR**  
CRM Consulting,  
Project coordinator,  
International Project  
Management Dept.



**Mr Chiel Kamp MCC NL**  
World Association for  
Supported Employment,  
Secretary General ,  
Chair of Global Applied  
Disability Research and  
information Network on  
Employment and Training  
(GLADNET).



**Mr Franz Wolfmayr AT**  
EASPD, President,  
Member of the management  
team of Chance B group



**Dr Fabrizio Fea IT**  
EASPD, Vice President  
Medical Director  
Associazione Scuola Viva.



**Mr Luk Zelderloo BE**  
EASPD,  
Secretary General

# The trophy for the winner of the EASPD Employment for All Award



This Trophy represents the walls that need to be pushed down in order to get a job when you have a disability. It was designed and made by adolescents with an intellectual disability in a workshop led by their instructor Olivier Faivre. The trophy was offered by the Centre de la Gabrielle, MFPASS France.



"The best practices which participated in the "Employment for all" Award competition are indeed great initiatives to make equal opportunities on the labour market a reality. They prove that diversity is a value and that even the most ambitious goals can be achieved with mutual support and respect for human dignity."

**Alexander PREOBRAZHENSKIY**

Social Cohesion and Diversity Department  
Directorate of Human Rights and Antidiscrimination  
Directorate General of Democracy

**Council of Europe**

*On the following pages, you will find 10 of the top "Best Practices" we received. Each of them is presented on only one page. Of course this may leave you with lots of questions. But be assured that the participating organisations have agreed to deliver more information on demand. So please do not hesitate to contact them.*





## 1 ifs SPAGAT (NOMINATED)

### For an autonomous life – work in the open labour market

**Institut für Sozialdienste Vorarlberg gemGmbH (ifs) AUSTRIA**

Hebenstreit Thomas, Leader of the Division ifs-Spatag.

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Institut für Sozialdienste is a large multi-disciplinary, politically independent, non-denominational organisation supporting people with social problems or questions in the Austrian province of Vorarlberg. One department of the Organization is "ifs Assistenz".

ifs Assistenz's work is based on the strengths and abilities of our clients. The objective is to strengthen people with disabilities in their personal responsibility and autonomy, as well as to allow and promote self-determination and independent living (work, housing, leisure time, further education ...) for all involved

The main objective is to bring people with high support needs into meaningful, freely chosen and paid employment in the open labour market. We promote participation and exchange between all stakeholders involved in the integration process: employers, mentors, clients, family, friends, teachers ...

SPAGAT connects and launches processes concerning integration into living and leisure-time in order for people with disabilities to be able to lead a life in their own communities as part of society. ifs SPAGAT is a model for the integration of persons with disabilities into the employment world. It provides support and help to find work in the open labour market.

Thanks to the SPAGAT model of 'integrated employment', school-leavers and other persons with disabilities in Vorarlberg, Austria, who are considered unemployable according to current legislation and, thus, entitled to services for the disabled, are now free to choose between employment in a sheltered workshop or supported employment in a company in the general labour market.

The central elements of the process of employment-integration are: person-centred planning, support groups, the 'creation' of customised jobs, and the use of mentors in every company.

The optimal legal and financial conditions established by the province of Vorarlberg are additional criteria for success. The companies remunerate the actual work rendered by the persons they employ based on the collective wage agreement; the difference – in productivity- is subsidised by the provincial government, as are the mentors' costs.

The target-groups are persons with severe intellectual disabilities and in significant need for support and people with Autism-Spectrum-Disorder who want to work in the open labour market.



The integrated employment concept led to a systemic and structural shift in the transition process and career development of the persons with disabilities for whom only a sheltered workshop would have been available as an alternative.

SPAGAT is a trend-setter in the implementation of the UN CRPD and provides greater inclusion at lower costs than comparable placement in sheltered workshops – even without taking indirect profitability and cost-savings into account.

More and more special school-leavers with increased educational needs successfully choose this model. In the last few years, it has led to a structural shift in the relationship between workshop employees and persons professionally integrated into the open labour market.

SPAGAT can be seen as a tendency to rise – in Vorarlberg. Indeed, the number of persons who are working in integrated employment and not in sheltered workshops is increasing.

SPAGAT staff is often invited to important congresses to present this model and many study visit groups come to learn from the SPAGAT model.

## 2 Project SEARCH

### Education & training for young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities through an innovative workforce and career development model

**Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center** UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
 Ms. Erin Riehle, Project SEARCH Founder and Director / Senior Clinical Director  
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 +1 513-636-8729 ★ [erin.riehle@cchmc.org](mailto:erin.riehle@cchmc.org) ★ <http://projectsearch.us>



Project SEARCH provides education and training to young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities through an innovative workforce and career development model that benefits the individual, the workplace and the community.

**Project SEARCH consists of a** large, international network of High School Transition program sites and a Cincinnati-based program of research, continuous improvement, and replication and dissemination of the Project SEARCH model of high school transition. These include managing licensing agreements, providing technical assistance for program site implementation, managing the international database & communications, grant writing and management, and performing program site fidelity audits.

The program provides real-life work experience combined with training in employability and independent living skills to help youths with disabilities make successful transitions from school to a productive adult life. The Project SEARCH model involves an extensive period of training and career exploration, innovative adaptations, long-term job coaching, and continuous feedback from teachers, job coaches, and employers. As a result, following the completion of the training program, students with significant intellectual disabilities are employed in non-traditional, complex and rewarding jobs.

The Project SEARCH High School Transition Program is a unique, business-led, one-year, school-to-work program that takes place entirely at the workplace. Total workplace immersion facilitates a seamless combination of classroom instruction, career exploration, and relevant job-skills training through strategically designed internships.

The most important criterion for acceptance into Project SEARCH is a desire to achieve competitive employment. Students attend the program for a full school year in the host business. The business provides access to an on-site classroom that can accommodate up to 12 students. The site is staffed by a special education teacher and one to three job coaches to meet the educational and training needs of the students.

The first few weeks of the program are focused on orientation to the workplace, hands-on skill assessment, and familiarisation within the business environment. Students also develop a career plan which guides the internship selection process and individualised job search.

Students work on employability and functional skills for approximately one hour a day. These classroom activities are designed around these focus areas: Team Building, Getting Around your Workplace, Workplace Safety,

Technology, Social Skills, Communication, Presentation Skills, Interviewing Skills, Money Management, Health and Wellness, Job Search Skills and Keeping a Job.

The remainder of the day is spent on targeted internships through which the students acquire competitive, marketable and transferable skills to enable them to apply for a relevant position. Students also build communication, teamwork and problem-solving skills, which is important to their overall development as young workers.

During the last few months of the program the emphasis is on refining skills, achieving the career goal, and carrying out individualised job placement. The Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor becomes part of the team as the job search process begins. Job development and placement is based on the student's experiences, strengths, and skills.

True collaboration among partner agencies leads to seamless transition services and sustainability. It requires willingness among partner organisations to share resources and adapt policies and procedures. As such, Project SEARCH can lead to long-term structural change.



### 3 ADEM – Agence pour le développement de l'emploi

#### New nation-wide contact center for job-seekers and employers Creation of a central Contact Center for the Luxembourg Public Employment Service

**Ministère du Travail et de l'Emploi.**

**AGENCE POUR LE DEVELOPPEMENT DE L'EMPLOI LUXEMBURG**

Madame Ginette Jones, Assistante sociale

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ADEM's contact center acts as a Single Point of Contact for job-seekers and employers. It aims to provide callers with an immediate answer to their questions and allow ADEM counselors to have uninterrupted face-to-face meetings with their clients. The contact center is staffed exclusively by employees with either a disability or an otherwise reduced work capacity.

The main aim was to guarantee fast and efficient guidance on the phone by solving a maximum of issues at the level of the contact center, allowing the counselors to concentrate on their job without being continuously interrupted by phone calls. Another aim is to provide a positive image of the agency, providing callers with a courteous and professional service during all office hours.

On the other hand, this service will provide women and men with special needs or who have lost their jobs because of a disability, with an opportunity to regain employment. Considering the large number of people with special needs it is important to find or create opportunities of employment which are in line with their abilities.

All trainees come from different and diverse professional background, in general with low educational profiles. Due to an accident or illness, they could no longer continue in their old career or former employment, despite the fact that all wanted to continue to work. As the work in a contact center is potentially quite stressful, we did expect a relatively high rate of employees abandoning the job. However, this expectation has not materialised as nearly all of the staff that has successfully completed the training are still active in the contact center.

An ADEM-internal monitoring group assured the coaching and personal assessment throughout the training process.

All calls addressed to the ADEM contact center are handled by the customer support agents. The training the agent has received and the tools provided to him or her allows quick access to the job seekers file, as well as to different employer data. The objective is that a majority of calls are resolved at contact center level. In case the agent requires additional information, he or she will contact a person from a specific service to gain additional input for resolving the issue at hand. In the event that this additional step does not provide a suitable response to the caller, the agent is empowered with two options. He or she will transfer the call to a person more competent in the specific field or the customer service representative will address the issues to the proper competence center by electronic mail. A field agent will then take contact with the job seeker in order to solve the issue.





## 4 ABLE – Autism: Building Links to Employment

A customized employment service for people with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder to prepare for and gain employment in the open labour market.

**Orchardville Society** NORTHERN IRELAND, UK

Lydia Lynas Manager, Head of Employment and Skills Service

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The Orchardville Society is a voluntary organisation and registered charity that support young people and adults with Learning Disability and/or Autistic Spectrum Disorder to prepare for and gain employment in the open labour market in Belfast. The organisation offers a specialist employment service enabling about 300 people aged 16 – 65 to participate in a range of employability programmes designed to enhance and develop vocational skills. 250 work placements are negotiated and over 150 employers recruit, resulting in 15% of participants securing employment in the open labour market. We also adhere to the core principles of the Supported Employment

The upward trend in Northern Ireland for diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) indicates that 1:86 people in the population are on the spectrum which translates into over 20,000 people. This increase resulted in the development of a new service that would meet the needs of people with ASD using Supported Employment.

The best practice has been in developing an employment service that has enabled greater levels of economic participation within the two target groups namely; young people in special or mainstream education preparing to transition from school to employment and adults with ASD from a range of academic backgrounds. The project results have been exceeding its targets. Over 70 people have taken part in a customised employment programme tailored to meet their specific support needs within the work place. Work has been undertaken with employers to educate them about the skills and talents people with ASD often exhibit. The participants have clearly demonstrated the invaluable contribution people with ASD can make within the workplace and in doing so have dispelled many myths and changed attitudes regarding ASD.

The project has a number of key targets involving recruitment, assessment, profiling, job sampling and employment which have been either met or exceeded each year. The overarching aim of the project has been to enable people with ASD to develop relevant employment skills leading to sustainable employment. The project adapted existing assessment tools in order to better understand how ASD impacts on a person's life and to ascertain the unique skills and talents people with ASD may exhibit. Of particular relevance has been capturing the



impact sensory processing issues may have on an individual and adjusting the working environment accordingly.

In addition to working with people with High Functioning ASD, this project enables individuals with severe learning disabilities and/or challenging behaviour to access employment opportunities by offering a network of trained support workers that coach one-on-one within the workplace. This approach has been complimented by the development of an ASD training resource used by employers at all levels within organisations to encourage support strategies. 350 employees in over 80 organisations have taken part in the training which has enabled over 100 work placement and employment opportunities to be secured.

This project has proved that supported employment is a model that can be used effectively with people with ASD, particularly those with more complex needs and challenging behaviour.

## 5 Passwerk (NOMINATED)

### Where an autism spectrum disorder becomes an ability instead of a disability

**Passwerk cvba met so** BELGIUM

Mr. Dirk Rombaut, Sales Manager

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The aim is to coach people with an autism spectrum disorder on their way to suitable full-time employment, based on their qualities and abilities, and to actually employ them within the disciplines in which they excel.

The starting point is that every individual is entitled to be part of the regular economic market, in consideration of the individual's skills and strengths.

Passwerk combines business with a social dimension by adapting to the profile of its employees and not the other way round.

The employees, the results and the development of its employees are at the very heart of Passwerk. It uses the qualities of people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in activities such as software testing and other quality assurance assignments. Through professional management and 5 job coaches, the restrictions of the 40 employees with ASD are overcome.

Passwerk is eager for its employees to feel good, to do well and to better themselves. Every individual comes with strengths and limitations. Passwerk uses its organisation and approach to enable people to create optimum added value within the economic market, based on their own distinct identity. Passwerk sets out from the belief that, for its employees, nothing should be viewed as a matter-of-fact, neither in terms of the concrete job content or the everyday duties involved, nor in terms of interactions and processes.



Albert II, Belgium's King visiting Passwerk

Which is why the organisation develops adapted plans for each employee whenever necessary to enable its employees to operate to the best of their abilities.

Passwerk endeavours to provide its employees with the kind of support that enables them to engage in first-rate and professionally valuable activities within their field of practice. Their intellectual abilities are called upon in an inquisitive style in order to allow them to stop and reflect themselves on potential solutions in response to concrete situations and problems.

This translates into genuine involvement of all those participating, including Passwerk's friends and family members interested in what goes on in the organisation.

It is clear that employees who feel good perform better at work. This is achieved by providing Passwerk employees with: a personalised training, work environment and social setting; activities that are in keeping with their talents and interests; personalized support and coaching; an organisation that adapts to suit their needs and requirements; clear and transparent information about the business strategy.

Passwerk's employees are trained to be professionals in their field of discipline.

**Aims & objectives:** Better balance between economic and social interests. Full participation of people with ASD into society and economic activities. Innovative transferable model to other regions or other groups with specific "abilities". Mainstream the idea that diversity creates added value for the business. Cooperation with other parties and tailor-made approach as added value instead of cost.

See also: <http://www.passwerk.be/en/model>

## 6 Youth Transition Program

### Prepares youth with disabilities for community employment

**Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation** UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Mr. Keith Ozols, Title: YTP Statewide Coordinator, Vocational Rehabilitation

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YTP is a transition program for youth with disabilities implemented collaboratively by Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation, Oregon Department of Education, University of Oregon, and local school districts statewide in Oregon, USA. The purpose is to prepare youth for **competitive employment** or **career related post-secondary education or training**. Since 1990, over 23,000 youth have participated in the program.

The Youth Transition Program (YTP) offers a new pattern of services to students with disabilities beginning when they are still in high school and continuing into the early transition years. YTP is currently operating in Oregon, USA supporting over 1,300 youth with disabilities in 120 high schools. Since 1990, over 23,000 youth with disabilities have received YTP services.

The YTP model is flexible, and can be adapted to meet the needs of different localities. Over the last 23 years, YTP has been developed and implemented in over 200 high schools in Oregon, including both rural and suburban communities.

YTP has two distinct yet interconnected goals. The first goal is to improve post-school transition outcomes for youth with disabilities by preparing them for competitive community employment (Defined as paid jobs - minimum wage or higher - in integrated settings) or career related post-secondary education or training. The second goal is to increase capacity and create systems change in schools and other agencies serving students with disabilities in transition from school to work. The state level management team provides ongoing training and technical assistance to local education and rehabilitation professionals to develop the procedures, collaboration and evaluation systems needed to support effective transition services

In each participating school district, YTP services are provided jointly by a Transition Specialist and a local Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. Students participating in the YTP receive (a) individualized planning, focused on post-school goals and self-determination and help to coordinate school plans with relevant community agencies,



(b) instruction in academic, vocational, independent living, and personal social skills and help to stay in and complete high school, (c) career development services including goal setting, career exploration, job search skills, and self-advocacy, (d) competitive employment including connections with local employers, on the job assessments, placement, and training, (e) support services such as individualized mentoring and support or referrals for additional specific interventions, and (f) follow-up support for one year after leaving the program to assist in maintaining positive outcomes in employment or post-secondary settings.

Recent outcome data shows that 80% of YTP participants are engaged in employment or post-secondary training upon completion of the program. These positive outcomes are maintained at 6 month and 12 month follow-up time points.



## 7 SPAR-CARITAS VET-Market

### Apprenticeship-Training-Centre for the food market sector

**Caritas for people with disabilities** UPPER AUSTRIA

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The CARITAS principle “we support integration” describes our mission for our work with people with disabilities. The key tasks of the Caritas for People with Disabilities are to support and assist children, young adults and adults with disabilities in their integration process towards becoming active members of society, as well as to relieve their families.

Caritas supports the inclusion of people with disabilities (PWD) into the open labour market with real jobs. Therefore Caritas runs two Spar-Caritas VET (vocational education and training) Markets. The project is only partially subsidized and relies on an appropriate turn-over each year. The programme promotes cooperation between Profit and Not-for-Profit Partners based on the added value that successful cooperation brings for both sides.

SPAR is a renowned food retailing company. The cooperation between Spar as a profit organization and Caritas as a non-profit organization promotes employment for PWD on the food retailing market. Furthermore it is an excellent example for the successful integration of PWD into the open labour market.

The VET (vocational education and training) takes place in a real working environment and depends on individual abilities. The VET is implemented as a formal training or a full apprenticeship. The education enables participants to develop personal and occupational perspectives and to get to better understand operational work and working attitudes. The food retailing industry is the perfect vocational field because of the vast range of activities and the increased demand on qualified employees.

Our focus group is defined as persons with at least one of the following attributes:

- ★ special educational needs (SEN)
- ★ attendance at school for special education
- ★ increased child benefit
- ★ reduced learning capacity of at least 30%
- ★ emotional or social disability.



We also want to raise awareness on the successful integration of people with disabilities. Integration into society is primarily reached by integration into the labour market. Within the Spar-Caritas VET market PWD are in contact with customers every day and are supporting the preservation of the local supply in the villages St. Florian and Alberndorf. The qualification process takes place in real work environment inside the two spar markets, offering the usual goods at the usual prices. This gives the most realistic learning environment possible whilst still providing support and guidance needed for the young people with disabilities.

At the end of the qualification, the young learners, Spar and Caritas try to find the best future working place within the grocery chain Spar or externally. We give support in the beginning of the new job and during the first period of employment if needed. In figures, 29 PWD have successfully passed an apprenticeship or a part-qualification between 2007 and 2013 and found a job in the open labour market.

## 8 “Pameijer Works”

### Pameier Works “Everyone in paid employment”

**Pameijer** NETHERLANDS

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Pameijer supports 4,000 clients with a mental disability or with psychosocial problems. Pameijer’s goal is for everyone with a disability to have a properly-paid place within a company. Pameijer supports companies to enable them to include people with a disability, in regular jobs, with a proper salary. We work with companies like Sodexo, Crawford and Intratuin.

The objective is to place 900 Pameijer clients in education and employment positions at salaries consistent with their employment value. We wish to achieve this by 2015.

Pameijer Works comprises three strategies:

#### Client focus:

- ★ Assessing the client’s competences and talents
- ★ Matching clients with employment positions in companies
- ★ Quick (within 3 months) and long-term matching (at least 6 months, with the aim of developing this into an average of 3 years). We focus on three types of work within a company: protected employment, sheltered employment and supported employment.
- ★ Supervision of the client

#### Company focus

We approach companies with two account managers. There are currently 250 companies who have shown interest. The company’s demand is the determining factor. The companies are prepared with information, a workshop and training for staff and management. With a company scan, we gain insight into what tasks can be performed by people with a disability.

To support companies, we have our “Company Assistance Package”. This includes:

- ★ Communication advice to participating companies concerning Social Employment policy
- ★ Advice to companies on HR policy for people with a disability
- ★ Face-to-face & e-coaching of the company and support for the administration process
- ★ 24/7 support

#### Talent development at Pameijer

Talent development at Pameijer comprises many training modules for clients that contribute to talent development, that focus on participation and have maximum independence as their aim.

The supervision and development of the client is via an integrated e-platform which includes e-learning, e-portfolio, social media and serious gaming.

At the workplace, clients receive training in cooperation with regular education. Colleague support is developed at the workplace. There is a remote job coach available via e-coaching.

Our clients go to work at a company either on their own or in groups. This depends on the employment capabilities of the client and the nature of the activities. They are taken on as regular employees of the company and are treated just like any other employee. An individual training programme is produced together with the company and training institution (if required). This is under development. The focus is on developing and strengthening our clients’ self-management. Measurement tools are used for the competencies and development.

Employees at the companies are provided with basic support for the clients. There are agreements on salary and reimbursements. These agreements are set down in a contract with the company.



## 9 Integration of people with disability (people with different abilities) (NOMINATED)

Training program for people with different abilities to help their professional integration at Repsol petrol stations

### Repsol SPAIN

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Repsol seeks to ensure the welfare of people and build a better future through the development of smart energies. Repsol's team is the engine that drives the company. Business: Oil, LPG, New Energies.

HUMAN CAPITAL: 23,132 people. Disabled people: 2010: 496 / 2011: 527 / 2012: 547

REVENUE: as of 31 December 2012 €59,696 million in 48 countries

Diversity and work-life balance are priority programs. Recruitment plan for disabled people takes place in Spain, Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, Portugal and Venezuela.

Repsol encourages employment of persons with disabilities at petrol stations by means of specific training adapted to their needs and current market requirements. This includes:

Improving professional qualifications and providing all participants in the training action with the knowledge, skills and social abilities to ensure optimal performance in their jobs as petrol station sales agents.

Boosting practical training within the company by means of a period of non-employment work experience following the theory-practical training, in order to:

- ★ Consolidate the knowledge and skills acquired during the training period, giving the participants an experience as near as possible to that of the real job.
- ★ Complete learning and develop skills they will need to tackle real work situations.
- ★ Obtain data to find out whether participants are adapting well to the requirements of the job and the organization, and their real employment possibilities.

Stages of the Professional Recruitment Project in Repsol petrol stations:

**Planning and design:** Identification of the need for qualified staff at all levels, analysis of the post, definition of the professional profile and detection of training needs.

**Awareness-raising day:** Aimed at petrol station managers, in order to explain the project by Repsol and the entities, focusing on the organization's social policy, the advantage of having people who have been trained prior to starting in the post, and the social and economic benefits of hiring persons with disabilities. In this session petrol stations interested in hosting work experience students following the course, with a view to hiring them, are also identified.

**Selection of participants in the training action:** The collaborating entities preselect candidates from their database, according to the profile established and the location of the participating petrol stations. The final selection is made by Repsol staff.

**Theory-practical training:** The training course involves 90 hours of theory and practice. Suitable participants obtain the following diplomas of accreditation: Repsol Diploma/ Food handling certificate / Fire extinguishing certificate / Diploma in the Prevention of Workplace and Environmental Risks at service stations / Diploma's from collaborating entities. Before finishing the course, a meeting is held to allocate service stations for the non-employment work experience, attended by the collaborating entities, petrol station managers and course trainers. The allocation is carried out following analysis of how the participants have progressed during the course, their place of residence, access to a vehicle, etc., and the petrol stations available for carrying out the job experience.

**Integration day to help people with different abilities settle into work teams, and course closure:** Aimed at managers of petrol stations in order to help people on work experience integrate into the team at the petrol station. Following the session, the person to be hosted at each petrol station is introduced to the station manager, and the course is brought to a close.

**Non-employment work experience during 42 hours.** Takes place under agreements signed by the collaborating entities and the host companies. Contracts of variable duration will be awarded depending on the participants' performance throughout the training and the needs of each work centre.



## 10 Supported employment service for adults with intellectual disability

### Step-by-step towards independent living

**Foundation “Pentru Voi” ROMANIA**

Ms. Laila Onu Executive Director

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The Pentru Voi Fundatia is an NGO committed to increasing the quality of life for adults with intellectual disabilities. The organization is involved in both direct service and advocacy. Founded in 1996, Pentru Voi is a sustainable NGO built on community support, government collaboration, international partnerships and interdisciplinary practice. The social enterprise Pentru Voi creates opportunities for clients to build human and social capital and to sustain the NGO with financial capital.

Supported employment is a well-known service developed for persons with disabilities aiming to facilitate their access on the labour market. This practice was introduced for the first time in Romania by “Pentru Voi” in 1999.

This service, delivered by the team of job seekers and job-coaches consists of:

- ★ vocational profile of the person with disability;
- ★ preparing for future employment;
- ★ job seeking: in the local newspapers, specific websites, direct contact with potential employers, local agency for labour force;
- ★ Job analysis;
- ★ matching the job with the service-user: it is important to discuss all relevant aspects of a job with the service users and matching these aspects with the service user’s personal capabilities (such as work schedule, transport, space orienteering, team work skills, etc) in order for the search to be person-centred.
- ★ job-coach: after signing the work contract, according to individual needs, there may be a period of adjustment when the job coach offers daily support for a defined period of time; after this period (1-2 weeks) there is a permanent follow-up regarding the job placement, which takes place through monthly visits at the work place, maintaining the contact with the service-user, family and employer, as well as individual/group counselling



We are delivering supported employment services to some 60 adults with intellectual disabilities, which are either employed or looking for job opportunities on the labour market.

Some 40 adults with intellectual disabilities will benefit of daily counselling and job coaching at their workplace through the “Pentru Voi” social enterprise. We deliver job-coaching and professional counselling to 20 adults with disability at their workplace on the free labour market

We find employment for an average of 10 new people every year.

Over 20 people benefit from the monthly support groups we organise.

Over 10 people receive social skills training.

We also organise a training-course each year, aiming at developing skills in different work areas.

# Summary of Recommendations deriving from the best practices

## Support the supporters

- ★ *'Demand for recognition of (the value of) support services by governments'*
- ★ *'Need for subsidies from local authorities Recognize Supported Employment'*
- ★ *'Valorisation of competences and skills coming from the ground, using the approach of "vertical subsidiarity", the nearer you are to the problem the better you can find a solution.'*
- ★ *'Funding for Employment Support services.'*

## Even more laws?

- ★ *'Employment of people with a disability should be encouraged by law.'*
- ★ *'Empowerment and inclusion as described in the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities must be embedded in the corporate culture of public authorities.'*
- ★ *'Create a specific label giving access to specific support and business opportunities with EU/EC.'*

## Educated from birth to retirement?

- ★ *'Education policy should include extended eligibility for school-related services beyond completion of academic credits to allow for effective transition to work and adult life..'*
- ★ *'Career transition planning should start in schools.'*
- ★ *'Stimulate community work experience while still in high school..'*

## CONNECT US! Working circumstances & efficiency

- ★ *'Regulations should encourage interagency coordination, establish interagency agreements or collaborative planning mechanisms.'*
- ★ *'Contacts with each other (politics, employers, service providers, users associations,...) allows understanding and searching for solutions becomes easier...'*
- ★ *'Accessibility of the specialized support services to more than PWD alone. Focus (less with more qualitative). Consolidate existing initiatives and share good practices. Organise and structure answers to complex needs using the resources without dispersions and overlapping and, consequently, attracting and combining resources of different nature..'*
- ★ *'Activate an incremental operative approach able to adapt to work in Progress objectives and contents of actions, adapting them to both the variability and dynamism of the context.'*

- ★ *'Promote exchange between profit and social profit and promote open knowledge sharing.'*
- ★ *'Organize proactive scouting activities in order to discover valuable initiatives, don't limit efforts to "calls".'*
- ★ *'Create centers of excellence/expertise via existing platforms (e.g. ASD, visual impairment, hearing impairment, poverty, youngsters etc..).'*

## Lost in transition?

- ★ *'Legal certainty with regard to benefits. (for PWD) and insurability..'*
- ★ *'Clear guidelines regarding fees that clients can and should receive..'*
- ★ *'Provide reasonable accommodation such as an adequate break room for anticipated rest periods..'*

## The policy police?

- ★ *'More attention should be paid to the possibilities of natural support systems and professionals must be encouraged to contact them.'*
- ★ *'People cannot be judged as unqualified or unable to step in to the labour market. They need opportunities for trying jobs the informal way, working with natural support.'*
- ★ *'Provide a coach : shifting from an inactivity-period through a learning phase towards a new professional experience brings up well-known phenomena (health crisis, fallback,...) which can be dealt with and solved successfully'*
- ★ *'Foresee to hire a larger number of employees, to cover for increased absences.'*
- ★ *'Adjust and adapt support system for all including persons with disabilities.'*
- ★ *'..focus more on opportunities, than on rights.'*
- ★ *'..move away from deficit model to a for-profit model'*

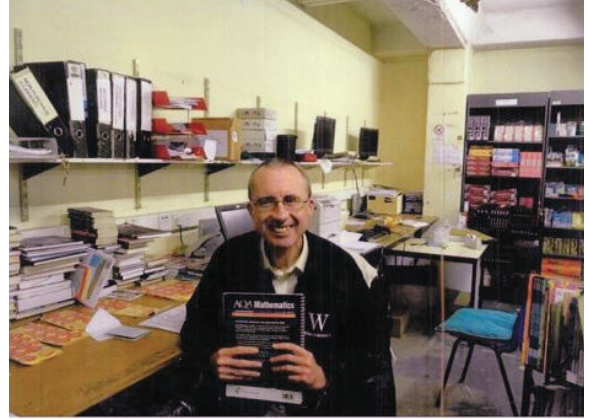
## To compensate or not to ...?

- ★ *'Every person with disability needs to be assessed at a job and if the disability poses a difficulty in reaching occupational targets, government should compensate the employer for this. This would ensure a level playing field and equal opportunities for all..'*
- ★ *'Focus on abilities...instead of stressing disabilities..'*

# Conclusions

We received a considerable number of 'best practices' from organisations in Asia, USA and Europe. Not bad for an award that will be issued for the very first time. EASPD is extremely proud that all of these organisations and involved people have invested so much time and energy in participating in this contest.

Particularly pleasing is the quality of the proposals received. Of course huge differences remain between the size of the organisations that provided the models, in the systems and environment they operate in. Certain imposed limitations (timeframe, budget, ...) have only allowed us to present 10 of the best « best practices » of today, best practices within their own specific context. Those best practices not selected as part of the short list were also of high quality and the selection process was particularly difficult for all those involved. The practices will soon be made available on the EASPD website.



The policy recommendations deriving from the practices and the organisations that developed them will advise the conference in Istanbul and will be used in several other fora, including the EASPD Standing Committee on Employment.

**A Sequel?** More 'employment for all' awards? This competition was set up as a one-off, but the success and interest shown has made us think twice. "So would it be a good idea to organise this award again?"

**What do you think?** Should this initiative be repeated? How can it be improved? Your opinion is welcome at [rudi.wouters@easpd.eu](mailto:rudi.wouters@easpd.eu)



"When the idea of an EASPD award was launched, we thought that it was an ambitious project. Yet we also felt the need to give a strong message on the concrete meaning of the postulate Employment for all.

As always, there is a winner in any competition, but let me underline that all are winners of this award. We wish to thank everybody for the work carried out, for the research done and for the efforts put in the implementation of the UN CRPD 2006. We will not forget any of those who submitted their presentation in this contest.

This is the first Employment award offered by EASPD. More will come, showing that we, as an organisation of service providers for persons with disabilities, take our mission seriously.

We support our members- and others- to improve the quality of the services provided aiming at a decent life of those we are willing to serve."

**Dr Fabrizio Fea**

Medical Director Associazione Scuola Viva, Rome

Vice President of EASPD, Chair of the Standing Committee on Employment

## Acknowledgment

Our esteem goes to all persons and organisations having taken the time, having invested the energy to complete the template and to submit "their best practice". It did not only take up their precious time, it also took a certain amount of courage to submit a practice you have been developing so intensely for some time and to submit it to a group of unknown people who might approve but also disapprove what has been done. Rest assured; reading all of your best practices was inspiring. There was quite some healthy competition but here too, in the field of Employment for all, we are in a way « building a peaceful and better world in the Olympic spirit which requires mutual understanding with a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair-play. » And we thank you for that.

We also wish to thank the (co-)organisers and the members of the Grand jury who had to do such a hard job during the holiday months! We also thank Mr Andor for the encouraging words in his foreword.

EASPD thanks Sabrina Ferraina, Sonia Staskowiak, Luk Zelderloo and Rudi Wouters for contributing - sometimes beyond the line of duty - to the realisation of this award and brochure. This work would not have been done without the support of Progress.

EASPD is certainly happy with the positive feed-back we have already received and with the nice trophy we received from the Centre de la Gabrielle, MFPASS France.



"..Employment for all, reasonable accommodation, modification of procedures and working methods ... actually it is a somewhat strange debate. The debate should be about valorizing skills, knowledge and knowhow; it should be about enterprises benefiting from committed staff. The models of best practice presented in this booklet prove that businesses can benefit from a more diverse and inclusive workforce. They prove that when the focus is on what people can bring instead of on disabilities, entrepreneurs find the right answers."

**Luk Zelderloo**, EASPD Secretary general

ALSO AVAILABLE in English, French & German on [WWW.EASPD.EU](http://WWW.EASPD.EU)

The European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD) represents over 10.000 social service-providers. EASPD's main objective, based on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006), is to promote equal opportunities for people with disabilities through effective and high-quality service systems. Improving the lives and employment opportunities of persons with disabilities are part of our objectives.



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