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european platform for rehabilitation



EUROPEAN PLATFORM FOR REHABILITATION
ANNUAL REPORT 2013

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EPR, the network of leading providers of services to people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups

The European Platform for Rehabilitation assists its members to achieve continuous professional improvement, best practice and sustainable growth in every aspect of services. Through its Public Affairs activities, EPR also enable service providers to contribute to the formulation of European social policies and legislations, as well as facilitating access to European Union (EU) funding.



Content

A word from the President

I.	Learning Together	p. 4
II.	Professional Development	p. 6
III.	Knowledge Management	p. 8
IV.	Public Affairs	p. 10
V.	EQUASS	p. 15
VI.	EPR Structures	p. 18
VII.	Financial Information	p. 19
VIII.	Membership	p. 20

A word from the President

I am delighted to present the 2013 Annual Report of the European Platform for Rehabilitation (EPR). This Annual Report is an opportunity to reflect on the many achievements of EPR and its members over the course of another very busy and productive year.

Innovation is in the DNA of our organisations and it was selected as a key theme for EPR in 2013. A series of events took place dedicated to recognising the important role that innovation plays in our ability to achieve our objectives. A highlight of the year was the Annual Conference which took place in Dublin. During the conference, we celebrated EPR's 20th Anniversary, a key milestone in the history of the organisation which provided an opportunity for us to take stock of our work and look forward to an exciting future.

During the year, we continued to work through our 2012-2014 Strategic Plan. Looking forward, in the first half of 2014 we will begin consultation in relation to the development of the next Strategic Plan and we look forward to engaging with all members in relation to their aspirations for the next chapter in the life of the organisation.

EPR continues to go from strength to strength. I am delighted to have been elected to a second term as President. Every day the lives of thousands of people across Europe are improved by the work that is carried out by dedicated, professional staff working for EPR member organisations. EPR plays an important role in supporting members in their daily work through facilitating mutual learning and providing opportunities for research, innovation and business development as

well as influencing policy at European and local level. Membership of EPR can be a real driver in terms of delivering value for money because it enables members to draw on the expertise of others for the benefit of their clients.

EPR is constantly evolving. In 2013, we established thematic communities to explore two areas of importance to our members: cooperation with employers and mental health. In the main, these thematic communities are facilitated through online collaboration. We plan to continue to develop this use of IT across the EPR network in coming years. There is no substitute for face-to-face meetings but through innovative use of ICT we can maximise the opportunities for EPR to support staff, at all levels of member organisations, to come together and share learning.

I would like to thank all the staff of EPR ably-led by Jan Spooren for their hard work. I would also like to thank my fellow board workers for volunteering their time and energy to the strategic direction of EPR.

We are currently in a period of flux in social services in Europe. By working together, with our skills, experience, flexibility and innovative spirit we can ensure that we continue to improve our services throughout Europe. I am very grateful for the many contributions that members have made to the work of the organisation over the last year. As we enter a new strategic planning period, we can ensure that EPR and its members continue to lead the way in relation to disability and social services provision.



Angela Kerins

Chief Executive of the
RehabGroup, Ireland

EPR Annual Conference 2013

10 – 11 June, Dublin - Ireland

Learning Together



160 participants

13 speeches

4 workshops

Round-table discussion

EQUASS awarding ceremony

Satisfaction rate 3.8/5 (on average)



@ Declan Masterson, photograph

Leading the way - Demonstrating added value through innovation in services for people with disabilities

Two days event focused on the value of innovation in the provision of services to people with disabilities. “Value for money” is a phrase that is common place in times of austerity but the ability to deliver quality through innovation on a reduced budget is a new mantra for disability service providers. Effective resource allocation, enhancement of disability services, international cooperation and the design of disability services of the future are just some of the examples of innovation that were showcased and discussed at the conference by some of the leading organisations, experts in healthcare policy and disability service providers.

EPR was particularly proud of celebrating its 20th anniversary in association with the Irish Presidency of the European Union and in close collaboration with the host and member organisation RehabCare.



“Changing the structures is not the question. The question is about the way the structure is managed [...] Re-invent the services, re-invent ourselves, re-invent the way our services are delivered”.

Tom Beegan, Special Advisor to the Health Services Executive on the Implementation of the Value for Money Report





“The member organisations of the EPR need to continue to push out our boundaries, to ensure we consistently offer quality services and value for money, and that we seek out innovative and creative solutions. In doing this we want to ensure that our outcomes are demonstrable, measurable and progressive.”

Angela Kerins, EPR President, CEO, RehabGroup.



Focus: Innovation Prize Winner

The Estonian organisation Astangu VRC won the 2013 Innovation Prize Contest with the project “Give us a chance to expand your mind”. The programme, presented to the attendees in an original movie format, aims to increase employers’ awareness about capacities and employability of people with disabilities. It proposes to employers a visit of the rehabilitation facilities, workshop as well as peer meeting employers that are ready to share their positive experience of employing people with disabilities.

The video has been made completely by Astangu staff, without the involvement of any professional video producers. They greatly enjoyed making the video and hope that the viewers will enjoy it at least as much as those who saw it at the conference! (The video is available on the EPR website – www.epr.eu)



13 joint professional development activities

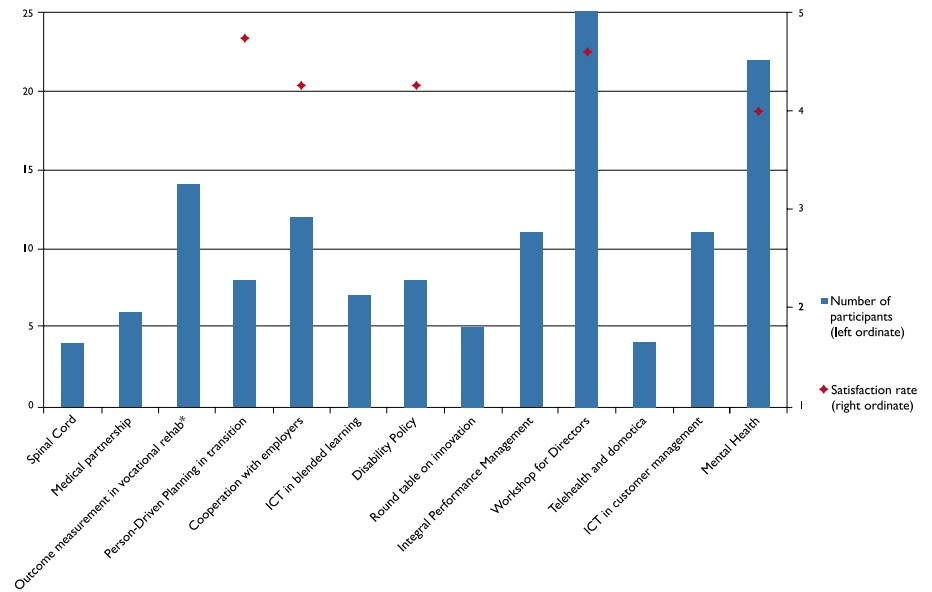
150 professionals involved

Satisfaction rate 4.4/5 (on average)

Professional Development



EPR offers a comprehensive range of tailored Centre Action Plans, based on individual in-house needs assessment. The professional development activities are designed to ensure mutual learning, exchange of experience and ideas and exploration of innovative solutions.



Benchmarking groups:

- Outcome measurement in vocational rehabilitation (webmeetings on 25 February, 24 May, 1 October)
- Person-Driven Planning in the transition process (17-18 September, at GREP, Norway)

In-house training seminars:

- Therapeutic education of the patient (5-6 February and 15 October, at CRM, France)
- Case management (October, Norway)

Training seminars:

- European disability policy (15 March, Brussels)
- Integral Performance Management (4 December, Brussels)

Demos:

- Use of ICTs in customer management (Online webinars on 9, 23 and 25 April)
- Use of ICT in blended learning (12 June, at NLN, Ireland)

Site visits:

- New types of social services (25 September, Portugal)
- Assistive technologies in living environments (27 November, Germany)

Strategic Workshop for Directors

- Communication between leadership and staff in modern organisations (2-3 October, at Heliomare, the Netherlands)

Thematic communities:

- Cooperation with employers
- Mental Health and Recovery



Knowledge Management



Focus: EPR Website

EPR re-designed its website allowing publicly access to all the interesting, creative and innovative solutions and ideas that services across EPR member organisations have developed. The lighter, more focused, selected, interactive and up-to-date contents revolve around four of the six life areas of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and on other three relevant thematic areas:

- Medical Rehabilitation
- Education and Training
- Work and Employment
- Independent Living
- Specific Client Groups
- Management in Rehabilitation Services
- Key Concepts (Person-Centeredness, Empowerment, Assistive Technologies and Accessible ICT, Quality Management, International Classification of Functioning)

Sharing information and best practices

Connecting professionals to experts

Supporting mutual learning

Embracing the excellence

Thematic Communities



In 2013 EPR proposed to its members the introduction of a new concept for joint action in the form of 'Thematic Communities'. The thematic communities respond to the experience of EPR professionals that sought for more long-term cooperation and more networking opportunities with peers. At the same time, they were set up to offer more flexibility to cooperation in terms of formats and contents. Thus, thematic communities should help to display and develop EPR members' expertise in thematic areas, to optimally use the expertise available within EPR network by stimulating networking and a better knowledge about available expertise through the establishment learning communities on longer term.

The thematic communities address substantial cooperation areas which attract a sufficient number of participants. They encompass a flexible combination of different activities on a specific thematic area, such as training seminars, site visits, web-based learning sessions, benchmarking, on-request advice, project development and input into the permanent online knowledge management platform.

Two thematic communities were established in 2013: one on services to People with mental health problems, and another one on Relationships with employers. Each community has been dedicated a section on EPR website offering a moderated forum and resources. In addition, the thematic community on Mental Health proposed two web-based training seminars: on facing the fears of employers in hiring persons with mental health problems (28 May), and on specific services to young people (13 December). The thematic community is also a space where participants had the opportunity to exchange about project ideas.

The thematic community on Relationships with Employers met a first time in June to define common priorities. On 5-7 November, a training seminar was organised in Brussels on the theme Marketing and job finding skills". Moreover, two in-house training seminars have been planned in the framework of this thematic community.

EPR gathers professionals from the social services sector to its Public Affairs event in Brussels



Social Innovation: The role of service providers and the impact on social services

On 5 December 2013 the European Platform for Rehabilitation (EPR) organised the Public Affairs event in the hearth of the European quarter in Brussels in order to reflect on the important role that innovation plays in the social services sector. The hearing gathered relevant stakeholders from the sector including some key officials of the European Commission, Directors and Managers from EPR members and other relevant representative of the European civil society.

Social innovation, as an approach that can influence all walks of life for the better, has been a key theme for EPR in its 20th Anniversary year. In this event the focus was on the impact of social innovation on services providers' ability to continue to adapt as scenarios change.



➤ “Social innovation is not a goal in itself, but as a mean to pursue the goals of Europe 2020 strategy” - “Social service providers have the important role “to tell us (and to Member States) what happen on the ground, how they innovate and how they continue to serve people in need” ,

Raymond Maes, from the Cabinet of Commissioner Andor, Responsible for Employment and Social Affairs in the European Commission.



Raymond Maes, from the Cabinet of Commissioner Andor who is responsible for Employment and Social Affairs in the European Commission and Conny Reuter, Secretary General of Solidar and Chairman of Social Services Europe, presented to the hearing their insights into the opportunities and potential impact of social innovation on social services. The event welcomed also two EPR member organisations presenting innovations that they have introduced into their practices to enhance their service delivery. Reuben Jayawardene from RehabCare in Dublin

talked about “The invisible mouse”, which is a very creative use of assistive technology. Pablo Gomez from INTRAS in Spain talked about community-based services for people with mental health problems and the necessity to develop models ensuring continuity care. The closing sessions was held by Harald Hauben, Senior Consultant of Eftheia bvba, who invited the hearing to reflect about the meaning of social innovation and how innovative ideas, products, processes, methods, models and services offer opportunities of continuous improvements in whatever sector.

Partnerships

Reinforcing the co-operation with Social Services Europe

During the year EPR cooperated actively with Social Services Europe, the largest social services network in Europe that brings together nine Europe-wide networks of not-for-profit providers of social and health care services. The network fills its agenda with active commitments in lobbying activities at European level and in drafting several position papers on the major areas of concern that have been debated around the Europe 2020 strategy, the Social Investment Package, the European quality framework for social services, state aid, public procurement, social innovation and the job creation potential of the health and social services sector.

Focus: Manifesto for the European Parliament Election 2014

EPR supported Social Services Europe in drafting the Manifesto to invite the European Parliament to protect and support social and health care services and promote their strategic importance for the social and economic policy and for the well-being of the people of Europe. The Manifesto gathers 10 recommendations to put social and health care services at the heart of a stronger social Europe. It calls on prospective members of the European Parliament to commit to support the provision of social and health care services, in particular the not for profit sectors, by considering the recommendations.

Social Services Europe

The European Parliament Elections 2014

10 Recommendations to Put Social and Health Care Services at the Heart of a Stronger Social Europe



➤ “Every person is entitled to high quality, accessible, sustainable and affordable social and health care as and when they are needed and the European Parliament can use its powers to make that a reality”.

Social Services Europe

Enhancing the partnership in the United States

EPR, during 2013 strengthened the partnership with Council the Counsel of State Administrators in Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR). CSAVR is composed of the chief administrators of the public rehabilitation agencies serving individuals with physical and mental disabilities in the States. Mr. Stephen Wooderson, CEO of CSAVR, participated at the EPR annual conference in Dublin, and two delegates from the Belgian EPR member organisation GTB Flanders visited CSAVR in autumn.

In addition EPR organised an on-line training and a benchmarking meeting with Dr. Caren Sax and Dr. Fred McFarlane, both leading professors and personalities at San Diego State University, USA, on different approaches related to Person-Driven planning in transition process.



Key-note speeches in external events

EPR presented its study on “Active inclusion of young people with disabilities” at the Eurofound conference in The Hague on 16-17 January 2013 and in Madrid at the event organised by the European Foundation Centre (EFC) and Fundación Once on 7 May 2013.

EPR provided a lecture on EU policy in the field of social services to a group of students of the Master Programme on European Social Policy at the Catholic University of Leuven, to a group of German rehabilitation companies that visited Brussels and to a delegation of Norwegian rehabilitation managers, upon request of AVRE (EPR member organization).

EPR invited as expert at the Council of Europe to present the results of the study on the “Impact of the crisis on the rights of persons with disabilities” on 13 June 2013.

EPR presented to a high level Bulgarian delegation the EQUASS system and the European approach to quality on 7 November 2013, upon invitation of EASPD and the European Commission.

Stakeholder cooperation of EPR

EPR is one of the representatives of Civil Society in the **High Level Expert Group on Disability**, chaired by the European Commission and bringing together specialists from EU Member States with the aim to develop greater interaction between national policies.

EPR is member of the **European Platform of Social NGOs**, the largest civil society alliance fighting for social justice and participatory democracy in Europe. EPR attended the Working Group meetings on Social Services of General Interest, the Communication Network meetings and the informal meetings on membership development.

Since 2012 EPR has been invited by the **European Social Insurance Platform (ESIP)** to its Disability and Rehabilitation Committee which undertakes a peer review of vocational rehabilitation systems in various EU Member States. The expertise of EPR is used to complement and balance the inputs of funding organisations in this domain.

A delegation of EPR participated in the **European Day of Persons with Disabilities** (3 December 2013), promoting "Accessible Tourism in Europe".

EPR Publications

3 Policy papers

- Social Innovation –
What is in it for social services?
- Social Investment Package –
Towards social investment for growth and cohesion
- Personal Budget –
A new way to finance disabilities services

3 Newsletter Issues (April, September, December)

12 Monthly E-bulletin on European Affairs

13 Funding Alerts



European Quality in Social Services

The European Quality in Social Services (EQUASS) is an initiative of the European Platform for Rehabilitation (EPR). EQUASS aims to enhance the personal services sector by engaging service providers in quality, continuous improvement and by guaranteeing quality of services to service-users throughout Europe.

A substantial number of social service providers and individuals in more than 12 European countries have shown their commitment to the EQUASS quality approach by certifying their services or supporting the implementation as well as assessing the EQUASS approach as EQUASS consultants and EQUASS auditors.

The EQUASS certification programmes fully comply with the European requirements quality in the social sector as expressed in the European Quality Framework for Social Services by the Social Protection Committee and the core criteria of the EQAVET framework for the Vocational Education and Training (VET) Sector. Certification based on EQUASS criteria can also be considered as evidence for successful implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.



Overview of EQUASS trainings

2 EQUASS Assurance auditor seminars

| full course for new auditors in Belgium in May

| calibration course in Germany in October

| 1 participants received a regular training

Overview of EQUASS certifications in 2013



EQUASS Assurance:

323 certified organisations
54.600 service users
14.000 staff members

EQUASS Excellence:

18 certified organisations
34.000 service users
2.500 staff members

PRIME Project



The PRIME project, short for Project for Implementation of EQAVET, started in November 2011 and officially ended on 24 October 2013. The project led by RCN Pluryn in the Netherlands, aimed to improve the quality of Vocational Education and Training (VET) services by transferring the expertise and experiences of quality assurance in VET services for persons with a disability to those VET-providers who would like to implement the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for VET (EQAVET) in their services. The EQUASS unit contributed to the PRIME project by providing the capacity building and tools to use EQUASS as a way of implementing EQAVET. In the final meeting all partners demonstrated their quality assurance approach by using the building blocks of the EQAVET framework.

DeSqual Project

EQUASS has been selected to provide a trainer and expertise for the next two years (October 2013 – October 2015) under the DeSqual project (Development of Sustainable Quality assurance in VET) in order to provide a curriculum and trainings on how to generate a quality culture in disability services provision. This project is a collaboration of 4 quality assurance organisations and 10 social service providers / VET providers for people with disabilities who will pilot a new developed training program for achieving sustainable quality assurance.

With an EQUASS quality assurance certificate as a starting point, partners will develop a training program that focuses on individual quality behaviour and quality awareness of professionals and quality culture in the organisation. In this way project DeSqual will contribute to the sustainable implementation of EQAVET requirements in their quality system.



Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is the decision-making body of EPR. Its main task is to supervise all EPR activities and to set the strategic, financial and organisational framework of EPR. The Board consists of the Chief Executives/Directors of the full members. In 2013 the Board held five meetings to discuss and approve EPR policies and activities in Belgium, Ireland and The Netherlands.

Centre coordinators

Centre coordinators of full and associate EPR members represent the direct link between EPR and its member organisations. Their main role is to disseminate EPR information throughout their organisation and implement decisions taken by the Board of Directors. They also operate from a centre perspective to generate centre input in EPR initiatives and to ensure maximum return on investment by disseminating EPR results and products. In 2013, the EPR coordinators met twice (March and December) in Brussels.

EPR Secretariat

The EPR secretariat is the main unit responsible for the development and implementation of the network's activities. It acts as the interface with EPR member organisations and with external stakeholders. The secretariat is based in Brussels and it is composed the secretariat of a core team of staff members and benefits from the additional expertise of external consultants.

Jan Spooren

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Laurence Meuret

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Paulina Kühn

*EQUASS intern
June - December 2013*

Financial Information

Item	Budget	Results (in Euro)
Revenues	944.361	976.097
Membership fees	385.000	385.000
EQUASS	513.563	543.507
Projects and Consultancy	26.500	22.524
Other Incomes	19.298	25.067
Extraordinary Incomes		
Expenses	944.361	954.618
Staff costs	289.529	324.391
EQUASS Operational Costs	414.875	421.894
Operational Costs Projects and Consultancy	4.500	5.306
Operational Costs EPR	108.500	91.755
Office Costs	98.100	90.974
Other Costs	28.857	20.298
Balance		21.479

Membership

Full members



A2G, Norway

Director: Sigurd Gjertsen

EPR Coordinator: Wenche Iren Warberg

www.a2g.no



Centre de Réadaptation de Mulhouse (CRM), France

Director: Bernard Barthe

EPR Coordinator: Jean-Claude Schrepfer

www.arfp.asso.fr



Fundación ONCE
para la Cooperación y el Empleo Social
de Personas con Discapacidad

Fundación ONCE, Spain

Director: Sabina Lobato

EPR Coordinator: Ester Bueno

www.fundaciononce.es



Adelante, The Netherlands

Director: Jean-Paul Essers

EPR Coordinator: Paul Kurvers

www.adelante-zorggroep.nl



DURAPART

Durapart AS, Norway

Director: Bjørn Paulsen represented by Grete Kristiansen

EPR Coordinator: Hiis Søftestad Hanne

www.durapart.no



GREP, Norway

Director: Thor Fjellvang

EPR Coordinator: Anne Britt Holtren

www.grep-as.no



Heliomare, The Netherlands

Director: Frits Wichers
EPR Coordinator: Frank 't Hart
www.heliomare.nl



Luovi Vocational College

Director: Tarja Mänty
EPR Coordinator: Mari Kontturi
www.luovi.fi



Pluryn, The Netherlands

Director: Tessa Zaeyen
EPR Coordinator: Cees Jonkheer
www.pluryn.nl



Stiftung Rehabilitation Heidelberg – SRH, Germany

Director & EPR Coordinator: Hans-Joachim Eucker
[www.bbwn-neckargemuend.de](http://www bbw-neckargemuend.de)



Josefs-Gesellschaft, Germany

Director: Manfred Schulte
EPR Coordinator: Andreas Reiß
www.jg-gruppe.de

National Learning Network

Investing in People, Changing Perspectives

National Learning Network, Ireland

Director: Frank Flannery
EPR Coordinator: David Muldoon
www.nln.ie



Investing in People, Changing Perspectives

RehabCare, Ireland

Director: Angela Kerins
EPR Coordinator: Laura Keane
www.rehab.ie



TBG Learning Limited, United Kingdom

Director: Andrew Conlan-Trant
EPR Coordinator: Michelle Mayo
www.tbglearning.com

Associate members



fundação afid diferença

AFID Diferença Foundation, Portugal

Director: Domingos Rosa

EPR Coordinator: Lutegarda Justo

www.fund-afid.org.pt



Association of Vocational Rehabilitation Enterprises (AVRE), Norway

Director: Johan Martin Leikvoll

EPR Coordinator: Paal Haavorsen

www.attforingsbedriftene.no



BBW, Berufsbildungswerk Süd Hessen, Germany

Director: Renee-Eve Seehof

EPR Coordinator: Carsten Rehbein (replaced by Christiane Scholz)

www.bbw-suedhessen.de



Fagerh, France

Director: Isabelle Merian

EPR Coordinator: Raquel Sécades

www.fagerh.fr



APPACDM Villa Nova de Gaia, Portugal

Director & EPR Coordinator: Dulce Maria Feirreira Coutinho

www.appacdm-gaia.org.pt



ASTANGU

Astangu Vocational Rehabilitation Centre, Estonia

Director: Mari Rull

EPR Coordinator: Keiu Talve

www.astangu.ee



Comitato Regionale Lombardia A.I.A.S. Italy

Director & EPR Coordinator: Gaetano Santonocito

www.aiasmonza.it



Fundación INTRAS, Spain

Director: Teresa Orihuela

EPR Coordinator: Pablo Gomez

www.intras.es



GTB, Belgium

Director: Luc Henau
EPR Coordinator: Sophie Vandermarliere
www.gtb-vlaanderen.be



MEREK, Hungary

Director: Mihaly Kogon
EPR Coordinator: Erik Fuksz
www.merek.hu



Theotokos Foundation, Greece

Director: Papakonstantinou Yiannis
EPR Coordinator: Vaia Arsenopoulos
www.theotokos.gr



*University Rehabilitation Institute
Republic of Slovenia*

University Rehabilitation Institute (URI), Slovenia

Director: Robert Cugelj
EPR Coordinator: Jurij Svajger
www.ir-rs.si



Workshop “Panagia Eleousa”, Greece

Director: Dimitrios Chimariotis
EPR Coordinator: Mina Kyziridi
www.ergpanel.gr



FONDEN *Marie* HJEMMENE

Mariehjemmene Foundation, Denmark Director: Bo Kristiansen

EPR Coordinator: Hans Meier Andersen
www.mariejem.dk



LOS – Private Social Services, Denmark

Director: Geert Joergensen
EPR Coordinator: John Anderskou
www.los.dk



USEL (Ulster Supported Employment Ltd), Northern Ireland

Director: Sam Humphries
EPR Coordinator: Arthur Savage
www.usel.co.uk



Valakupiai Rehabilitation Centre (VRC), Lithuania

Director: Edita Satiene
EPR Coordinator: Rasa Noreikyte - Ustinaviciene
www.reabilitacija.lt



Irish Wheelchair Association

Irish Wheelchair Association, Ireland *

Director & EPR Coordinator: Kathleen McLoughlin

*EPR member from January 2014

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