

# SERVICES IMPLEMENTING THE EU STRATEGY FOR THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

## EVENT MODERATOR



**Karen Coleman** is an award-winning Irish journalist and one of Ireland's finest broadcasters. Karen is a highly sought-after conference moderator who regularly moderates high-level events. Her experience as a BBC correspondent along with her background presenting live international radio shows and making television documentaries, have given her the skills to handle all sorts of conference moderating requirements. Find more information about Karen Coleman [here](#).

## EXPERT PANEL SPEAKERS

**Adam Harris** is the Founder and CEO of AsIAM, Ireland's National Autism Charity, drawing inspiration from his own experiences growing up on the autism spectrum. Today, AsIAM provides support to the autism people and their families, advocates on behalf of the community, and works to support public and private sector organisations and communities in becoming inclusive and accessible. A Social Entrepreneurs Ireland Awardee, Adam is a frequent contributor to media and conferences in Ireland and overseas. He has advised on many consultative and policy committees on disability rights and inclusion. From Greystones in Co Wicklow, Adam was appointed to the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission in July 2020.



**Ana Peláez** is High Commissioner for Solidarity and International Cooperation of the ONCE Social Group and Vice President of the ONCE Foundation for Latin America (FOAL). At the CERMI she is Gender and Equality Commissioner and Executive Vice President of the CERMI Women's Foundation. At the European Disability Forum she is General Secretary and President of the Women's Committee. At United Nations, from 2009 to 2016, she was a member of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, of which she was its Vice President. Since 2019 she is a member of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and has been re-elected for a second mandate (2023-2026). In February 2021, she has been appointed as one of the CEDAW Committee Vice-Chair for the period 2021-2022.

**Marian Harkin** is an independent member of the Irish Parliament with a strong interest in social and public health issues. She was also a Member of the European Parliament from 2004 to 2019, where she was Chair of the Carers Interest Group and the Volunteering Interest Group, Vice President of the Disability Intergroup and member of the Intergroup on Ageing and Solidarity between Generations and the Social Economy Intergroup, among others. Deputy Harkin was also a member of the European Parliament's Committee on Employment and Social Affairs Committee, where she was the shadow rapporteur for the opinion on the European Accessibility Act. Now, as a Deputy of the Irish Parliament, Ms. Harkin continues her work in the field of social affairs, disability and health.



**Pablo Sánchez** is Vice CEO of INTRAS Foundation, organization working for social inclusion of people with disability, mainly related to mental health. His degree in History and MBA allows him to have a balanced vision between management and allowance of accompanying people with disability to recover their life projects. He is also President of Spanish National network of Mental Health and Regional Network of Sheltered Employment in Castilla y León.

**Robert-Jan Uhl** works as a policy analyst in the Agency's Institutional Cooperation & Networks Unit at the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. He works on FRA relations with presidencies and the Council of the EU, and manages its project on the EU Framework for the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.



## WORKSHOPS & SPEAKERS ROUND 1: 14.30-15.45 CEST

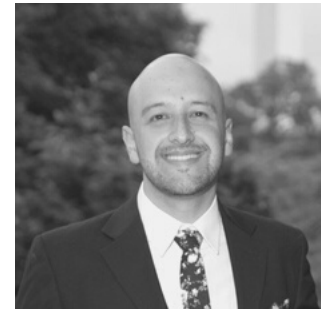
### WS 1. Quality of services and rights

This workshop will discuss the link between quality of services and ensuring rights of service users. Participants will discuss the topic with an expert in the field and look at EPR's paper on Insights, Recommendations and Good Practices for Quality Services (consult the paper on EPR's website here). Participants will then discuss what could be relevant for their own work, sharing experiences, challenges and developing recommendations.

By 2024, the European Commission, as part of the Strategy for the rights of persons with disabilities 2021-2030, will develop a specific framework for Social Services of Excellence for persons with disabilities. It aims to improve service delivery for persons with disabilities and to enhance the attractiveness of jobs in this area including through upskilling and reskilling of service providers. EPR will draw input from the workshop discussions to feed into this initiative.

### Speakers:

**Juan Sebastián Jaime Pardo** is a Human Rights Officer at the Human Rights and Disability Unit of the United Nations. He was a Clinical Lecturer and Senior Staff Attorney at the Gender and Disability Rights Legal Clinic of Los Andes University. He worked as adjunct professor for the classes of Legal Interpretation and Bioethics, Disability and the Law.



**Donal McAnaney**, Adjunct Faculty at Pacific Coast University for Workplace Health Sciences. Donal has been working in the field of disability and rehabilitation for over 28 years and in research projects in this area for over 15 years. He is involved in a number of representative organisations including: The Global Applied Disability Research and Information Network on Employment and Training, Research Chair, Pacific Coast University International Council, B.C. Canada, Member of the International Disability Management Standards Council.

## WS 2. Work Integration Social Enterprises and transitions to the mainstream labour market

Participants will hear presentations of good practices where success factors, challenges experienced and recommendations for others that might be interested in implementing the practice will be shared. After Q&A, participants will then discuss what was heard including what could be relevant for their own work and develop recommendations. **Chance B**, Austria, will present their TOL Dual programme, which supports people with disabilities to transition from to the mainstream labour market. On-the-job training is certified using an online competency recording tool in the areas of gardening, retail, hotel, administration and crafts. The model supports both the individuals and companies, and cooperation with employers is established at the start. **Shekulo Tov**, who will share their Integrative Unit Model (IUM), an innovative, award-winning model for the rehabilitation of people with psychosocial disabilities in the labour market. The Shekulo Tov Group operates 8 social business brands nationally, operated through 120 community IUM-based training units. The model successfully placed over 30% of their service users in the labour market earning at least minimum wage.

## Speakers:



**Philipp Wegner** is an international partner of Shekulo Tov and an expert in the German rehabilitation scene. He has been working in the social security sector for over 7 years in management positions. For the past 4 years, Philipp specialized in the field of rehabilitation services for people with disabilities. He supported organizations and their management teams in adapting to changing laws and market demands. He is dedicated to implementing the IUM into the German rehabilitation market, in order to increase the number of job placements in the open labour market

**Michael Longhino** is on the management board of Chance B and head of the department for innovation and development. He previously led the department for Supported Employment of Chance B and was actively involved in different projects on national and international level, especially in the field of inclusive education. Mr. Longhino holds a Master degree in sociology and is a certified mediator.



### WS 3. Supporting older people with a disability

This Workshop will address examples of initiatives put in place to support older persons with a disability and hear from some of the latest research in the field. Participants will discuss success factors, challenges and recommendations on how to best develop and deliver services that meet the needs of this target group.

The Particip.Age project aims to enhance the community and social inclusion of ageing people with intellectual disabilities, support their rights and enhance the competences of service providers' staff to support them. It will include research, the development of training modules and raising awareness in the community. Roberto Zanon will present the project and participants will be invited to discuss its activities and share their reflections on the themes addressed.

## Speakers:



**Roser Fernández**, Neuropsychology Programme Coordinator at Aura Foundation, Spain, who will make a presentation on neuropsychological intervention for a healthy ageing of people with intellectual disabilities. Aura Foundation's activities include research on the ageing process in individuals with a disability, cognitive stimulation and recreational initiatives, as well as programs aimed at promoting independence, quality of life and emotional wellbeing of older people with a disability.



**Roberto Zanon**, Bachelor's degree in Psychology, Master's in "European funds and financing of European projects" at the University of Bologna. Further specializations on Social Media Strategy for EU Projects, Societal Impact of Research projects, EU project design and management (2021 - 2027), and Horizon Europe. Ten years of working experience as social worker and adult educator with marginalized groups (migrants, homeless people, people with disabilities, Roma). Seven years of experience in EU projects (both planning and coordination). Senior Project Officer at the European Platform for Rehabilitation (EPR) since 2019. Currently working as consultant on EU and international projects on social inclusion, education and health; trainer in Goal Oriented Project Planning and the Logical Framework Approach.



## WORKSHOPS ROUND 2: 16.15-17.30 CEST

### **WS 1. Outcome measurement – good practice & working with funders**

This workshop will hear about the importance of outcome and impact measurement for services and interventions of social services. He will set the scene by talking about the outcomes of the [QOLIVET Project](#) developing EPR's tool to measure the impact of social services and interventions on the quality of life of its users, including the QOLIVET QoL Impact Assessment Tool (QIAT). Taking up the conclusions from last year's EPR webinar on outcome and impact measurement for social services and interventions, the workshop will also look into the relationship between service providers and their funders when it comes to outcome measurement, e.g. how public authorities could financially support the service providers to roll out methods and tools for outcome measurement and how those tools could be adapted to better reflect the objectives of the services provided and a quality of life approach. After Q&A and experience shared from Ireland or Spain (tbc) on working with funders, participants will discuss what was heard, including what could be relevant for their own work, and developing recommendations.

We invite participants to prepare the workshop by reading the [report](#) from the EPR webinar on outcome and impact measurement for social services and interventions held on 16 December 2021 – you also find uploaded to the [events page](#) the two presentations by Donal McAnaney and one other by colleagues from Medea, Italy – and, if you have time and want to dig a bit deeper, also by watching the [recording](#) of the event (duration: 2h30), uploaded to EPR's youtube channel.

### Speaker:



**Donal McAnaney**, Adjunct Faculty at Pacific Coast University for Workplace Health Sciences. Donal has been working in the field of disability and rehabilitation for over 28 years and in research projects in this area for over 15 years. He is involved in a number of representative organisations including: The Global Applied Disability Research and Information Network on Employment and Training, Research Chair, Pacific Coast University International Council, B.C. Canada, Member of the International Disability Management Standards Council.

### WS 2. Pathways to employment

This workshop will hear from experts from GTB, Belgium, about their range of services and new projects supporting people at different stages of their employment pathways; to enter, re-enter and stay in the mainstream labour market. They support people with a disability or health problem to find and keep suitable work and support employers in the recruitment and (re)integration of suitable employees. Projects and services include Start to Can supporting young people to plan their future and We Go To Work, an outreach programme to support the return to work of long-term unemployed. Participants will discuss the GTB programmes and possible learnings for their own organisation.

EPR is running a taskforce of member experts developing recommendations for policy and practice on how to best support pathways to employment, with the aim to feed into the initiatives on employment from the European Disability Strategy. Participants will have the opportunity to discuss and contribute to the development of the recommendations and how they experience laws and government schemes aiming to support the employment of people with a disability in their own countries.

### Speakers:



**Mario Verzele** studied business psychology and worked for 17 years as a coordinator and strategic manager in a GOB (specialized training, counselling and mediation service for people with disabilities). From that position he pioneered with the supported employment methodology in Flanders, hence his organisation got the best results in long-term employment. He has worked at GTB for 9 years and he is part of the daily management of SUEM.be (the Belgian association for supported employment). Mario is detached to the public employment service VDAB because of his expertise on supported employment and people with a labour market disability. At GTB he is a trainer on strength based (solution focused) coaching, expert on quality systems and guest teacher on supported employment for occupational therapists.

**Patrick Ruppel** is master in Adult Education and master in Hospital Management (KU-Leuven/Belgium). Since 2014 he works for GTB, Specialized Team Mediation NGO. GTB is a structural partner of the VDAB (Public Employment Service). Within GTB he is an expert and manages the domains 'innovative projects' and 'the policy advisory group work and health'. In each job, he pays particular attention to the working capacity of people with disabilities. He was co-founder of the local employment agency in Limburg, the Flemish Assisted Work platform, the promotor of the tenders for care activation in Limburg. In order to bring this focus on work for disadvantaged groups into organizations, he has shaped various reorganization trajectories and was strongly involved with the reform of the disabled sector by transferring the sheltered workshops, the specialized vocational training and the Consultation Services on Disability to the policy area of work. Patrick is an expert in realizing innovative projects in which health and work play a role.



### **WS 3. Assistive technology for independent living**

In this workshop participants will hear presentations of the latest developments and innovations in assistive technology to promote and support independent living of people with disabilities in Ireland. The workshop will be led by **FreedomTech**, a partnership between the [Disability Federation of Ireland](#) and Enable Ireland which advocates for affordable access to assistive technology for people with disabilities as a way to support them to live independently and fully participate in education and employment.

Through its research and activities, FreedomTech aims at influencing the work and commitment of national policymakers on assistive and accessible technology. One of its initiatives is CHAT (Community Hub for Assistive Technology), a community of over 200 organisations across Ireland, including services providers, researchers and healthcare professionals, that aims to facilitate mutual learning and identify challenges and solutions regarding assistive technology.

#### **Speakers:**

**\*FreedomTech** is now working in partnership with 3 other service providers on a project to co-create and pilot an AT Passport, supported by the HSE's CREATE Grant. It is envisaged that the AT Passport will enable AT Users to play a central role in identifying and meeting their own AT needs, supported by service providers.





**Joan O'Donnell** is the Project Manager of FreedomTech, which aims to ensure that we develop a comprehensive ecosystem of supports around AT. The concept of the AT Passport which has since gained recognition internationally as a way to put users in control of their own technology and Assistive Technology. Joan has a background working with complex social issues associated with disability from a social policy perspective and she is a longstanding advocate for inclusive employment practices. She is the author of the Future of Work a Remote Opportunity for Open Doors in Ireland and also evaluated the effectiveness of Irish employment policy as part of an EU study for Eurofound. She lectures in Systems Thinking in Practice MSc programme with the Open University and is a doctoral researcher with the ALL Institute, Maynooth University. Her research focuses on the creation of psychologically safe spaces in virtual disability settings. You can read more about this research [here](#).

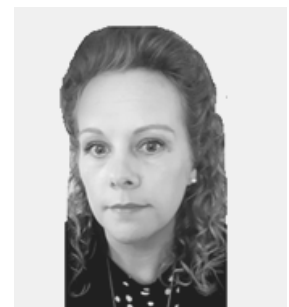
**Anne Marie McDonnell** is Head of Business Development Service Design with Rehab Group. She is a qualified Vocational Rehabilitation Counsellor with over 20 years' experience in delivery and management of disability inclusive services. She also worked as a consultant in the MENA region on the introduction of Disability Inclusive Public Employment Services.



## SHOWCASES

### Highlights from Rehab Group - Assisted Decision Making and Behavioural Therapy

**Nicola Hardy** is an experienced clinician working in the field of disability support services. She has professional qualifications in community care, behaviour analysis, leadership, mental health awareness, trauma informed care, and mediation & restorative practice. Nicola has worked for over 22 years in education, social care, and community support services. Nicola has worked for Rehab Group as a Behaviour Analyst for the last 7 years, primarily supporting adults on the autism spectrum as they avail of day and residential support services. Nicola's work day-to-day focusses on creating supportive, person-centred, and holistic support environments in which people are fully involved in selecting and working towards their personal goals via accessible information & tools. Nicola's professional interests are creating restriction free environments, helping people to develop the skills they need to be more independent and promoting quality of life for people with disabilities. In her spare time, Nicola likes walking, reading, photography and spending time with her young family.





## INSPIRATIONAL SPEAKER



*In 2012 **Jack Kavanagh** suffered a life changing spinal cord injury leaving him with 15% muscle function, in the years since Jack has challenged the perceived limitations of his situation. In 2014 Jack gave the acclaimed TEDx Talk “Fearless Like A Child, Overcoming Adversity” and in 2019 was awarded as one of “Ten Outstanding Young People Of The Year”. Jack has also received several international awards for his documentary *Breaking Boundaries*.*

*As a Health Professional, Facilitator and Coach Jack is passionate about the value of health & wellbeing as drivers for business performance coupled with cultivating diverse & inclusive environments where people belong and are valued.*

*Jack is host of the Only Human Podcast and sits on the board of directors of the National Disability Authority and Center for Excellence in Universal Design as well as leadership development organisation Common Purpose Ireland.*

