

epr

european platform for rehabilitation



Annual report 2005

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A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

As President of the European Platform for Rehabilitation (EPR), I would like to offer some reflections on last year's work. In 2005, we reached some significant results, of which I am pleased to highlight here some of the important ones.

In the Public Affairs field, EPR has strengthened its position toward the European institutions, mainly via the activities of the European Network of Service Providers in Employment and Rehabilitation (ENSPER).

The European Quality in Rehabilitation Mark (EQRM), the only European-wide quality system customised for the sector of rehabilitation services, and the Quality Assurance for Social Service (QUASS), received deep interest within the European Commission as a potential model for social services.

Internally, the EPR proved again to be a body with a very high level of cooperation, in which some significant tools have been implemented in 2005. For example the application of the Centre Action Plan (CAP), a tailor-made instrument to encounter the real needs of our centres, and the Knowledge Management Centre (KMC) - a treasure of know-how and expertise among the EPR centres.

Thinking strategically, we need to consider the challenges faced by the EPR. First, in 2006 EPR must re-think its own mission and goals while ensuring the participation of the member centres at all levels and increasing the professionalism and motivation of the membership. Secondly, we have to keep in mind three important aspects: the possibility of opening new sets of activities, the opportunity to address our work in new geographical settings, (e.g. East Europe and/or globally), and the strong commitment to increasing the quality of service offered, both inside and outside the EPR, to people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups.

This requires a strong push to encourage the recognition of the EQRM and the QUASS, and possibly the creation of a project for the accreditation of professionals. In these fields of interest, we welcome our intensified cooperation with the European and national institutions.

There is so much more to say about the exciting times around us but I would like to end with wishes for another year of fruitful cooperation and tangible successes.

Stefano Schena
EPR President



Stefano Schena plays an active and committed role in the social sector in Italy. Working as the Chief Executive of Don Calabria Centre (Verona, Italy), one of the founding members of EPR, Stefano Schena also presides over the Social Service Agency based in Verona, which carries out social and charitable activities in favour of the disadvantaged people.

Stefano Schena is a renowned professor at the University of Verona, and the author of numerous publications in the field of disability, vocational training and brain injury. Stefano Schena is also Vice-President of the European Network of Service Providers in Employment and Rehabilitation (ENSPER).

Stefano Schena has been closely involved in the EPR, performing various roles since the birth of the organisation. As the Chairman of the European Rehabilitation Academy from 2002 to 2004, he made a key contribution to the EPR's success in the sphere of professional development. Stefano Schena became President in July 2004, when he succeeded Jan Albers, and was reelected in December for the term 2006-2007.

EPR STRATEGY

During 2005 the EPR continued to carry out its strategy, “Concretising benefits from EPR membership”, which was approved in 2004. The activity matrix below provides an overview of the different actions under the three pillars and at three different levels. The EPR strategy finds the right balance between a business-like philosophy of “value for money”, and the principle of internal solidarity between EPR members. Moreover, this approach combines an EPR that provides services to its own members, with an EPR that plays a leading role at the European level regarding quality of services and formulation of disability policies.

EPR activities & services	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	RESEARCH & INNOVATION	PUBLIC AFFAIRS
External Activities	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Training Programmes ➤ Accreditation 	  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Consultancies 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Influence policy ➤ Gather information
Centre Action Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Management training ➤ Quality ➤ Self-directed learning ➤ Staff placements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Exchange good practice ➤ Benchmarking ➤ Introduce new services ➤ Strategy development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ EU funding ➤ EU policies ➤ Representation / PR ➤ Partnership building
Menu of standard services opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Workshop management ➤ General seminar ➤ Centre visits ➤ Reduction of fees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ KMC ➤ Newsletter ➤ Project participation ➤ Reduction fees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ PA event ➤ E-bulletin ➤ Funding alerts ➤ Public relations ➤ Meeting facilities

THE CENTRE ACTION PLANS

The EPR strategy on ‘concretising outputs from EPR membership’ offers to all EPR full members an individualised Centre Action Plan (CAP). The CAP defines in an explicit way what a centre wants to get out of the EPR membership and describes each action to be taken in order to achieve the centre’s objectives. Based on this demand-driven approach, the activities in each CAP derive from a need analysis carried out by the EPR consultants in direct collaboration with key staff and the Chief Executive in each organisation.

Each CAP strives for a balance between the joint activities attended by several EPR members, and individual activities developed for one centre. Since 2005, the associate members are invited to take part in the ‘Joint Activities’ of the CAPs. The activities benefit from the technical expertise and administrative support of the EPR secretariat and are free of charge for all EPR members.

In 2005, the EPR full members had the opportunity to have an interim assessment of their Centre Action Plans by the EPR consultants. This service is offered as part of the free consultancy days to which the full members are entitled.

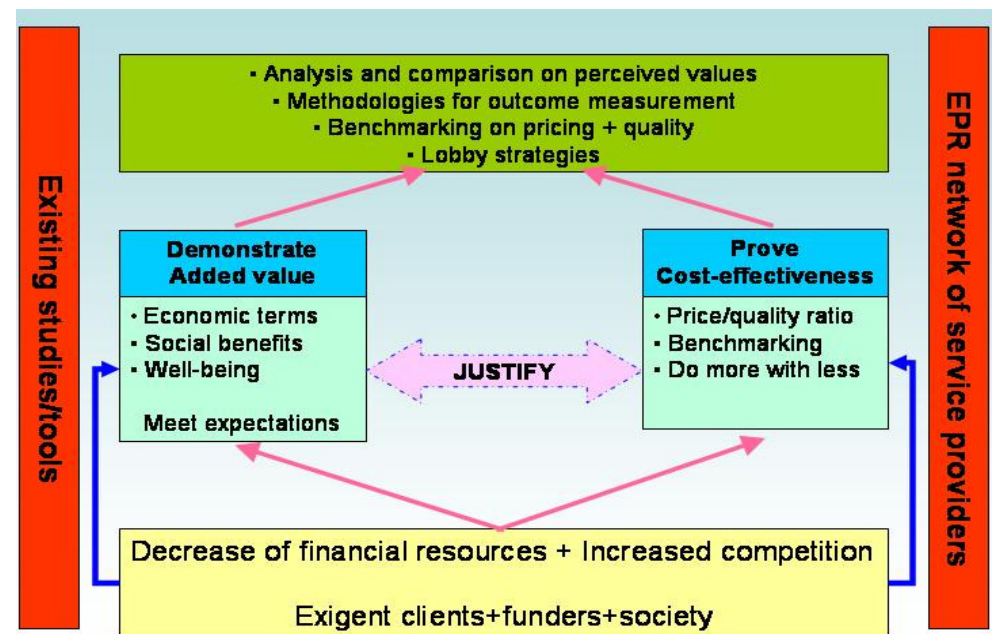
Joint Actions

• *Justification of rehabilitation services*

Considering the decrease in financial resources for social welfare, the requirement of cost-effective use of payers’ money, and the competition in the disability sector, service-providers must increasingly justify their services provided, and so the need for a measurement tool for outputs gets more important.

A first meeting took place on 22-23 September in Brussels. The participants exchanged their expertise by presenting the value and outcomes of rehabilitation in their country, as well as the funding mechanisms of rehabilitation services. Five full members were involved in this activity: CRM (France), ODC (Italy), RehabCare (Ireland), Fundosa Social Consulting (Spain), JG (Germany).

A second meeting will be held on 25-26 April 2006, and will go deeper into lobby strategies towards funders, and the organisation of tender processes within a not-for-profit service provider.



- **Benchmarking**

Due to the more competitive environment and the high expectations, organisations providing services to people with disabilities are increasingly concerned about the effectiveness and efficiency of their operations and the way they function. In order to respond to these concerns, three member centres of the European Platform for Rehabilitation – CRM (France), National Learning Network (Ireland) and CRPG (Portugal) - decided to start a benchmark exercise on both outcomes and quality of services in order to learn from each other and to improve by this way their services.

- **Vocational assessment system**

The objective was to exchange experiences in terms of strategic aspects of vocational assessment, as well as some technical/methodological elements (methods used, duration, profile of client groups, etc.) with an understanding of the position of those procedures within the national framework.

The meeting was held on 8-9 September in Brussels and gathered 5 EPR members: NLN (Ireland), Josefs-Gesellschaft (Germany), SRL (the Netherlands), ODC (Italy), and AVRE (Norway). Two conclusions came out of the discussion: on one hand, there is a need to train the public authorities and/or referral agencies on rehabilitation procedures and client needs. On the other hand, some work should be done to agree on a common terminology and to develop a system of best practices in vocational evaluation. The group has drafted a report on their discussion and has submitted a list of recommendations to the EPR Board of Directors.

Individual Actions

- **Best practice study on TBI and autism**

In the framework of the CAPs and according to the request of some EPR member centres, the EPR Secretariat has undertaken a first study which identifies the services provided in EPR member centres to people with autism or following a traumatic brain injury. The study gives an overview on approach, methodology, and staffing, and offers to interested organisations ideas for improving their services and/or information on potential partners to establish a learning platform.

- **Other individual actions**

The EPR secretariat also delivered a number of targeted individual services upon the request of its members. Such services included:

- in-house Seminars on Funding Opportunities and European cooperation conducted in ODC and CRM;
- presentation on ESF at the Conference organised by Rehab in the UK;
- research study on the disability sector in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland undertaken for F. ONCE;
- assistance with project application for ODC;
- intensified cooperation with Brüsseler Kreis of which JG is a prominent member;
- facilitating the inclusion of SRH as consortium partner in a large consultancy project in Russia.;
- various actions in the area Public Affairs ranging from information and research to contact facilitation and help with event organisation.

European Rehabilitation Academy



Through its European Rehabilitation Academy (ERA), the EPR provides professional development opportunities that enhance the capacity of individual workers, service providers and the entire rehabilitation sector. The Academy provides a systematic approach to human resources development within the rehabilitation sector. It offers a comprehensive range of customised development programmes which are designed to ensure professional excellence at all levels within service providing organisations.

- ***Demand-driven approach***

As a part of the Centre Action Plans, the ERA seminars have been organised following the main demands from the EPR organisations. On the basis of the member needs analysis performed by the EPR consultants, the members of the ERA Advisory Committee have joined their high expertise in drafting the programme for 2005. This methodology proved to be fruitful, as the participants' evaluation shows high satisfaction for each seminar.

- ***Advisory Committee***

This advisory body is made up of key persons from EPR members who share their expertise as directors, HR managers, academics and researchers.

The main role of the ERA Advisory Committee is to monitor the CAPs (all innovation activities), give input for project development, and for the ERA trainings and seminars. The high-level expertise of the Committee is particularly precious for defining topics for trainings, designing the formats of seminars, and identifying the right expert or training for every ERA event.



Seminar "Creative facilitation techniques" 28-29 April, Tallinn

- ***The ERA seminars in 2005***

The Academy has designed a programme of seminars and learning groups responding to actual issues and challenges for social service providers. Six ERA seminars took place in 2005 and were well attended, not only by EPR members but also by external organisations.



Sandy Sneddon

The EPR member Astangu in Tallinn hosted the seminar **“Creative Facilitation Teaching Techniques”** on 28-29 April 2005. During this seminar, the trainer, Sandy Sneddon showed the participants how to use their creative abilities and to liberate that creativity in a group context. As one participant said, the training given by Sandy Sneddon was a complete success: “The presentation and

facilitation was excellent, with an easy, positive and respectful style”.



Giulio Fanton

The second session of the learning group **“Strategies for effective life management: working strategies”** took place on 28-29 September in Verona. This learning group aimed at enabling the participants to work with parents and families of clients with disabilities (e.g. TBI), taking into account themes like life-management strategies, personal

characteristics, and positive transformational outcomes. Maria Grazia Gambini, and Margherita Pozzani contributed to the facilitation of the learning group and brought their experience in effective life management of families.



Fred McFarlane

The learning group on **“Interdisciplinary and interdepartmental strategies to ensure a continuum of services”** met for the first time on 3-4 October in Hoensbroek and will come together for a second part in 2006. The seminar facilitated by Fred McFarlane and Jan Spooren focused on defining necessary departmental and organisational policies and procedures to insure

long-term sustainability.



Peter McGill

The ERA seminar on “Challenging Behaviour” which took place in Canterbury on 3-4 November 2005 aimed to give awareness to analysing challenging behaviour, as well as ideas for communication techniques. During the entire seminar, the trainer Peter McGill provided an excellent balance between presentations and practical exercises.



Adrian Stewart

A seminar on “**Increasing Initial Job Retention**” was organised in response to the difficulty service providers have in keeping clients in their job, rather than only getting them a job after vocational training. This first part, which took place in Dublin on 15–16 November, aimed to give ideas and a strategy to reinforce empowerment and ownership of the service-user on the vocational reintegration process.



Donal McAnaney

The most attended ERA seminar ever with 19 participants was the ERA Seminar “**The use of ICF in rehabilitation services planning and national disability statistics**” which took place in Dublin on 1-2 December. This seminar was designed to provide participants with an opportunity to begin to engage with the World Health Organisation International Classification of Functioning, Health and Disability (ICF) from the perspective of the individual professional, the service planner and the policy maker. The participants highly appreciated the teaching skills of the three trainers, Donal McAnaney, Anne Good and Marijke W. de Kleijn–de Vrankrijker.

- **The ERA seminars in 2006**

A training needs assessment was carried out in the fall of 2005, and resulted in the following ERA programme for 2006:

EVENT	DATE & LOCATION
A new Cycle of EC Funding Opportunities for the Disability Sector (2007-2013) Seminar	23 February 2006 Brussels, Belgium
Increasing Initial Job Retention Learning Group	2 nd meeting on 16 - 17 May 2006 Dublin, Ireland
English Language Course Summer School	9 - 20 August 2006 Dublin, Ireland
Interdisciplinary and Interdepartmental Strategies to Ensure a Continuum of Services Learning group	2 nd meeting in 2006 Hoensbroek, The Netherlands

Future Scenarios in Rehabilitation

A Strategic Workshop for Directors on “Future Scenarios in Rehabilitation”, organised by EPR and hosted by SRH, took place in Heidelberg on 24-25 February 2005. Discussions on this topical issue attracted 24 participants from EPR members, with some expert input from external partners.

The Workshop was divided into two sessions: during the first day participants debated the impact of the changing welfare state on the rehabilitation sector, and during the second day they analysed the impact of internationalisation of rehabilitation services. The Workshop was in many ways a true reflection of the EPR motto of “learning and developing together”, and on the basis of the evaluations received, it appears that the Directors were overall very satisfied with the Workshop’s content and practical organisation.

One participant said the following about the Workshop: “I really liked that each speaker stuck closely to their topic and time. Overall, the opportunity for discussion that we got was invaluable.”





European Quality in Rehabilitation Mark

EUROPEAN QUALITY IN REHABILITATION

The EQRM is the only European-wide quality system that is customised for the sector of service provision to people with disabilities. Every year, service providers throughout Europe, committed to excellence in rehabilitation, apply and achieve the EQRM after having undergone a thorough assessment process according to a set of Principles of Excellence.

Over the past year EQRM proved to be a valuable product about which clients are positive. Clients recognise EQRM as a good instrument for continuous learning and improvement, and share the opinion that the system is demanding but feasible.

The EQRM also proved that it functions and has the capacity to deliver. In Guus van Beek the EQRM has found an outstanding manager; the system has put in place sound administrative procedures and can avail itself of all necessary marketing materials. Last but not least, the EQRM can rely on a team of fully trained and qualified assessors.

The EQRM also showed that it is a significant tool for raising the profile of EPR. Looking back at the last three years, the EQRM has probably been the single most important public relations instrument for the EPR at the European level. It not only opened many doors but also confirmed the reputation of the EPR as a leading organisation focusing on quality and improving the sector.

- *Preview of EQRM activities for 2006*

Pro-active marketing during the last quarter of 2005 led to the remarkable result of fourteen organizations signing up for an EQRM process for 2006.

EQRM assessments		
1	Theotokos Foundation (Greece)	Oct-Dec
2	JG Gruppe: Josefheim (Germany)	Apr-Jun
3	Durapart AS (Norway)	Jul-sep
4	National Learning Network Region (Ireland)	Oct-Dec
5	National Learning Network Tallaght (Ireland)	Oct-Dec
6	CRPG (Portugal)	Oct-Dec
7	Opera Don Calabria (Italy)	Oct-Dec
8	Hoensbroeck Centrum voor Arbeidsperspectief (The Netherlands)	Oct-Dec
9	Institute for Rehabilitation, Republic of Slovenia	Oct-Dec
Initiation Programmes		
1	Rea College Nederland (The Netherlands)	Apr-Jun
2	Hoensbroeck Audiologisch Centrum (The Netherlands)	Oct-Dec
3	Kiipula Foundation (Finland)	Apr-Jun
4	JG Gruppe: Benediktushof (Germany)	Apr-Jun
5	JG Gruppe: Bad Wilbad (Germany)	Oct-Dec
Information Seminar		
1	Kiipula Foundation (Finland)	Jan-Mar

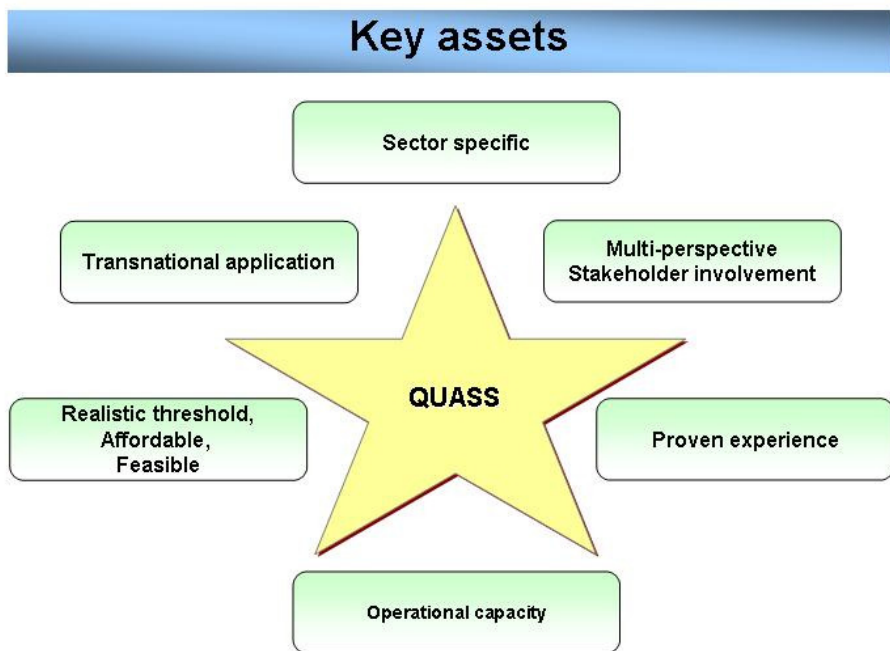
- **Quality Assurance for Social Services (QUASS)**

At the request of the EQRМ Awarding Committee, a project group has worked on the development of a Quality Assurance for Social Services (QUASS), based of the Principles of Excellence of the EQRМ. The QUASS has been designed in order to allow the service providers to enter at a lower level on the basis of more specific and prescriptive criteria and specific questions that would require less effort in terms of self-assessment and also less efforts and costs in terms of external verification. The QUASS assures minimum performance on the Principles of Excellence and assures running an operational Quality Management system, which is one of the basic requirements for the EQRМ.

- **EQRМ Awarding Ceremony 2005**

The EQRМ Awarding Ceremony 2005 took place during the ENSPER event on 6 December 2005, hosted in the Hotel Silken Berlaymont in Brussels, and was organised as a Discussion Forum over dinner. The EQRМ Awards 2005 were given by Frank Flannery (Chairman EQRМ Awarding Committee) to Åstvedt, Norway, and the National Learning Network (locations Castlebar and Bray) in Ireland. The ceremony benefited from a diverse audience of nearly 60 participants from service providers, organisations of people with disabilities, policy-makers, public authorities, consultancies, and social NGOs.

The ceremony concluded with a presentation of the new EQRМ quality assurance system by Guus van Beek (Manager EQRМ).



Vigdis RAVNØY and Ingjerd MORLAND NETTESTAD (centre and right) from Åstvedt hold high the EQRМ certificate

Knowledge Management Centre

The Knowledge Management Centre (KMC) is an online database gathering the vast knowledge and expertise of EPR members. At the moment, 13 EPR member centres (SRL, RehabCare, National Learning Network, CRM, ODC, Rehab UK, CRPG, SRH, JG, AVRE, HELI, PWG and Heliomare) are involved in this project. Within the framework of the Euro-American Platform, EPR also gave the KMC-access to the American association NCSOCRC (National Consortium of State Operated Comprehensive Rehabilitation Centres) and to the San Diego State University. In exchange, these American partners insert information in the KMC on the best practices within their membership. This reinforcement of Euro-American cooperation will also help to promote the KMC across the Atlantic.

During this last year of the pilot phase, the technical cooperativeness has been improved and the KMC administrators started the promotion of the database within their centres.

EPR in EU-funded projects

- *Opti-Work*

This project set out to develop and disseminate a conceptual framework, consisting of a number of analytic tools, and cross-national comparative reports, to assist in formulating EU policy, calculating the socio-economic impact of those policies, and making recommendations for innovative strategies to enhance the labour market integration of citizens with disabilities. The analytic tools will be applied to existing strategies and methods aimed at integrating people with disabilities into the labour market to identify good practice and system inefficiencies as a means of informing future system planning and implementation.

The role of the EPR is to oversee the fieldwork, to be undertaken by National Contact Centres (NCCs) in the 15 participating EU member states. Each NCCs will have an input of 36 working days (over 3 years), including the participation in 3 international meetings. The work would involve the gathering of national statistics/legislation/policies on the one hand, and conducting interviews with employers and people with disabilities on the other hand.



Discussion group among the NCCs experts during the training in Dublin

Consultancy activities of the secretariat

- ***Social Services Institution Building in Romania***

Following the introduction of quality standards for social services based on the EQRM model in 2004, the EPR continued its involvement in this large project (5 mln euro) in 2005. EPR experts trained Romanian service providers on how to carry out a self-assessment against the EQRM quality standards. Further, EPR facilitated an inter-ministerial working group that evaluated the introduction of the new law on quality standards. Based on these workshops, recommendations for improvement were formulated toward the Ministry, and training and information materials were developed. Finally, the EPR was asked to comment on new service-specific quality standards which are developed for the disability sector, and to conduct a cross-reference study against the EQRM-based general quality standards for social services. The project ended in summer 2005, but EPR maintained its relationship with the Romanian authorities in general, and with the National Authority for Persons with a Handicap (NAPH) in particular, as described in the project below.

- ***Management of Disability Grant Fund in Romania***

This project started in July 2005 and provides the National Authority for Persons with a Handicap (NAPH) with a grant fund of 15 mln euro to reform the disability sector in Romania. Local authorities throughout Romania could submit project proposals to restructure/close down large state-run residential institutions and to develop alternative community-based services. EPR was involved as a partner in technical assistance with the objectives to ensure a fair selection of projects in accordance with the National Disability Strategy (1), to enable a transparent and reliable grant implementation (2), and to train the NAPH and disability service

providers in management of grant-assisted projects (3). In addition, the project provided advice and expertise on rehabilitation strategies and methodologies used in the EU countries. In the margin of this project, the NAPH expressed the interest to establish a permanent strategic partnership with the EPR.

- ***Study for Belgian Federal Ministry***

At the request of the Diversity Unit of the Belgian Federal Ministry of Personnel and Administration, the EPR Secretariat has realised a study entitled 'Job retention/ return to work for people with disabilities'. This study intends to identify concepts and methodologies used in various European countries, and to provide concrete examples of good practices. The examples presented as well as the references to applications in various countries aim to illustrate the concepts rather than to provide a comparative analysis or systematic benchmarking. The main focus of this study has been the adapted work schedules and adaptations to overcome mobility limitations. In addition, it also describes in detail the adaptation of the job description and content as well as the peer support at the workplace as these methods appear to be the most important instruments to enhance job retention throughout Europe.



The political year in a nutshell

2005 was not short on developments and issues on the European political scene. To mention but a few: on the macro level the Lisbon Strategy has been given a new start; the Constitution for Europe faces an uncertain future after rejection in two referenda, and a new Financial Framework 2007-2013 is under debate.

In the social area, a fresh Social Policy Agenda 2006-2013 has been adopted; key Commission Communication on Social Services of General Interest is coming up; a proposed Directive on Services in the internal market generated much controversy and debate; Regulations on State Aid are being reviewed; the Structural Funds have been revamped; the Commission has adopted Communication on "The new generation of Community education and training programmes after 2006" and a new overarching programme PROGRESS covering employment, social protection and anti-discrimination will come into being in 2007, thus opening new sources of funding for the disability sector post 2006.

For people with disabilities in particular, significant progress towards agreeing on a UN Convention on the rights of people with disabilities was made and in December the Commission published for the first time a Communication on the "Situation of disabled people in the enlarged European Union: the European Action Plan 2006-2007."

Furthermore, the 2005 European Day of People with Disabilities was probably the most interesting and relevant European Day Conference ever for service providers tackling a number of critical issues related to service provision.

ENSPER: the vehicle for EPR's Public Affairs

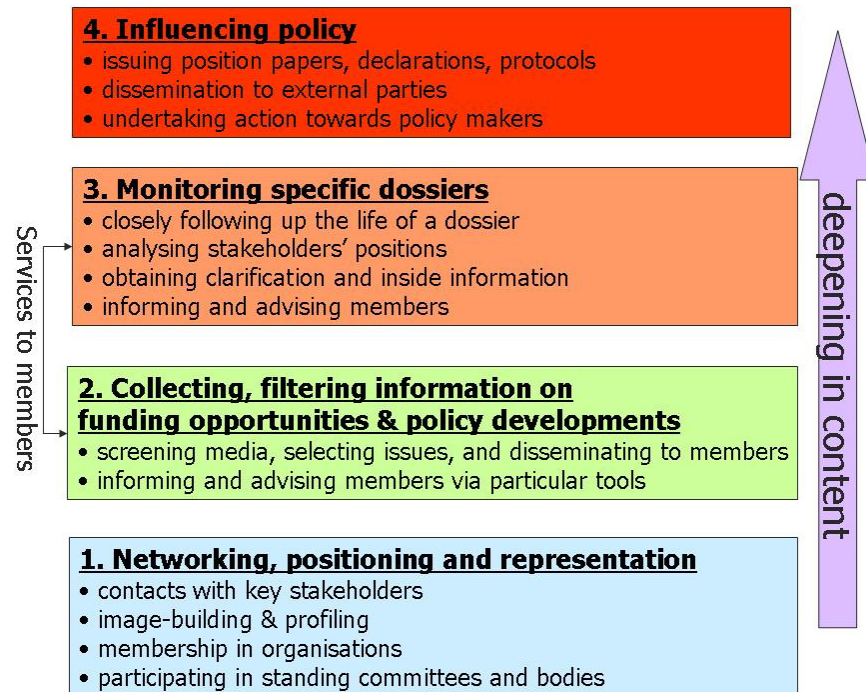


In 2005, EPR, within the framework of its cooperation with Workability Europe (WE) and Rehabilitation International (RI) in the European Network of Service Providers in Employment and Rehabilitation (ENSPER), continued to build and expand on its Public Affairs activities. While ENSPER did not preclude EPR from having its own role and profile in Public Affairs, most notably in issues related to quality of service provision, the forum reaffirmed itself as the primary vehicle for EPR's efforts to influence policy-makers.

The Board members from the three networks on the ENSPER are currently Ray Fletcher (President, RI), Stefano Schena (EPR), Frank Flannery (EPR), Jan Spooren (EPR), Hans Vrind (WE), François Kuentz (WE), Bertie Hunt (WE), Stig Larsson (RI) and Mineke Hardeman (RI). The ENSPER Board met four times in 2005.

Martin Ohriski (EPR/WE) coordinates the Lobby Strategy and Action Plan of ENSPER.

EPR's Public Affairs activities in 2005: a strategy on four different levels



1. Networking, positioning & representation

- **European Commission**

EPR participated in two meetings of the **High Level Group on Disability**. The High Level Group is composed of representatives of the Commission, national ministries of the EU Member States and candidate countries, and the Council of Europe and civil society. EPR is represented on the HLG by Jan Spooren. The HLG is a prestigious forum which gives EPR the opportunity to actively participate and promote the interest of EPR and its members on key political issues impacting the sector.

EPR also had regular meetings with the Head of the **Unit for Integration of People with Disabilities** to exchange information and to identify ways of more concrete cooperation.

- **Council of Europe**

In June EPR, participated at the Plenary Conference of the International NGOs enjoying participatory status with the Council of Europe. EPR took part in sessions of different thematic groupings on European Social Charter and Social Policies and Health. EPR will be studying the outcomes of these exchanges and will be looking at ways it can get involved in the work of formations active in disability issues.

- **European Disability Forum (EDF)**

EPR maintained its close working relations with EDF, the European umbrella organisation representing more than 50 million persons with disabilities in Europe. EDF is closely involved in the operation of the EQRM via its participation in the Awarding Committee. EDF also took part in the Public Affairs Discussion Forum organised by ENSPER, and was a lobbying partner on the issue of State Aid.

- **Brüsseler Kreis**

In 2005 EPR signed a contract with Brüsseler Kreis (Brussels Circle) offering a list of Public Affairs services related to European policy-making, funding opportunities, and event organisation. Brüsseler Kreis is a network of 11 large Protestant and Catholic social companies in Germany, formed with the aim of acting jointly and exerting an active influence on the development of the social sector in Europe. The activities of the Brüsseler Kreis are focused within the fields of aid for the disabled, the elderly and young people, the health service, and also education.

- **Other contacts**

EPR also deepened its relations with the Platform of European Social NGOs, met individual members of the Business & Disability Network, stayed in contact with MEPs from the European Parliament Disability Intergroup, and remained in touch with the European Council for Non-Profit Organisations (CEDAG) and others. Policy issues, exchange of information, project cooperation and participation of events were the main subjects discussed. On all occasions, EPR used the opportunity to promote the EPR network and its activities.

2. Providing information on funding opportunities & policy developments

Throughout the year EPR sent its members a number of funding alerts in the fields of disability, equality, non-discrimination, social inclusion, and research. The secretariat is aware of some members which submitted project proposals as a result of the alerts. EPR also compiled a comprehensive study titled *A cross-national comparison of disability policies and organisations for and of disabled people in Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia*.

3. Monitoring specific dossiers

The main issues monitored by EPR throughout the year were:

- *EC White Paper on Services of General Interest*
- *Cohesion Policy in Support of Growth and Jobs: Community Strategic Guidelines, 2007-2013*
- *Disability mainstreaming in the European Employment Strategy*
- *Reform of structural funds and programme PROGRESS*
- *Proposals for new programmes in education, training and youth*

4. Influencing policy

In 2005 EPR issued position papers/responses on the following dossiers:

- *EU Regulations on State Aids – block exemptions regarding sheltered workshops*
- *Draft Directive on Services in the Internal Market*
- *EC Biennial report on the overall situation of people with disabilities in the enlarged EU*
- *Council of Europe Action Plan to promote the rights and full participation of people with disabilities in society: improving the quality of life of people with disabilities in Europe 2006 – 2015*
- *UN Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities*



ENSPER shines spotlight on Social Services

On 6 December 2005, the European Platform for Rehabilitation, Workability Europe and Rehabilitation International, within the framework of their cooperation in the European Network of Service Providers in Employment and Rehabilitation (ENSPER), organized an evening event on the hot topic of *Social services in a competitive European market: threat or opportunity?*

The event took place in the Hotel Silken Berlaymont in Brussels and was organised as a Discussion Forum over dinner. The evening brought together a diverse audience of nearly 60 participants from service providers, organisations of people with disabilities, policy-makers, public authorities, consultancies, and social NGOs.

The evening opened with a reception and a welcome address from Richard Howitt, MEP (UK/PSE), President of the EP Disability Intergroup. According to Mr Howitt, “The Draft Services Directive has been one of the most complex and contentious issues that we have had to deal with in the European Parliament. The organisations that ENSPER brings together are important to this debate and to the disability movement in Europe – we as MEPs do listen to your contributions to this debate so that a legislative framework that best promotes the interests of disabled people can be achieved.”



Richard Howitt, MEP, addressed the ENSPER Forum

The keynote speaker, Stefan Trömel (Advisor to the European Disability Forum) set the context of the discussion on social services and highlighted the issues at stake, focusing in particular on the viewpoint of organisations of people with disabilities. Mr

Trömel stated that what people with disabilities want is full access to mainstream (social) services and disability-specific services which promote independent living, autonomy, and freedom of choice. Mr Trömel also underlined that “these must be quality services designed with the full involvement of organisations of people with disabilities.”

The keynote speech was followed by reactions from Hans Vrind (President Workability Europe), Simon Wilson, (Director, Platform of European Social NGOs), Patrick de Bucquois, (Vice President CEDAG), who each offered their perspective. Ray Fletcher, President of ENSPER, moderated the debate.

The overriding messages conveyed by the panelists were that the Service Directive was here to stay but that civil society has an important role to play in ensuring that service provision is above all human rights driven and not solely profit driven. The panelists also stressed the necessity of implementing quality standards in all areas of service provision.



The panelists set the tone for the debate

Jan Spooren, General Secretary of EPR, said the following about the Discussion Forum: “This was the first time we organized an event using this plenary-dinner formula, and overall we are very pleased how it went. I thought we succeeded to combine a few things in a limited timeframe by having a debate on a topical issue, giving awards, presenting our new initiatives in the area of quality and at the same time giving everyone the opportunity to enjoy networking in a nice atmosphere.”

LOUIS VAN AMELSVOORT AWARD



The EPR (formerly EPVR) experienced a great sadness in 2000 with the passing of Louis van Amelsvoort, the much-esteemed General Secretary of the then EPVR. Louis van Amelsvoort played a key role in promoting cooperation among the EPVR members.

In memory of his contribution, the EPR decided in 2001 to establish the Louis van Amelsvoort Award (LvA) for Excellence in European Co-operation, which rewards yearly an outstanding piece of work done in the field of European Co-operation in Vocational Rehabilitation.

The Louis van Amelsvoort award is a piece of art sculpted by Sjra Schoffelen. The sculpture was given the title 'Power of life' and is a piece of art that invites reflection on the drive and energy of all human beings to achieve their maximum potential.



EPR President hands over the Louis van Amelsvoort award to 2005 nominee Stefan Trömel

Nominations to date

Since 2002, nominations are proposed by member organisation according to specific criteria, and the Executive Committee selects the winner from the nominations submitted. The Louis van Amelsvoort Award has so far been granted to:

- **Don Mazzi (2003)**

Don Antonio Mazzi is the former director of Opera don Calabria Institute. Since the 1970s he has promoted the international co-operation of the vocational rehabilitation centres in Europe. He disseminated an international attitude in our work as one of the leading actors within the European network of centres, and he is one of the founders of EPR.

- **The project group on Quality (2004)**

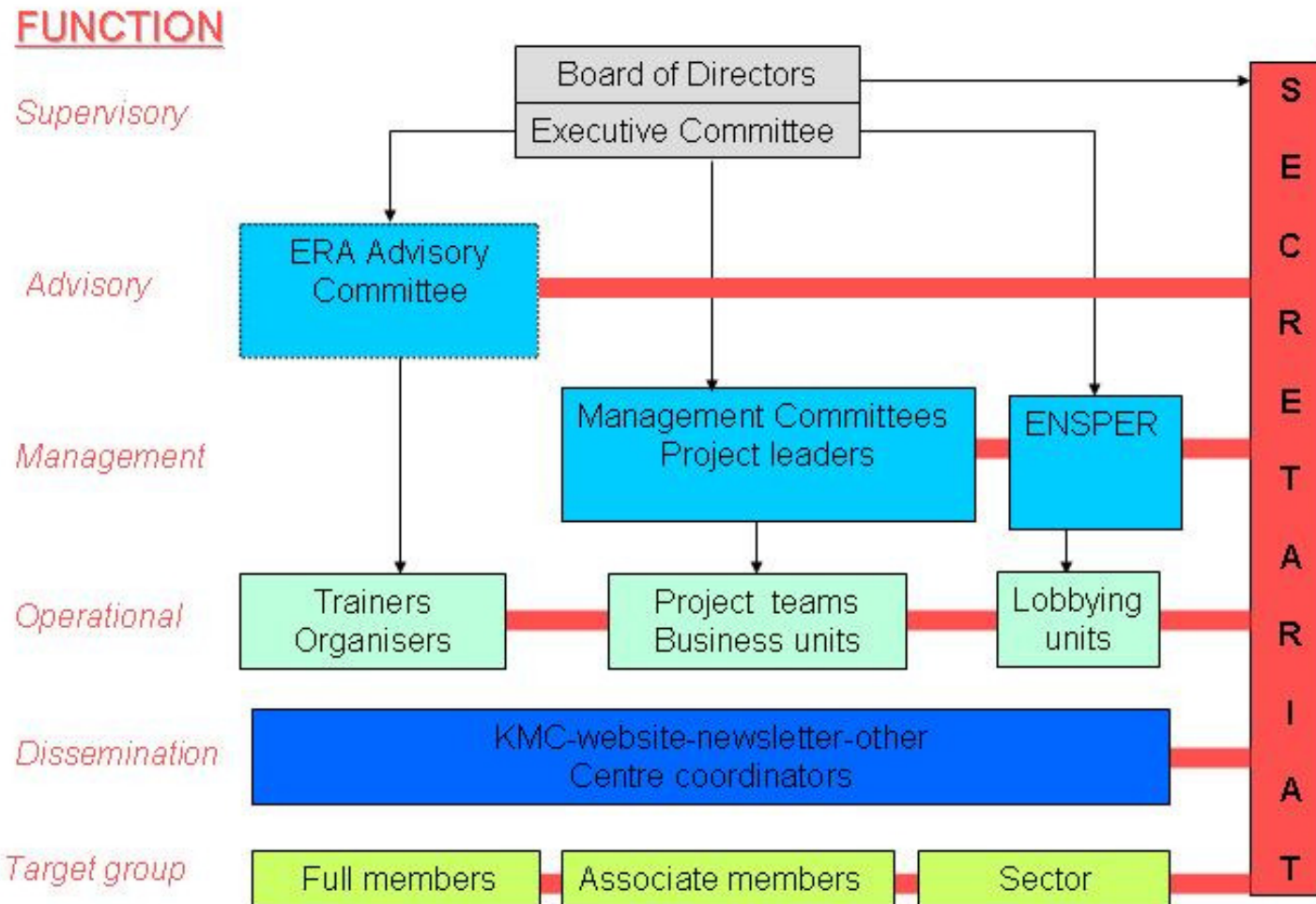
This team had done an outstanding job in developing the tools and procedures of the system for accreditation. The members of the team are Guus van Beek, (EQRM Manager) Michael Crowley (NLN), Cristina Crisostomo (CRPG), Jean-Claude Schrepfer, and Brendan Coyle (Rehab Group on behalf of Donal McAnaney), and Marjut Huttunen (Heli).

- **Stefan Trömel (2005)**

Stefan Trömel was the Director of the European Disability Forum for more than five years, and currently still works as advisor to this European umbrella of disability organisations. Stefan Trömel played a crucial role in building a partnership and good co-operation between organisations of people with disabilities and service providers, which has finally led to a situation where service-providers are included as full-fledged partners in the discussions with the European Commission on disability issues.

The next LvA award will be granted at the EPR General Seminar 2006 in Oslo (28-29 September).

Organisational framework of the EPR



• **Overview**

The organisational structure of the EPR is organised around three pillars (horizontally), and consists of five levels (vertically). It is important to note that the member organisations and their staff are the ultimate target groups and beneficiaries of all EPR activities, and that the four other levels should function in that context.

Supervision and dissemination is organised in a global way for all pillars through the same bodies and mechanisms. *Supervision* is an exclusive competence of the Chief Executives while *dissemination* takes place both at EPR and centre level.

The more detailed *management* of the activities is organised per pillar, and is in the hands of smaller bodies composed of some Directors and some experts. The management level has full responsibility and can make all decisions within the strategic and financial framework set out by the Board of Directors. They also coordinate the various activities within one pillar.

The EPR secretariat supports all organisational structures at all levels and for all pillars.

• **Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors consists of the Chief Executives of all full members and is the decision-making body of the EPR. Its main task is to supervise all EPR activities and to set the strategic, financial and organisational framework of the EPR. The Board of Directors nominates the Executive Committee. Besides organisational discussion on current EPR affairs, Board meetings are also used as a forum to exchange ideas on topical issues.

The Board of Directors is composed of the following persons:

- Stefano Schena, EPR President, Don Calabria Centre
- Jeronimo de Sousa, EPR Vice-President, Centro de Reabilitação Profissional de Gaia
- André Lefèvre, Centre de Réadaptation de Mulhouse
- Josefa Torres, Fundación ONCE
- Fritz Krueger, Josefs-Gesellschaft
- Joe O'Brien, National Learning Network
- Angela Kerins, RehabCare
- Frank Flannery, Rehab in the UK
- Markus Hertrich, SRH Learnlife
- Thérèse-Sophie de Wit, Stichting Revalidatie Limburg



- **Executive Committee**

This is a sub-group of the Board of Directors whose main responsibilities are to prepare policy decisions for the Board of Directors (including drafting the agenda) and to direct the activities of the Brussels secretariat on behalf of the Board of Directors.

The Executive Committee was nominated by the Board of Directors in February 2004 when the new statutes of EPR were approved. Stefano Schena was nominated as President, Jeronimo de Sousa as vice-President, and Frank Flannery as immediate past President. André Lefèvre also served on the Executive Committee.

All members of the Executive Committee are nominated for two years, which means that re-election of the Executive Committee is due at the first Board of Directors meeting of 2006.



- **Centre coordinators**

All full and associate members have a centre coordinator who forms the important link between the EPR level and the centre level. Centre coordinators disseminate EPR information throughout their organisation, and are active in implementing the decisions taken by the Board of Directors within member organisations. Their double mission includes ensuring the input from the centre in EPR initiatives and the maximal return on investment via dissemination of EPR outputs and results. The centre coordinators met once in Brussels in 2005.



The EPR coordinators during bilateral discussions at the coordinators meeting on the 21 October in Brussels

- ***The EPR secretariat***

The EPR secretariat is the main unit responsible for the development and implementation of the network's activities. Based in Brussels, the secretariat acts as the main interface with EPR member organisations and with external stakeholders. The secretariat is composed of a core staff team, external experts, and also benefits from freelance support staff.

Core team



JAN SPOOREN, GENERAL SECRETARY

The General Secretary oversees EPR's work in the area of Public Affairs and European projects. Jan Spooren also dedicates a percentage of his time to external consultancy activities generating income for the EPR. He reports to the Executive Committee and to the Board of Directors. Jan Spooren is responsible for the overall management of the EPR secretariat, activities and finances. Jan Spooren develops the EPR strategy, supervises the implementation and progress of the various initiatives, and monitors and evaluates the Centre Action Plans.



NADÈGE JIBASSIA, ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Nadège Jibassia coordinates the implementation of various EPR activities. She supports the organisation of the ERA seminars, the EQRM assessments and trainings, EPR major events, and certain Centre Action Plans activities. Nadège Jibassia is in charge of the Knowledge Management Centre and acts a coordinator for the EPR involvement in the Opti-Work and SD-Net Job projects.



MARTIN OHRIDSKI, PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

Martin Ohridski supports the Public Affairs Strategy of EPR in a wide range of tasks and responsibilities. He develops and implements EPR's lobby strategy and liaises with key stakeholders. Martin Ohridski is in charge of the edition of EPR's position papers towards the policy-makers and acts as a coordinator for ENSPER. Furthermore, he is responsible for the publication of the EPR newsletter and is the main coordinator for major events organised by the EPR. Martin Ohridski also works on a half-time basis for Workability Europe.



JUDITH LAUB, INTERN

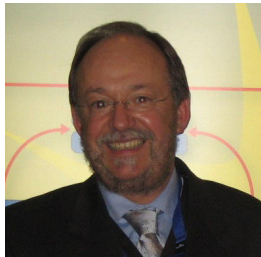
Judith Laub contributes to the overall functioning of the secretariat. She provides secretarial and administrative assistance in PR actions, organisation of meetings and events. Judith Laub has also undertaken research on specific disability topics, and has been involved in certain Centre Action Plans activities.

External experts



JAN ALBERS, SENIOR CONSULTANT

Jan Albers was involved in the design of the Centre Action Plans. He is thus in charge of the monitoring and evaluation of the Centre Action Plan for several EPR members and also facilitates specific actions including the discussion group on vocational assessment, and the project team “justification of rehabilitation services”. Jan Albers has also been tasked to assist EPR in its strategy to identify new members.



GUUS VAN BEEK, EQRM MANAGER

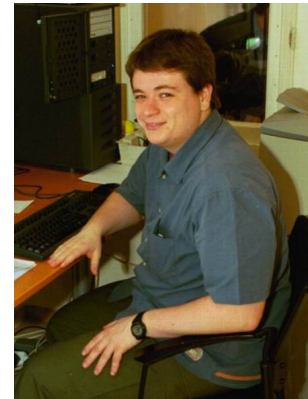
Guus van Beek is EPR’s quality expert responsible for the development and running of the EQRM system in general and for the management of the EQRM assessments, initiation programmes and trainings. Guus van Beek also provides consultancy to external organisations interested in the EQRM. In 2005, Guus van Beek worked intensely on the development of a Quality Assurance System for Social Services (QUASS).

Freelance support



BÉNÉDICTE DUBOIS, FREELANCE SECRETARY

Bénédicte Dubois works as an external freelancer and is responsible for the human resources and finances of the EPR secretariat.



DIMITRI FATRALIS, IT EXPERT

Dimitri Fatralis is in charge of the IT infrastructure and functioning in the EPR secretariat.

- ***EPR General Seminar 2005***

The General Seminar 2005 took place in Dublin on 12-13 May and was hosted by RehabCare under the theme “Rehabilitation pays”. The format of this event was slightly different compared to previous years. Indeed, the first day of the seminar was not only open to EPR members but also to external rehabilitation professionals. The second day was restricted to EPR members only. The logic behind this new format was to reach a balance between broader discussion and debate during the Day I and a more practical approach and information for the EPR members on Day II.

The next General Seminar will be hosted by the Norwegian Association for Vocational Rehabilitation Enterprises (AVRE, www.attforingsbedriftene.no) and will take place in Oslo on 28-29 September 2006 on the general theme of “benchmarking.”



*An impressive line-up of panelists and exquisite décor:
a session during Day I*

- ***Newsletter***

In 2005, EPR continued to improve the edition of its newsletter. The EPR newsletter now features an editorial update from the secretariat, articles about projects and project teams, information about Public Affairs and ERA developments, a list of new documents on the website, news from the members, as well as a calendar of upcoming events. A new section is dedicated to a feature article on a particular topic or rehabilitation profession. Three newsletters were published and distributed in printed format to the EPR members - in March, June and December.

- ***Public Affairs e-bulletin***

In 2005, EPR complemented the package of Public Affairs services offered to the members with a monthly e-bulletin on Public Affairs. The Public Affairs e-bulletin informs about news, developments and events in relevant European sectors such as employment, social affairs, education and vocational training, research, and public health.

- ***Website***



The EPR website aims at promoting the EPR to external parties as well as providing the member organizations with easy access to EPR documents and products. After a complete redesign in 2003, significant investments were also made in 2004 and 2005 to enhance the quality and stability of the website and to achieve more user-friendly look. EPR website continues to attract a large number of visitors: the number of hits (EPR secretariat excluded) reached 3865 in 2005.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Item	Budget	Results (in euro)
<i>Revenues</i>	<i>447.000</i>	<i>565.319</i>
Membership fees	240.000	245.000
Consultancy & services	71.200	71.170
Interests	2.500	2.669
EQRМ	98.900	26.801
ERA	34.400	24.708
Quality Conference	0	14.004
Opti-Work	0	180.967
<i>Expenses</i>	<i>446.700</i>	<i>555.220</i>
Staff costs	192.600	193.849
Operational costs	49.510	44.296
Structural costs	65.590	64.727
Contingencies	6.000	5.300
EQRМ	98.900	53.323
ERA	34.100	14.852
Quality conference	0	12.906
Opti-Work	0	165.967
BALANCE		+10.099

MEMBERSHIP

Our members

Full

National Learning Network
Working in People, Changing Perspectives

RehabCare
Working in People, Changing Perspectives

RehabGroup
Working in People, Changing Perspectives

SRL
STUDIUM REVALIDATE LIMBURG

SRH

JGG

Centre de Réadaptation
de montagne

CENTRO DE REABILITAÇÃO PROFISSIONAL DE GAIA

Fundación ONCE
para la recuperación e integración social de personas con discapacidad

Associate

Heli

Attforingsbedriftene

Logo with green triangle

Institut Republika Serbiske za rehabilitaciju

CEDAR

helio mare

Pluryn Werkenrode Groep

THE EMEN ASSOCIATION

Logo with blue globe

FULL MEMBERS



Centre de Réadaptation de Mulhouse is one of the largest centres in France for vocational rehabilitation. It provides functional and professional rehabilitation mainly for adults with spinal cord injuries, brain injuries, hemiplegics, orthopaedic and rheumatological diseases.

Centro de Reabilitação Profissional de Gaia in Portugal is aimed at providing services of great quality and value adjusted to the needs and expectations of clients, generating the greatest level of satisfaction for all the parties committed, on behalf of innovation and continuous improvement.

Fundación ONCE (21 companies in 70 centres) was set up to improve the conditions of people with disabilities in the Spanish society. The fundamental aims of Fundación ONCE are training and job creation for people with disabilities, the elimination of architectural and communication barriers, and cooperation with other institutions.

Josefs-Gesellschaft is a large Catholic society offering rehabilitation services to 4,500 people with physical disabilities in Germany. The 3,800 employees provide educational and vocational training, ensure suitable occupation, and daily care of people with disabilities.



National Learning Network is Ireland's largest non-governmental training organization with more than 50 locations nation-wide catering for over 4,500 learners each year. Its objective

EPR Annual report 2005

is to assist people at a disadvantage in the labour market to learn the skills they need to build lasting careers in jobs, thanks to a brand of training, education and employment access support.

Founded in Verona soon after World War II, the **Don Calabria Centre** in Verona, Italy is one of the many enterprises implemented by the Opera Don Calabria. The Don Calabria Centre applies mainly to disadvantaged or disabled people, with a particular attention to the situation of the so called "new poverty" social areas.



RehabCare in Ireland provides a wide variety of responsive health and social care services that facilitate reintegration in the local community. Each year more than 2,600 people take advantage of these services, which range from resource centre activities to care work delivered in people's homes.

Rehab in the UK provides assessment, training and development programmes that enable people with disabilities to break into the workforce. The development of a network of innovative brain injury centres is now the main focus of its work. The organisation operates three of these centres - in Birmingham, London and Newcastle.

The aim of **Stichting Revalidatie Limburg** in the Netherlands has always been the (re)integration into society of (potentially) disabled persons through high-quality co-ordinated health care provision. SRL acts as an umbrella organisation for a number of centres providing different types of services.

An important task of **SRH Learnlife**, Germany, (11 centres) is the retraining of people who have to change their occupation because of an acquired disability. The Berufsförderungswerk Heidelberg GmbH (BfW) is one of the establishments of the SRH Group that has over 1,870 training places for adults and 90 places for assessment and evaluation.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

The **Association of Vocational Rehabilitation Enterprises** is an employer organisation for approximately 100 not-for-profit organisations spread across Norway. These organisations provide various types of vocational support to more than 25,000 disadvantaged persons yearly.

The **Astangu Rehabilitation Centre** is the only public centre in Estonia providing social and vocational rehabilitation to persons with disabilities. The main goal of the Astangu Rehabilitation Centre and its 122 employees is to support social and vocational integration of people with disabilities.

The **Cedar Foundation's** vision is to play a leading role in the achievement of a community in which people with disabilities are participate as equal citizens in Northern Ireland. The Cedar Foundation's Training Service is an innovative package of programmes that promote the social and economic inclusion of people with disabilities.

The **Eden Foundation** is a Maltese non-governmental organisation which works in partnership with people with developmental disabilities. Eden Foundation helps them to achieve full inclusion to the best of their abilities by gaining access to mainstream education, employment and leisure activities, leading to an independent life.



Heliomare has more than 30 locations throughout the province of Noord-Holland. Heliomare supports clients with a physical or multiple disability, TBI or autism. Heliomare offers programmes of medical and vocational rehabilitation, special education independent living programmes and training, daily occupation and sports.



The leading **Institute for Rehabilitation** in Slovenia is most famous for its medical rehabilitation for victims of war and especially of mines, and is the leading organisation in Slovenia providing medical rehabilitation, assistive technology, prosthetics and orthotics, as well as psychosocial and vocational rehabilitation.

The **Pluryn Werkenrode Groep** is a Dutch organisation that provides care and support to approximately 2000 persons with physical, cognitive, intellectual or multiple limitations. PWG offers support in all the aspects of daily life, including education and training, in job- (re)integration, housing, domestic affairs, and personal care as well as leisure time.

Pulmonary Association Heli is Finland's largest non-profit organisation for people with disabilities. It is involved in a range of activities, including health promotion, rehabilitation, special training and the running of work centres. Heli's professionals cater for people with different types of disabilities and mental health problems, as well as individuals in danger of social exclusion.



The **Theotokos Foundation** is a private, non-profit organisation based in Greece. It offers comprehensive services to children and youngsters with learning and other developmental disabilities. The purpose of the Theotokos Foundation is to offer to their clients opportunities to learn, to communicate and to function with adequacy in their everyday life in order to become autonomous and active adults.

Members directory

Full members		
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<p>Centro de Reabilitação Profissional de Gaia (CRPG) Avenida João Paulo II 4405-075 Arcozelo VNG, Portugal Director: Mr Jeronimo de Sousa Tel: +351 227537 700; Fax: +351227629065 E-mail: info@crpg.pt www.crbg.pt</p>	<p>Opera Don Calabria (ODC) Via San Marco, 121 37138 Verona, Italy Director: Mr Stefano Schena Tel: +39 0458184111; Fax: +39 0458184100 E-mail: valentina.danese@centrodoncalabria.it www.centrodoncalabria.it</p>	<p>SRH Learnlife AG (SRH) Bonhoefferstrasse 1 69123 Heidelberg, Germany Director: Mr Markus Hertrich Tel: +49 62 2182230; Fax: +49 62218223121 E-mail: anton.endrich@srh-learnlife.de www.srh.de</p>
<p>Fundación ONCE Sebastian Herrera 15 28012 Madrid, Spain Director: Ms Josefa Torres Martínez Tel: +34 (91) 506 88 88; Fax: +34 (91) 539 34 87 E-mail: jtorres@fundaciononce.es www.fundaciononce.es</p>	<p>RehabCare Roslyn Park Sandymount Dublin 4, Ireland Director: Ms Angela Kerins Tel: +353 12057200; Fax: +353 12057202 E-mail: sarahjane.dillon@rehabcare.ie www.rehab.ie</p>	
<p>Josefs Gesellschaft e.V. (JG) Custodistrasse 19-21 50679 Cologne, Germany Director: Mr Fritz Krueger Tel: +49 221 889980; Fax: +49 0221 88998 60 E-mail: info@josefs-gesellschaft.de www.jg-gruppe.de</p>	<p>Rehab in the UK Windermere House, Kendal Avenue London W3 0XA, United Kingdom Director: Mr Frank Flannery Tel: +44 2088968815; Fax: +442088962444 E-mail: ian.welsh@momentumscotland.org www.rehab.ie/uk</p>	
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What is EPR?

The European Platform for Rehabilitation (EPR) was founded in 1993 as a not-for-profit non-governmental European network of leading European providers of rehabilitation services to people with disabilities and others who are disadvantaged. Today these services include vocational training and reintegration in the open labour market, as well as medical rehabilitation and social care.

All EPR members are committed to the values of equality, equal opportunities and human rights for their clients. Under the motto “learning, developing and producing together”, the EPR membership has continued to grow and today numbers 18 organisations from 14 European countries.

Professional development, quality, a holistic, multi-disciplinary view, and international cooperation remain the foundation stones on which EPR is built.

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