



*European Network on Independent Living*



## **Conference “All Inclusive” – the UN Convention**

Chemnitz (kobinet) Topic of the conference “All Inclusive” – The UN Convention and the Equal Rights Politics for Persons with Disability was equal opportunities for people with or without disability. The German Federal Commissioner for Disability Issues, Karin Evers-Meyer, was hosting the conference together with the Disability Association Germany (Allgemeiner Behindertenverband in Deutschland), the Disability Association of Saxony and the Network Article 3 (Netzwerk Artikel 3) At Chemnitz Town Hall, 100 participants of the conference discussed making human rights and freedom for persons with disability reality. The impulse for the discussion was the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled People, which the German Parliament ratified in December 2008. It will enter into force in March 2009.

In the four workshops, the participants discussed the legislative actions that need to be taken to fulfil the requirements of the Convention. A focus lay on how to make the public realise the potential and abilities of people with disability and how to have the public treat people with disability with dignity. Participants talked about means to raise awareness, as laid out in article 8, e.g. to combat stereotypes, prejudices and harmful practices relating to persons with disabilities, to promote awareness of the capabilities and contributions of persons with disabilities.

“All necessary legislative and additional actions need to be taken to allow people with disability to live an independent life. The full participation in all areas of life must be a matter of fact,” said Dr. Andreas Juergens of Network Article 3.

Dr. Ilja Seifert, head of the Disability Association Germany said: “The UN Convention allows us to get closer to a crucial aim of disability politics, namely the prerequisite for equal participation of people with or without disability in all parts of life.”

[http://www.kobinet-nachrichten.org/cipp/kobinet/custom/pub/content.lang,1/oid,20286/ticket.g\\_a\\_s\\_t](http://www.kobinet-nachrichten.org/cipp/kobinet/custom/pub/content.lang,1/oid,20286/ticket.g_a_s_t)



## **Ireland (DFI): Amendments to the Housing Strategy**

The Advisory Group, on which Disability Federation Ireland (DFI) and other voluntary as well as statutory bodies are represented, met in January. The Group advises the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government on the development of the housing strategy for people with disabilities, due for completion in 2009.

DFI has submitted to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government some proposed amendments to the Housing Bill. At present the needs of people with a disability are neglected in housing legislation. The Bill drafted by the Department only refers to this group in a section which provides for the clawback of housing adaptation grants, the amount depending on when the adapted dwelling is sold. DFI expressed concern that while the legislation might improve the efficiency of social housing governance, it would not enable people with disabilities to ‘catch up’ and live as much as possible like others in Ireland. It would not embed the needs of people with a disability in the system of housing provision, but leave them effectively as an ‘add-on’ DFI’s amendments are aimed at requiring local authorities to explicitly include people with a disability and the voluntary organisations working with them in planning and implementing social housing programmes.

For an electronic copy of DFI’s submission, please contact Lillian Buchanan at [lillianbuchanan@disability-federation.ie](mailto:lillianbuchanan@disability-federation.ie)



## ENIL: Position Paper

ENIL regional delegate Debbie Jolly wrote a research paper on Community Living and the support of independent living for the disabled women, men and children of Europe.

The paper elaborates the human rights argument for the full support of community living and independent living for all disabled people that is: living in the community independently in a place of one's own choice with financial and local support and with access to personal assistance. The paper argues that disabled people do not need to live in institutions excluded from their communities or have their human rights abused. Link:

[http://www.enil.eu/enil/index3.php?option=com\\_jake&jrun=%2Fdocfiles%2Fview%2F85%2F](http://www.enil.eu/enil/index3.php?option=com_jake&jrun=%2Fdocfiles%2Fview%2F85%2F)

## Good Practice: Swiss TV increased subtitling

Swiss TV station SRG-SSR-Fernsehsender, which has several channels, reached an impressive 79 per cent increase in subtitling of their programmes.

A new speech recognition technology even allowed for the subtitling of live broadcasts. The station is currently subtitled for about 18,6 per cent of the transmissions. This is more difficult in Switzerland because of the four national languages. The TV station announced that it would secure subtitling on all channels between 7 and 10 pm in the course of this year, including live events. Switzerland has a decree concerning this in their Radio and TV Order.

## Documentary Series on Disability looks for “actors”

Dublin Community Television (DCTV) is currently making a new TV series called “Invisible”. This is a four part documentary series on disability. It will challenge the idea that people are disabled and instead suggest that it is society that has the disability in its inability to cater for and accept differences in people. Some of the issues that the programme is covering have emerged while working within the different disabled communities and include areas such as “Access to Education”, “Family”, “Sexuality and Relationships” and “Disability and Media”.

DCTV is a non-profit, members co-operative station which is open to anyone who would like to join and offers a space for communities to have a place to have their say. If you know of any Dublin-based families or individuals with disabilities, who might like to participate in the episode around “Sexuality and Relationships” please contact their researcher Jacqui Johnston at: [jjmedia@eircom.net](mailto:jjmedia@eircom.net) (Source: DFI)

## Virginia: Deinstitutionalization a Difficult Matter

From the Norfolk Virginian Pilot:

A legislative conference committee will soon weigh in on the dispute between Virginia Gov. Timothy M. Kaine and the legislature over whether to close an institution for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Advocates and family members are similarly divided on the question.

Family members of residents have actively opposed closing the facility down, saying they fear their loved ones would not get the same level of care in community-based housing. Southeastern Virginia Training Center has 163 residents and 460 employees.

Howard Cullum, president of the Arc of Virginia, said the organization supports the governor's proposal to close the facility in Chesapeake and use the money to help people with disabilities live in apartments and homes in the community. "The concept that people need to be in a segregated environment is outdated and not where families who live in communities want the services to go," Cullum said.

<http://www.patriciaebauer.com/2009/02/19/virginia-wrangles-institution/>

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