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# Seminar on Awareness Raising for Persons with Disabilities

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Copenhagen, Denmark**

**Final Report**  
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## Introduction

The Council of Europe and the Danish Ministry for Children and Social Affairs organised a seminar in Copenhagen, on 13-14 December 2017 to discuss awareness raising for persons with disabilities<sup>1</sup>. Held in the framework of the Danish Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (November 2017 – May 2018), the seminar contributed towards the implementation of the Council of Europe Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, “Human Rights - A Reality for All”<sup>2</sup>. The seminar brought together government authorities, persons with disabilities and their representatives, service providers, non-governmental organisations and independent experts and private sector and media representatives.

The objective of this seminar was to support member States in their efforts to build partnerships and co-operation with media and civil society organisations dealing with the rights of persons with disabilities, persons with disabilities themselves, the private sector and other stakeholders to effectively raise awareness and counter prejudice and negative attitudes towards persons with disabilities<sup>3</sup>. This was done through: (1) the exchange of experience, expertise and practical examples of effective awareness raising strategies from the member States, civil society and the employment sector; (2) discussing challenges and difficulties in designing and implementing awareness raising strategies and strategies to overcome them; (3) the exchange of information on research, policies and strategies on awareness raising in areas under discussion: media, sports, employment and changing attitudes of children in schools, and (4) the preparation of a factsheet on awareness raising based on the findings, recommendations<sup>4</sup> and good practice from the seminar.

The seminar was opened by Hanne Stig Andersen, Head of Office for Persons with Disabilities, Liri Kopaçi-Di Michele, Head of Equality Division at the Council of Europe and Thorkild Olesen, Chairman of the Danish Disabled Persons’ Organisation. The Coe strategy has five rights-based priority areas. They are:

- Equality and non-discrimination
- Awareness raising
- Accessibility
- Equal recognition before the law
- Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse

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<sup>1</sup> The term “persons with disabilities” is used throughout (with the exception of quotations), in keeping with the language of the United Nations. Convention and the Strategy.

<sup>2</sup> Human rights: a reality for all – Council of Europe Disability Strategy 2017-2023, available at: [www.coe.int/en/web/disability/strategy-2017-2023](https://www.coe.int/en/web/disability/strategy-2017-2023).

<sup>3</sup> All the presentation of this Seminar are available at: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/disability/copenhagen-seminar-december-2017>

<sup>4</sup> The views and recommendations in this report do not necessarily reflect the views and recommendations of the Council of Europe and the member States.

## Setting the scene

The scene was set by Alfredo Ferrante, Chair of the Committee of experts on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and Anette Laigaard, Chairperson of the Danish Disability Council who shared the following:

The Council of Europe recently undertook a study on awareness raising on the rights of persons with disabilities. Findings revealed that there are 80 million people in Europe with a disability. This reflects the 15% of the population, and one in four persons has a family member with a disability. Raising awareness is a key to ensuring the inclusion of persons with disabilities in society and our communities, as ignorance and stereotyping are major causes of the marginalisation of persons with disabilities. Passing legislation is not enough - there needs to be a cultural change if progress is to be made.

It is important to employ a competent strategy in the raising of awareness. A "push approach", where persons are instructed on how to behave or react, will be less effective, as persons are not likely to be motivated to comply. However, a "pull approach", working from the bottom up, involving persons with disabilities to help devise the strategy is more likely to result in a sustainable strategy. For example, awareness can be raised by employers by employing persons with disabilities - this not only gives the individuals independence and empowers them in their everyday lives, but also raises awareness in others (colleagues and/or customers) of their capabilities.

Equally important in the implementation of the strategy is ensuring that persons with disabilities are aware of their rights and involved in the process.

If we are to bring a positive change in the attitudes of people towards persons with disabilities, there needs to be a multi-channelled approach. Government, authorities and leaders have to be on board. The involvement of persons with disabilities themselves is of key importance, and they should be consulted with on the implementation of any strategy to raise awareness.

It is recognised that people who are not familiar with disability often harbour prejudice or fear of the unknown and this needs to be reduced. In addition, ignorance plays a large part in people's attitudes and behaviour towards persons with disabilities, as they are unsure of how to behave or react, afraid that they will do the wrong thing or offend. This often leads to them doing nothing, resulting in persons with disabilities feeling "invisible". Increased interaction between disabled and able-bodied persons should be encouraged and facilitated which will result in the raising of awareness, not only of the issues faced by persons with disabilities, but of the fact that they are actually just normal people who happen to have a disability.

In order for the strategy to succeed, it needs the involvement of all members of society. However, there are certain groups of people that are important to engage. Education for young children is crucial. If they become familiar with disability during childhood they are much less likely to adopt prejudice or stereotypes as adults. Education in schools is paramount. Employers need to realise that persons with disabilities have much to offer their organisations. Public authorities need to outwardly promote positive and proactive attitudes towards persons with disabilities. The involvement of persons with disabilities themselves is imperative.

There are challenges related to the effective implementation of this strategy, not least the financial resources required. However, the seminar contributors were unanimous in their conviction that it can be done. The engagement of volunteers to assist with implementation would be beneficial, particularly if persons with disabilities themselves were encouraged to participate. Implementation could be achieved through various sources including: the use of volunteers, Municipal Disability Councils, a strong image policy, the empowerment of persons with disabilities and various work opportunities.

## **Session 1: Role of media in awareness raising for persons with disabilities**

Contributors: Deborah Jamieson - Officer for Disability Issues and Sam Phillips - Chief Marketing Officer, Omnicom Media Group UK

The focus of this session was the media's role in changing perceptions towards persons with disabilities. It was concluded that the media could play an important role in improving and changing people's attitudes towards persons with disabilities by using positive language and images - focusing on the person as opposed to the disability. In the UK alone, there is data to show that 67% of persons are uncomfortable with disability and 24% avoid talking to someone with a disability.

Raising motivation and expectation - only 9% of employers think that there is a strong business case for hiring a person with disability, making people more aware that persons with disabilities are an integral part of society. The video "Not Special Needs" illustrated these points especially focusing on how the use of terminology can be deemed by some as degrading or patronising.

There are some key challenges which need to be addressed. Persons with disabilities are still under-represented in portrayal in the media, often depicted as being less capable than persons who do not have a disability. There are also fewer persons with disabilities employed in the industry. Media organisations should represent the full community. If products are created with persons with disabilities in mind, it can affect positive social change.

When persons with disabilities are portrayed, the focus tends to be on their disability as opposed to their individuality and often concentrates on the medical aspect of their disability. The artistic abilities of persons with disabilities, for example in the Arts, are not consistently recognised by mainstream media.

Making persons with disabilities more visible in all types of media and not solely focusing on high-profile persons with disabilities ('ordinary' persons with disabilities' stories need to be told), will help to normalise people's perceptions. Two examples of how this could successfully be done were shown - the "We're the Superhumans - Rio Paralympics 2016<sup>5</sup>" trailer and The "Malteser" advert<sup>6</sup>. The latter came as a result of a competition organised by Channel 4 in the UK "to encourage brands and media and creative agencies to prominently feature disability and disabled talent in their

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<sup>5</sup> Available at: <http://www.wearethesuperhumans.com/>

<sup>6</sup> Available at: <http://www.channel4.com/info/press/news/mars-chocolate-uk-celebrates-diversity-in-new-ad-for-maltesers>

advertising campaigns." This advert used sexuality and humour which showed persons with disabilities as everyday people and from a business perspective led to a 7% increase in people liking the brand. This in turn has encouraged the parent company "Mars" to continue on this marketing campaign with the focus on diversity being a brand advantage.

Broadcasters and marketing companies need to use persons with disabilities in all areas of their work (not just on screen but off screen too). The industry needs to recognise the spending power of persons with disabilities (in the UK alone the Purple Pound<sup>7</sup>, which is the money that could be contributed by persons with disabilities is worth £249 Billion).

Christina Davidsen - Presenter, "Del Handicappede Talkshow<sup>8</sup>".

In Denmark, there is a talk show hosted by Christina Davidsen called "Del Handicappede Talkshow", aimed at challenging the stereotypes surrounding disability. Of the many, one of them includes persons who do not have a disability thinking that persons with physical disabilities also have "something wrong with their brains". This leads them to speak slowly and shout at a person rather than talk normally! Christina Davidsen herself appeared on Channel 4's extremely successful series "The Undateables" which aimed to raise awareness of persons with disabilities by showing that they are well rounded, funny and likable.

### Group findings:

Positive messages, e.g. "Yes we can", coupled with humour and down-to-earth images can be extremely useful. We should include persons with disabilities, not just on screen, but as part of the whole process from original conception to dialogue and planning and, finally, the finished piece. We need to make the business case as well as the moral case. With only 9% of employers in the UK thinking that there is strong business case for hiring a disabled person, it is imperative that they fully understand how valuable doing so can be to their business. Basic awareness training for staff can go a long way towards achieving this.

The type of language used by the media needs to be addressed as they can have a strong influence on changing people's perceptions. An example of good practice from Austria was given where they have an online newspaper which gives guidelines to journalists on how to approach disability and gives them appropriate phrases and positive language to use<sup>9</sup>. It is crucial for the media to portray persons with disabilities in 'prime time' as an all-inclusive approach rather than side-line them. In the UK 'Sign Zone<sup>10</sup>' is a television channel that shows British Sign Language interpreted programmes from midnight until 4.00am. This assumes that deaf people who use British Sign Language (BSL) as a first language are awake between these hours.

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<sup>7</sup> Available at: <http://www.bbc.com/news/av/business-39040760/the-power-of-the-purple-pound-explained>

<sup>8</sup> Available at: <http://www.dch.dk/Nyheder/det-handicappede-talkshow-g%C3%A5r-i-luften>

<sup>9</sup> Available at: [www.barrierefreiemedien.at](http://www.barrierefreiemedien.at)

<sup>10</sup> Available at: <http://www.bslzone.co.uk/watch/>

There needs to be a balance between portraying the lives of 'ordinary' persons with disabilities as well as, for example, 'The Superhumans'. Not only can persons with disabilities feel left out or 'not good enough' if this is not achieved but also there is a danger of the general public thinking that all persons with disabilities can be high achievers. Therefore, persons with disabilities and organisations representing them should be including persons with disabilities in all decisions when it comes to portraying them in the media. "Nothing about us without us" should be always taken into account.

Organisations should strive to achieve accessibility not just in their premises, but also throughout the media, television, radio, written publications and websites. Sign language interpreters, audio description, large print and Braille publications and many other forms of accessibility should be taken into account rather than just the physical requirements of a building.

## Recommendations

- Use positive messages surrounding persons with disabilities in the media.
- Include persons with disabilities in all decisions when it comes to portraying them in the media.
- Ensure that media uses positive language when referring to persons with disabilities and that programmes and adverts are shown at all times of the day.
- Ensure the media's needs focus on all types of persons with disabilities rather than just the high achievers (such as, for example, in sport).
- Tackle accessibility in all its many forms and avoid focusing on wheelchair or mobility accessibility only.
- Provide disability awareness training to all staff, at all levels in every organisation.

## Session 2: Awareness raising of persons with disabilities by changing the attitudes of children in schools

Contributor: Orlando Costa - Senior Officer, National Institute for Rehabilitation, Portugal

The main goal is to raise awareness of persons with disabilities for children in schools from a very early age. On average, 2.5% of pupils in schools have a disability. If children grow up in an inclusive environment, preconceptions about persons with disabilities can be averted in later life.

In Portugal, they introduced a competition to make film for students of public and private secondary schools. The first round was at school level, and winners progressed to national level. Prize money was awarded. Up until 2011 this was a very successful initiative, however, in recent years the number of applications for participation has declined, due to social and financial stresses. However, this initiative will continue as it is believed that raising awareness in schools will contribute to inclusion.



Contributor: Vincenzo Falabella, President of the Italian Federation for Overcoming Disability

In Italy there is an inclusive school system. There are 234,000 pupils with disabilities and all are included in mainstream schools and in ordinary lessons. A mixed system exists in Spain, the UK, Sweden and Germany. This presentation was illustrated with analytical data which can be found on the Council of Europe website for this Seminar.

### **Group findings:**

In order to raise awareness in schools, it is imperative to involve teachers. Teacher training should include disability awareness training, and teachers should be shown how to make lessons accessible to all. Accessible materials should be used in lessons and differentiation employed to ensure that every child has access to learning regardless of disability. Teachers also need to know how to challenge stereotypes and encourage acceptance of all.

Parents can also play a large part in raising awareness with their children. The provision of workshops in schools, including parents of children with disabilities and parents of able-bodied children, would benefit all by increasing understanding and enabling interaction.

All schools should be accessible and the involvement of children with disabilities in designing accessible areas would be constructive. There are many assistive aids available, both technological and practical, and these should be used where appropriate.

### **Recommendations**

- Provide disability awareness training in educational environments for both teachers and pupils alike.
- Include disability awareness training in teacher training programmes.
- Use accessible materials in lessons.
- Involve and encourage parents to take part in workshops at school and play a part in raising awareness.
- Ensure that schools are accessible for a much wider range of disabilities, rather than just physical disabilities.



### Session 3: Awareness raising through sport

Contributor: Martha Jo Braycich - Senior Director for Community Impact Initiatives at Special Olympics Europe-Eurasia

Awareness of persons with disabilities in sports has increased over recent years with more prominent coverage of events such as the Paralympics, The Invictus Games and, to a lesser degree, Special Olympics. Many more Special Olympics events are being organised in every country for children with disabilities – last year there were more than 100,000 events held in 172 countries worldwide, with 5 million participating athletes.

Being involved in sports is very beneficial for children with an intellectual disability and a great way to achieve inclusion. It improves their self-confidence and gives them opportunities for social interaction, both with other children who have an intellectual disability and with children who do not have a disability. Events organised at school can help them bond with their peers and these positive experiences will remain with them in to adult life.

Support is needed to encourage more activities led by young persons in local communities – involvement in such events will help to break down prejudice and reduce bullying. In addition, being involved in a sports activity or club does not just involve participating in the sport – there are opportunities for young persons with a disability to get involved in others ways, for example as coaches, administrators and fund-raisers, helping to change the perception of persons who do not have a disability and giving them skills they can take in to adulthood.

#### Example: Martin Nielsen

Martin Nielsen is a 24 year old Special Olympics athlete. He has been an athlete for 5 years having heard about it at a local club. He described how he started with football and graduated to athletics – he has competed in a number of Special Olympics and won several medals. Martin Nielsen explained that he likes the opportunities that being involved in athletics affords him, such as meeting people from other countries and making new friends. He likes sport as it gives him a purpose and something enjoyable to occupy his time when he has finished school. When he completes his schooling he would like to secure a job as a coach. In the past he has organised workshops on wellbeing and has led training sessions on different running techniques.

Contributor: Mads Henriksen - Teacher at the Handicap Sports Knowledge Centre Denmark

The participants spoke heard about a sports school for young adults This concentrates more on personal development programmes, giving young persons with disabilities the opportunity to develop self-confidence, aiming to empower them and give them life skills which will help with independence in their own lives and interaction within their community. The children's own experiences are drawn upon when establishing the programmes, ensuring they are relevant. Mr. Henriksen works with local elementary schools, the University of Copenhagen, teachers and other specialised schools.

The aim of Parasport Denmark<sup>11</sup> is to include children with disabilities in general sports clubs. It is recognised that experiences with families, at school and participating in hobbies all influence a young person's social identity. Generally, schools only offer physical education lessons, and if young person wants to get more involved in sports they have to go to a sports club run by volunteers. These clubs give young persons with disabilities the chance to meet new friends and interact with persons of different ages, from children to adults. The training given at Parasport is adapted to suit the needs of the person receiving it.

Parasport runs a team inclusion project which is aimed at 6-18 years old going to a special school and with developmental disability, ADHD, autism or a physical disability. They run the project in collaboration with a sports club and the special school. Potential participants and their parents are invited to the club and a team is formed. Initially, the team is trained by a Parasport coach, supported by staff from the school. As the team progresses, the school staff pull back from the training and a Parasport Superleder organises the team ongoing. Superleders are volunteers who are committed to inclusion - they are the team administrators, organising activities, participation in competitions and matches and social events.

Parasport is funded by the National Board of Social Services which enables them to pay for the school staff, compensate the Superleder and coach and fund inclusive activities and social events. The involvement of the school at the beginning, when the team is formed, provides reassurance to the parents, young people and the sports club that it is a safe environment.

The Special Olympics is integrated in to the Danish sports system and is part of Parasport. In the UK, Special Olympics is a separate NGO working with the Youth Trust and suffers from lack of funding. In many countries the Special Olympics does not enjoy the same status as the Paralympics.

An evaluation was conducted in five European countries to examine the impact that Special Olympics has on the lives of young persons with disabilities<sup>12</sup>. It concluded that involvement in Special Olympics has engendered more positive attitudes from people who do not have a disability – they view the person with a disability as an athlete and a member of the team rather than as a person with disabilities.

## **Group findings:**

In considering what has been effective in the raising of awareness of persons with disabilities through sport, several benefits were identified. The general public is more ready to view persons with disabilities as normal. It encourages young persons with disabilities to get involved in sports, improving their physical and mental health and instilling the value of working as a team as well as perseverance and tenacity. Clubs and coaches are learning adaptive training techniques in order to increase inclusion.

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<sup>11</sup> Available at: <http://parasport.dk>

<sup>12</sup> 'Unified Gives us a Chance': An Evaluation of Special Olympics Youth Unified Sports Programme in Europe/Eurasia, available at: <https://www.specialolympics.org/uploadedFiles/LandingPage/WhatWeDo/Final%20Report%20Unified%20Sports10%20Sept%202010.pdf>

Supporters of teams, whether they have a disability or not, have a shared interest, which highlights more what they have in common rather than their differences. Paralympic athletes provide inspiration for young people and can be employed to promote the positive impact that being involved in sports can have on a person's life and help to devise sports programmes for young people. Media coverage of Paralympic sport has increased significantly and this has contributed to more positive attitudes amongst viewers, both those with a disability and those who do not have a disability. It was also noted that we should not only raise awareness through professional sport, but encourage young persons with disabilities to get involved in sport for the sake of sports. To be a part of a club as a hobby is just as important.

There are challenges faced by those aiming to raise awareness of persons with disabilities through sport. Sports grounds and facilities have to be made accessible and there are often financial and physical difficulties related to this. Equally, it is not always easy for a person with disabilities to travel to and from the sports facility or indeed to competitions and matches. There is a lack of funding for sports activities for persons with disabilities. It is also recognised that more encouragement is needed for women with disabilities to get involved in sports because discrimination occurs both because of their gender and disability. Inclusive sports are a positive way to address and highlight both issues.

## Recommendations

- Promote adaptive training techniques to clubs and coaches in order to increase inclusion for persons with disabilities.
- Encourage young persons with disabilities to get involved in sport as a good way of keeping fit and as a hobby.
- Ensure that sports grounds and facilities are made accessible for a wide range of persons with disabilities.
- Encourage women with disabilities to get involved in sporting activities, as they are subject to discrimination on multiple grounds.
- Provide disability awareness training to coaches, teams and individual participants within the sporting environment.

## Session 4: Breaking down prejudice in employment for persons with disabilities

Contributor: Valerija Buzan - European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities

The aim of the European Association of Service Providers (EASPD), a non-profit NGO in the disability sector, is to provide community based services focussing on persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities receives support from professionals at home to assess their needs and the particular support they require, then the public funding they receive is paid directly to them rather than to a service provider, allowing them to choose which provider to use themselves.

In order for persons with disabilities to increase their employability there needs to be a robust teaching and support system in schools to help them develop confidence,

life and social skills. Ms. Buzan gave examples of a café, bakery and hostel that employ persons with disabilities or learning difficulties and how they focus on the person's strengths and abilities rather than what they are not able to do.

Contributor: Morten Wulf, Fonden Unges, Denmark

Mr. Wulf gave an example of good practice in the Youth Foundation which works with young persons with autism to help them develop life and employment skills which will allow them to integrate in to the workplace. A programme called 'Ready to Start' works with local authorities and provides young persons with autism with an opportunity to join an internship<sup>13</sup>. The local authority funds the internship, providing 2000 euros per month, which also covers the cost of a support worker. This means that 85% of young persons with autism who join such an internship retain their employment after a year. Supermarkets for instance traditionally have a high turnover of staff and are now increasingly employing persons with autism.

There is no quick fix for the challenge of increasing the number of persons with autism in the workplace. Many potential employees with a disability want to work, but have no previous experience which disadvantages them. The integral part of 'Ready to Start' programme is a scheme where a mentor (external to the business) trains the employee in certain skills and tasks and measures on a quarterly basis how their effectiveness is progressing. Afterwards the employer pays a salary, which reflects the effectiveness of the employee concerned. There are currently 75 adults on the scheme and 49 of those are in regular employment.

Contributor: Anni Sorensen, President for LEV, Danish Organisation for persons with intellectual disabilities

This NGO was established in 2009 to support some of the 50,000 persons with intellectual disabilities in Denmark. Klapjob is a project which has helped more than 2,500 persons with intellectual disabilities gain employment. Persons with intellectual disabilities contact Klapjob, often assisted by a support worker or local municipality. 85% of applicants, after a short work placement, remain in the workplace.

There are many benefits of being in employment. Quality of life is improved along with enhanced financial stability. Often they enjoy better health therefore reducing the need for support from professionals. Having a work identity helps provide motivation and improve self-esteem.

There are challenges faced in implementing projects of this kind. Persons in segregated environments often do not want to change the status quo and families and professionals express anxiety about removing persons from protected environments. Some local authorities are reluctant to co-operate with NGOs. In addition the projects have to be financed by the state and there is limited funding.

## **Group findings:**

In order to bring about effective progress in breaking down prejudices in employment for persons with disabilities, there needs to be a sturdy business case in place for both business and authorities, based on case studies and data analysis. Employers,

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<sup>13</sup> Available at: <http://klartilstart.dk/>

local and central government, have to work collaboratively to produce a robust support infrastructure for persons with a disability, and benefits and allowances have to be structured to ensure the person has access to work. Funding should be made available to entrepreneurs who are committed to inclusion in the workplace. As well as effective teaching and support in schools, parents should be encouraged to develop their child's personal autonomy and prepare them for living independent lives. Social and wider media should be spurred on to dedicate more time to disability awareness issues.

There are challenges involved in making employment more inclusive. Any business case needs to be measurable to enable monitoring of its effectiveness. Employers need to be positively incentivised to employ persons with disabilities – punitive measures, such as insisting that a certain percentage of their workforce are persons with disabilities and issuing fines if not, are not working. Many persons with disabilities currently find that gaining employment leaves them worse off financially due to loss of benefits which discourages them from seeking work and this is an important hurdle to overcome. Preparation for life after school needs to be increased in education, through lessons, careers workshops and support groups.

## Recommendations

- Promote inclusive development and collection of reliable disability data to show that it is good for both businesses and the economy, and to help break down prejudices in employment for persons with disabilities.
- Provide incentives, including funding, to entrepreneurs who are committed to inclusion in the workplace.
- Give visibility to good practice examples of employers who hire persons with disabilities.
- Encourage educational establishments to provide career workshops and support groups to young students with disabilities to better prepare them for professional life and job market.
- Provide disability awareness training to all employees, from senior to the most junior levels.

## Summary

The seminar was brought to a close by Mie Henriette Eriksen and Liri Kopaçi-Di Michele who rounded up the events of the two days, gave us their final thoughts on the subject and talked about work ahead.

Ms. Henriette Eriksen impressed upon us that it is crystal clear why this issue is so important but while the object itself of raising awareness for persons with disabilities is straightforward we have many tasks ahead of us in order to achieve it. If we are to succeed we must take a multi-directional approach involving many stakeholders. We must include persons with disabilities in all aspects of awareness raising as they are some of the best ambassadors for changing attitudes. The Danish Chairmanship will continue a mutual co-operation with other European nations.

Ms. Kopaçi-Di Michele reminded us that while we have achieved some good work - challenging prejudices, stigma and accessibility barriers - there is much to do. Stereotypes are all around us and education from an early age is of key importance. The school environment is very important and children must learn the value of diversity from an early age.

Diversity and inclusion, surveys and data collection should be at the heart of policy making and it is heartening to see so many good practices taking place. The media play such an important role in challenging stigma, stereotypes and negative attitudes. Sport can provide many opportunities and promote healthier lifestyles, and having a job is very important not just from a financial perspective - it can improve quality of life and contribute greatly towards society.

The promotion of good practice is paramount and something that the Council of Europe is doing through seminars such as these - through presentations, group work and recommendations we can find insights in to the challenges ahead and identify ways to overcome them. We must continue these conversations in order to break down barriers cement clear objectives and find the right strategies in order to achieve our aims. Some of the good examples of work we have heard about during this seminar are easily transferable and we must learn to use them. Change is possible if there is enough political will and leadership. We must strive for this and ensure support for all people at a grass roots level.

The governments of member States will drive the implementation of the Council of Europe Disability Strategy; however, persons with disabilities, NGOs and other stakeholders will also play an important role. All member States will benefit from the support of the Council of Europe, as it continues to facilitate seminars such as these inviting discussions, deliberations and the exchange of good practice.



## Contributors:

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