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Accompanying document to the

**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL, THE
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**

**Situation of disabled people in the European Union: the European Action Plan 2008-
2009**

ANNEXES

{COM(2007) 738 final}

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Situation of disabled people in the European Union: the European Action Plan 2008-2009

ANNEX 1: SITUATION OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

As the likelihood of being restricted in the ability to work as a result of a long-standing health problem or disability (LSHPD) increases with age, it is a concern that.

- the number of older persons in need of care will more than double by 2050, increasing the demand for formal care services;¹
- furthermore, even though disability prevalence rates have declined to some extent in some countries, the ageing of the population and the greater longevity of individuals can be expected to lead to increasing numbers of people at older ages with a severe disability and in need of long-term care.²

However, mental health problems now account for a quarter of new disability benefit claims in the EU³ and are becoming a leading cause of disability.

People born with a disability tend to attain lower education levels than those who acquire a disability later in life. Furthermore, people with disabilities participate less in education and have lower educational qualifications than those without a disability:

- only 63% of the 16-19 age group who were considerably restricted in their ability to work participated in education or training compared to 83% of those not restricted.
- over 50% of those aged 25-64 who were considerably restricted in their ability to work had no educational qualifications beyond compulsory schooling, compared to 32% of those reporting no restriction.

The employment rate of disabled people remains stable (50%) but is still well below that for the rest of the population (68%)⁴. This gap tends to increase with age and with the level of restriction:

¹ Commission staff working document, Europe's demographic future: facts and figures SEC(2007) 638.

² OCDE: Trends in Severe Disability Among Elderly People DELSA/HEA/WD/HWP (2007).

³ EC report: "Social inclusion in the EU 2003".

⁴ New figures from the 2004 EU-SILC data are similar to those for the 2002 LFS module.

- people aged between 16 and 24 who are considerably restricted in their ability to work have an employment rate of 27% compared to 45% for those with no such restrictions, but among the 55-64 group the employment rate of those considerably restricted was only 15% compared with 45% for those not restricted;
- barely 24% of people aged 16-64 who are considerable restricted in their ability to work are in employment versus 62% of those restricted only to some extent.

The general reduction in unemployment has not resulted in more jobs for disabled people: indeed it seems that disabled people are more likely to drop out of the labour market altogether⁵.

Disabled people with learning or intellectual disabilities are much less likely to work, but even disabled people with higher education are less likely to be employed (48%) in high-level jobs (48%) than their non-disabled peers (85%).

Restrictions in mobility to and from work have a greater effect on participation in the labour market than restrictions affecting the kind or amount of work

In 2002, on average across the Member States, of the 48% of those who were considerably restricted and reported a need for assistance in order to be employed only 21% received it. Over 8% of people employed aged 25-64 with an LSHPD worked in sheltered employment.

As highlighted in a recent European Parliament resolution⁶, women with disabilities have less independence, less access to education and to employment, and face a greater risk of exclusion and threat of violence, injury or abuse, than both men with disabilities and able-bodied women. An analysis of the available data shows that women with disabilities are likely to have lower educational levels and lower employment rates than men with disabilities (Annex 2).

⁵ OECD: sickness, disability and work, breaking the barriers, volume 1 2006.

⁶ A6-0075/2007 of 26 April 2007.

ANNEX 2: SITUATION OF WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES

Introduction:

The cumulative effect of attitudes to both gender and disability is that women with disabilities often have less independence and less access to their rights, in particular with regard to education, training and health services. They also face the risk of abuse, including sexual abuse. Although discrimination against women and against people with disabilities is being addressed separately with increasing attention and urgency, a more integrated approach is needed to tackle the dual discrimination.

Following up its 2005 Communication on the European Disability Action Plan for 2006-2007⁷ (priority relating to the EU's capacity for analysis), the Commission has started to analyse the specific situation of women with disabilities.

The Commission has strongly supported the inclusion of provisions in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities⁸ for mainstreaming gender issues and eliminating all forms of discrimination against people with disabilities. For its part, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on 20 April 2007⁹ on the basis of Mrs Herranz Garcia's initiative report¹⁰.

The EU objective is now clearly defined: it is to ensure that all those with disabilities, whether girls or boys, women or men, as well as the parents of disabled children can exercise the same rights and obligations as others. Hence the need to collect data on the situation of women with disabilities to support the development of informed policies.

Methodology

The present document is largely based on the 2002 Labour Force Survey (LFS) disability module while taking into account the first data collection for the EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC), carried out in 2004¹¹, in which all data are broken down by gender. While the first covers all EU Member States, except Latvia, Poland and Bulgaria, plus Norway, the second covers only 13 Member States — the EU 15 countries apart from Germany, the Netherlands and the UK, plus Estonia, together with Norway.

The LFS sample size is big and the questions relating to disabilities are extensive and detailed. The results of the analysis of the EU-SILC data, insofar as they cover the same issues, are broadly consistent with those of the LFS, especially in respect of the differences between those who are restricted in their ability to work and those who are not. The results of the analysis of earnings and income levels are based on the EU-SILC, since these aspects are not completely covered in the LFS.

⁷ COM(2005) 604 final of 28 November 2005.

⁸ UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities:
<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/conventioninfo.htm>.

⁹ A6-0075/2007 of 26 April 2007.

¹⁰ Report of the European Parliament on the situation of women with disabilities in the European Union:
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/omk/sipade3?PROG=REPORT&SORT_ORDER=D&REF_A=A6-2007-0075&L=EN.

¹¹ "Men and women with disabilities in the EU", Applica, CESEP and Alphametrics, April 2007.

Findings

Prevalence of disability among women

Some 9.5% of all women of working age (16-64) in the EU are restricted in relation to the work they can do¹², while 6% are considerably restricted. Among those aged 55-64, the proportion of those restricted rises to almost 19% and those considerably restricted to around 12.5%. These figures are slightly lower than those for men, perhaps reflecting the lower tendency among women to seek work, and therefore to regard themselves as restricted in these terms. The EU-SILC for 2004 shows slightly more women than men to be restricted in their normal activities. The proportion of women of working age reporting restrictions in the work they can do varies markedly across Member States — from over 16% in Portugal, Slovenia and Finland to 6% or less in Spain, Italy, Luxembourg and Malta. The proportion of those regarding themselves as considerably restricted varies equally widely. Self-perceptions, therefore, differ substantially between countries.

Access to education

Young women who are restricted in the work they can do are much less likely to be in education beyond compulsory schooling than those who are not restricted. In the EU as a whole, only 61% of women aged 16-19 who report being considerably restricted were in education or training in 2002 as opposed to 84% of those not restricted. Among women aged 20-24, 26% of those considerably restricted were in education or training as against 45% of those not restricted. The figures for women restricted only to some extent are closer to those for women not restricted but still remain lower (79% for the 16-19 group, 38% for 20-24).

Education levels

The lower participation rates in education are reflected in lower education levels. In 2002, some 58% of women aged 25-64 who were considerably restricted had only basic schooling, as compared with 38% of those not restricted. Only 10% had tertiary or university education, as against 21% of those not restricted. This pattern is evident to varying extents in every Member State.

Employment rate

Only just under 27% of women of working age who were considerably restricted were in employment in the EU in 2002 as compared with almost 59% of those not restricted. The difference is substantial in all Member States, apart from Belgium, where the gap is only 6 percentage points. Among women restricted only to some extent, the average employment rate was lower than for those not restricted, but only slightly so — 55% as against almost 59%. But the latter figure is somewhat misleading, since in over half the Member States the employment rate for women with only some restriction is over 10 percentage points below that for those without restrictions, and in Lithuania, Slovakia and Romania around 25 percentage points below.

These lower employment rates reflect the lower education levels of women with restrictions as compared with those without, but this is only part of the explanation. At each level of educational attainment, women who are restricted — in common with men — have lower

¹² Either in the kind or amount of work or in their mobility to and from work.

employment rates than those who are not. For women with tertiary education reporting considerable restrictions, for example, the average employment rate was just under 50% as opposed to just under 80% for those not restricted. For women with the same education level but restricted only to some extent, the employment rate averaged 74%, closer to the rate for those not restricted. However, the gap was still around 10 percentage points or more in half the countries.

Need for support

Among women who are restricted in the work they can do, the lack of support they receive to overcome their restrictions seems to be only a partial explanation of the relatively large numbers who are not in employment. In 2002, under half (46%) of women aged 16-64 in the EU who were considerably restricted thus reported needing support in order to be able to work. Among those restricted only to some extent, the proportion was only 17%.

Earning levels

Data from the EU-SILC for 2004, which cover 13 EU Member States, give an insight into the earnings of women with disabilities as well as their relative income levels. The wage gap between men and women is equally evident for those with restrictions as for those without. Women who were strongly restricted in what they can do earned around 17% less on average than their male counterparts. Women who were restricted to a smaller extent earned on average some 22% less than men with the same degree of restriction. The earnings of both women and men with restrictions were, moreover, substantially lower than those without. Women who were strongly restricted in what they can do, therefore, earned on average around 38% less than men who were not restricted, while women who were less restricted earned 35% less.

The difference in earnings between those who are restricted in what they can do and those who are not reflect to a large extent differences in educational levels and, accordingly, in the jobs they do. Nevertheless, women who are restricted still tend to earn less than those not restricted — and very much less than men with no restrictions — within broad occupational groups.

Income levels

On average across the countries covered by the EU-SILC, just over 16% of women of working age who were strongly restricted in what they could do had incomes below the poverty line in 2003 (defined as 60% of the median level in the country in which they live)¹³. This was also the case for 14% of women who were restricted to a lesser extent. These figures compare with just under 11% of women who were not restricted and had incomes below this level and the 10% of men. Nevertheless, the proportion of men who were restricted with incomes below the poverty line was even larger (20% of those strongly restricted and almost 17% of those restricted to a lesser extent).

¹³ Income here is measured as income of the household in which people live, which is assumed to be shared equally between them. It is equivalised for differences in household structure to take account of the fact that people living in the same household can share resources and therefore live more cheaply than those living alone.

Not unexpectedly, the average income of those who are restricted in what they can do is also less on average than that for those who are not restricted. The average disposable income of women who were strongly restricted was on average in the countries covered only around 85% of the income of those not restricted, while for those restricted to a lesser extent, it was 92%. These figures, however, vary across Member States. In Estonia and Ireland, the average income of women strongly restricted was under 70% of those not restricted, and for women restricted to a lesser extent it was under 80%.

Although they might not succeed in lifting incomes above the poverty line, the benefits received by women who are restricted nevertheless raise their relative level of income significantly. Before benefits, therefore, the average income of women of working age who are strongly restricted was only around 63% of those who are not restricted, and for women who are restricted to a lesser extent around 79%. In both cases, therefore, the effect of benefits is to reduce the gap in income with those who are not restricted by around 60%. Again, there is a marked variation in the effect of benefits in raising relative incomes across the EU: in France and Sweden, it was well over twice as large as in Estonia, around twice large as in Ireland and almost twice as large as in Portugal.

ANNEX 3: BUILDING DISABILITY STATISTICS — COMMISSION ACTIVITIES

Under Eurostat's annual work programme and in line with the European Disability Strategy, which aims to support equal opportunities for all people with disabilities, activities are under way in the European Statistical System (ESS)¹⁴ to develop Community statistics on disability and social integration — through Partnership Health and in cooperation with international organisations.

Introduction: policy needs for disability statistics

The objective of European statistical activities is to provide relevant, reliable and comparable statistical data to establish a picture of the overall situation of disabled persons in Europe on the basis of the social model of disability, i.e. by measuring differences in opportunities and participation and taking into consideration the contextual factors (both personal and environmental) that make up the physical, social and attitudinal environment in which people with disabilities live.

These statistical data, together with research data, in turn support the informed formulation and implementation of disability policies at the various levels of governance concerned. They can also be used to construct indicators of participation in society and economy to assess the inclusion of people with disabilities and enable the monitoring of European disability-related policies so as to ensure that people with disabilities have actual access to their rights.

These data are essential to the European Disability Strategy, in particular for assessing the progress made in filling the gaps between people with disabilities and the people without a disability (in employment, in education, in access to services, etc.). Regular updated statistics are also crucial to identify the challenges and risks of exclusion in a rapidly changing environment so as to reflect them in the priorities for the mainstreaming of disability-related issues in relevant EU policies. Moreover, they are now indispensable in order to meet the monitoring requirements in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Article 31).

More detailed statistical data on disability are also needed in order to respond, for example, to the specific requirements for health information in the Programme of Community Action in the field of public health (2003-2008)¹⁵. Health information at Community level covers data ranging from health status — including disability — to health determinants, including demography, geography and socio-economic situations, personal and biological factors, and living, working and environmental conditions, with a particular focus on inequalities in health.

¹⁴ European Statistical System, see: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page?_pageid=1153_47169267_1153_47183518&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL

¹⁵ Decision No 1786/2002/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2002 adopting a programme of Community action in the field of public health (2003-2008), OJEC L 271/10

Basic instruments

In general, comparable data on disability and on the integration of people with disabilities into society can be obtained only by means of surveys that make use of common instruments. Health Interview Surveys (HIS) and Disability Interview Surveys (DIS) are widely accepted instruments that could provide comparable data on health, disability and social integration.

At European level, steps have been taken to arrive at comparable data in the area of disability statistics through the use of surveys. The first step towards developing a data collection on aspects of disability in a coordinated way across Europe was a small module on 'health' in the European Community Household Panel (1994-2001). In 2001, Eurostat published a pocket book with the results gained from the panel data collected on the disability questions for the years 1994-1996¹⁶. The second step was the collection by Eurostat of 18 HIS items on health from national surveys (including activity limitations). However, the frequency and completeness of the data are not the same across the Member States. The third step (in 2000/2001) was the preparation of a module on the employment of disabled people, which was included in the **2002 European Labour Force Survey (LFS)**¹⁷.

In 2001, the World Health Assembly adopted the **International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF)**. This new classification, which replaced the old ICIHD classification, provides a new conceptual framework for disability statistics, with an emphasis on participation and environmental factors.

In June 2001, the United Nations Statistical Division (UNSD) organised a seminar on the use of the ICF for statistical purposes, in particular in population surveys. At this meeting, which saw a coordinated contribution from the EU, a 'city' group on disability statistics was created (the **Washington Group (WG)**) with a view to agreeing on reference instruments for measuring disability in censuses and population-based surveys. Since then, the WG has already met 7 times and the last sixth meeting was held on 19-21 October 2007, in Dublin¹⁸.

Specific instruments

In order to have a more coordinated and harmonised input at the WG meetings and to prepare a proposal for a EU programme to promote the coherent development of disability statistics, as agreed by the Working Group on Public Health Statistics, Eurostat has been supporting — by way of a grant — the **European Disability Measurement (EDM)** project¹⁹.

In 2002, the EDM project resulted in the conclusion that — for the development of disability statistics at EU level and in line with the WG recommendations — two different tracks should be followed:

¹⁶ See: Disability and social participation in Europe. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg, 2001, http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-AW-01-001/EN/KS-AW-01-001-EN.PDF.

¹⁷ Employment of disabled people in Europe in 2002, see: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-NK-03-026/EN/KS-NK-03-026-EN.PDF.

¹⁸ Washington City Group: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/citygroup.htm>.

¹⁹ EDM project: <http://forum.europa.eu.int/Public/irc/dsis/health/library>.

- **track A**, relating to general disability items and questions/instruments suitable for a census or general nationwide surveys, which is the first priority of the WG;
- **track B**, relating to **specific disability items** and questions/instruments (including environment and participation), which is the second priority for the WG.

For **track A**, the Member States then agreed on the three general disability/health items and questions — **the Minimum European Health Module (MEHM)** — which is now included in the annual Eurostat social survey on Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (SILC), starting in 2004²⁰. This proposal was also the EU's input for the work of the WG.

For **track B**, the EDM project proposed a stepwise approach and presented a draft list of specific core items for the measurement of disability in European population surveys, taking into account the EuroReves list, a proposal from ISTAT, and the lists produced by the World Health Organisation (WHO), UNSD and DISTAB.

Towards an EU framework for the regular collection of harmonised data

In 2002, a proposal by the Task Force on health and health-related survey data (TF/HIS) to introduce a framework for the regular collection of harmonised data by means of surveys and/or survey modules on health, named the European Health Survey System (EHSS), was welcomed by the meeting of the European Directors of Social Statistics and endorsed by the Working Group on Public Health Statistics in 2002, which also endorsed the recommendations of the EDM project.

The aim of the EHSS is to anticipate the health information needs of the Member States and the EU in the medium term (2003-2008), including the needs under the new Community public health programme and other EU programmes, such as the Commission's action plan on 'Equal opportunities for People with Disabilities'. It should coordinate the HIS/DIS efforts, avoiding unnecessary overlap and incompatibilities and filling current gaps in health information.

Health Core related modules have subsequently been developed to implement the **European Health Interview Survey (EHIS)**. The first module is the European Health Status Module (EHSM), the full version of which already contains 17 of the 30 items listed in track B of the EDM report²¹. Other modules relate to health determinants and health care. The final versions of all modules were agreed with national experts at the Technical Group HIS meeting (October 2006) and were accepted by the Working Group on Public Health Statistics in November 2006²².

In order to obtain more complete coverage of the items listed in track B and in order to measure disability in all the aspects covered by the International Classification of Functions

²⁰ EuroReves report:
http://forum.europa.eu.int/Public/irc/dsis/health/library?l=/reports/healthsinterviewssurvey/echis_euroreves_102003&vm=detailed&sb=Title.

²¹ A shorter version will be used in EHIS.

²² Final version of the 1st round EHIS questionnaire for 2007-2008 (for disability see the part on EHSM):
http://forum.europa.eu.int/Public/irc/dsis/health/library?l=/methodologiessandsdatasc/healthsinterviewssurvey/2007-2008_methodology/questionnaire_versionpdf/EN_1.0_&a=d.

(ICF), a specific project was launched in 2006 by Eurostat. The primary aim of this project is **to develop a survey module on *Disability and Social Integration***. This module is to be designed as a free-standing module that could be included in non-health surveys such as a Labour Force Survey to provide health information. It will also be a core additional component of the European Health Interview Survey (EHIS), so should complement the other modules already prepared.

Reference documents and websites:

- Data on people with disabilities with reference to health status and labour market situation, available on the EUROSTAT website under the theme: ‘Population and social conditions’ → ‘Data’ → ‘Health’ or ‘labour market’:

<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/>

- Tech-HIS/2003/09, Implementation of ECHIS, Technical Meeting on Health and Health Interview Survey Statistics, Luxembourg, 12-13 June 2003, available on the public-access Circa portal: Public Health Statistics → Library → Open calls for proposals → Development of a survey module on disability and social integration:

<http://forum.europa.eu.int/Public/irc/dsis/health/library>

- Commission Regulation (EC) No 1983/2003 of 7 November 2003 implementing European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No 1177/2003 concerning Community statistics on income and living conditions (EU-SILC), as regards the list of primary target variables — available at:

http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/pri/en/oj/dat/2003/l_298/l_29820031117en00340085.pdf

- Doc. Eurostat/E0/02/DSS/5/3/EN relating to the meeting of the European directors of social statistics — Luxembourg, 23 September 2002 — on the harmonised results from surveys and/on survey modules on health — available on the Circa portal under Social Statistics Directors → Library → DSS meetings → Meetings 2002 → Meeting 2002 09 23 → Documents:

http://forum.europa.eu.int/Public/irc/dsis/ssd/library?l=/dss_meetings/meetings_2002/meeting_2002_09/documents&vm=detailed&sb=Title

- Report to Eurostat on the European Health Status Module (EHSM)– EuroReves — October 2003, — available on the Circa portal under Public health statistics → Library → Reports and ongoing methodological developments → Health Interview Survey → ECHIS — European Health Status Module — EuroReves report 31/10/2003:

http://forum.europa.eu.int/Public/irc/dsis/health/library?l=/reports/healthsinterviewsurvey/echis_euroreves_102003&vm=detailed&sb=Title

- 2005 English questionnaire for the European Health Status Module — available on the Circa portal under Public Health Statistics → Library → Reports and ongoing methodological developments → Health Interview Survey → ECHIS — European Health Status Module — English questionnaire, version 2005, to be used for translation:

http://forum.europa.eu.int/Public/irc/dsis/health/library?l=/reports/healthsinterviewsurvey/questionnaire_translatio&vm=detailed&sb=Title

- EDM project: final report available on the Circa portal under Public Health Statistics → Library → Open calls for proposals → Development of a survey module on disability and social integration

<http://forum.europa.eu.int/Public/irc/dsis/health/library>

- Washington City Group: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/citygroup.htm>
- Questionnaire for the first EHIS round (2007-2008): final report available on the Circa portal under Public Health Statistics → Public Health → Methodologies and data collections → Library under Statistics → European Health Interview Survey (EHIS) 2007-2008 → ‘Health Interview Survey’ methodology

<http://forum.europa.eu.int/Public/irc/dsis/Home/main?index>

- The proposal for a Regulation (EC) of the European Parliament and of the Council on public health and health and safety at work statistics aims to establish a framework for all current and foreseeable activities carried out by the European Statistical System in the field of public health and health and safety at work:

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/Result.do?T1=V5&T2=2007&T3=46&RechType=RECH_naturel&Sumbmit=Rechercher

ANNEX 4: THE EU DISABILITY ACTION PLAN 2006-2007- ACHIEVEMENTS AT EU

PRIORITY ACTION	INSTRUMENTS	ACHIEVEMENTS
1. ENCOURAGING ACTIVITY		
<p>Encouraging Member States and social partners to improve access of disabled people to the open labour market and to mainstream disability issues in Member States reform programmes.</p>	<p>Mainstreaming of disability issues in the European Employment Strategy through dialogue with Member States in relevant fora.</p>	<p>On the basis of its 2005 discussion paper on disability mainstreaming under the revised guidelines of the European Employment Strategy, the Commission analysed the 2006 Member State reports on the implementation of their national reform programmes. The Commission contributed its findings to the 2006 Joint Employment Communication.</p> <p>http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/employment_strategy/employment_en.htm</p> <p>This analysis showed a need to reinforce positive measures to support people with disabilities in all the employment guidelines, not merely the guideline relating to disadvantaged groups. This is to be seen in light of the recognition by the Council, in point 34 of its 2006 Spring Conclusions, of disabled people as a priority group for employment measures. The analysis also showed that the low level of data collection on disability remains a matter of concern and makes it difficult to measure progress in this important area. The overall results of this analysis are reflected in the present Communication.</p> <p>http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/disability/emco010705_en.pdf</p>
<p>Promoting the use of new Structural Funds, in particular the European Social Fund (ESF), to support employment, training and equal opportunities for disabled people as well as the development of an accessible environment.</p>	<p>Mainstreaming disability related results of the Equal initiative.</p> <p>ESF Conference, European Year of Equal Opportunities for All.</p>	<p>Article 16 of the Council Regulation (EC) No. 1083/2006 laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund introduced provisions calling for the prevention of any form of discrimination based on disability at all stages in the implementation of the Funds and also provides that 'accessibility for disabled persons shall be one of the criteria to be observed in defining operations co-financed by the Funds and to be taken into account during the various stages of implementation'²³. Furthermore, the Community strategic guidelines on economic, social and territorial cohesion²⁴, which provide an indicative framework for Member States in the preparation of the programmes for 2007-2013, contain scope for support to disabled people, including in the fields of transport, ICT, access to finance and labour market</p> <p>A Commission conference was organised on "The European Social Fund and Disability" on 21 September 2006 to discuss the practical implementation issues with key stakeholders. Proceedings of the Conference can be found at</p> <p>http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/emplweb/events/event_en.cfm?id=645</p> <p>In addition, the Commission provided information to the MS on how to reflect the disability perspective in the European Social Fund</p>

²³ Council Regulation 1083/2006/EC Article 16

²⁴ Council Decision 2006/702/EC

²⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/index/hlg_esf_nsrf_en.pdf

		programming phases ²⁵ and will develop a practical European Social Fund tool kit by the end of 2007.
Reviewing the European Commission block exemption regulation on employment and training aids for the employment of disadvantaged categories of workers (EC) No 2204/2002 of 12.12.2002.	Analysis and dialogue with Member States and stakeholders in the EU Disability High Level Group in view of updating and adjusting EU competition legislation.	<p>The current Commission Regulations (EC) No 2204/2002 of 12 December 2002 on the application of Articles 87 and 88 of the EC Treaty to State aid for employment and No 68/2001 of 12 January 2001 on the application of Articles 87 and 88 of the Treaty to training aid — which are also applicable to the recruitment and training of disadvantaged and disabled people — will expire on 30 June 2008.</p> <p>In line with the 2005 State Aid Action Plan, the European Commission presented for consultation, on 24 April 2007, a draft Commission Regulation with new rules to exempt certain subsidies from the notification obligation under the EC Treaty state aid rules. The Commission has invited interested parties to submit their comments by 3 June 2007.</p> <p>Following discussions with the Member States in the Advisory Committee on State Aid on 3-4 July 2007, a revised draft regulation has been published for a second formal consultation of the interested parties (EC Official Journal of 8 September 2007). After taking into account the comments of interested stakeholders, the draft regulation will be submitted to the College of Commissioners, before being re-discussed with Member States in the Advisory Committee on State Aid. The text under consultation is available in all EU languages on the following website:</p> <p>http://ec.europa.eu/comm/competition/state_aid/reform/reform.html</p>
Promoting good practice approaches for integration of social criteria into procurement	A guide on the incorporation of social criteria into public procurement in the framework of the EU CSR Action Plan 2005-2009 and on the basis of the EU public procurement directives.	A guide on the incorporation of social criteria in public procurement is under preparation. To assist the Commission in this work, a call for a study examining social considerations in public procurement has been launched. Among other things, the study will address disability issues, including how to deal with discrimination on grounds of disability and how to foster accessibility through public procurement.
Encouraging EU social partners to assess the impact of their framework agreements on disabled people and to increase the participation of people with disabilities in their organisations.	Reinforced dialogue in the Liaison Forum. Extension of dialogue at cross industry level in the framework of the Social Dialogue Committee.	<p>Consultations took place in the first half of 2007 with the social partners to explore their possible contribution to the European Disability Action Plan and identify priorities for the next phase of the Action Plan.</p> <p>A call for proposals has also been launched (VP/2007/001) to support the development of European social dialogue and the implementation of the work programme of the European social partners. It specifies that access by people with disabilities to the actions supported by the Commission must be guaranteed.</p>
Analysing the impact disability is having on mobility in the European labour market and free movement of persons.	European Year of Worker Mobility, 2006: disability question in the Euro barometer survey.	The 'Europeans and Mobility' 2006 Eurobarometer showed that EU citizens strongly believe in the right of free movement. It identified difficulties that persons think they might face when moving to another EU25 country. In particular, around 15% of respondents expected to face difficulties with access to healthcare and social benefits if they moved to another country within the EU. This could be a major difficulty for people with disabilities.
Raising disability awareness among SMEs and industry on the EU Corporate Social Responsibility	Information and dissemination of disability of Commission pilot project results concerning the business	The Commission has developed a successful pilot project on the business case for disability. The project website contains a practical series of examples showcasing good practices and recommendations addressing accessibility and employment.

concept.	case of disability (VP/2004/08).	http://www.businessanddisability.org/
Encouraging mainstreaming of disability issues in the area of education and training, including regular monitoring of developments in the field of special needs education.	Open Method of Coordination in the area of life long learning and youth. EU Education and training programmes.	The European Agency of Special Needs Education has published a special report on assessment in inclusive settings, covering the needs of children with disabilities. http://www.european-agency.org/site/info/publications/agency/index.html
2. PROMOTING ACCESS TO QUALITY SUPPORT, CARE AND HEALTH SERVICES		
Reinforcing mainstreaming of disability issues into the streamlined Open Method of Coordination (OMC) on social inclusion and social protection	Open Method of Coordination (OMC) on social inclusion and social protection.	The EU Disability High level Group has issued a position paper on the mainstreaming of disability issues under the Open Method of Coordination on social inclusion and social protection. It describes how relevant disability-related aspects of social protection policies such as access to integrated care and support systems can be covered in the streamlined OMC process. It explains how the mainstreaming of disability can be strengthened in the National Reports on strategies for social protection and social inclusion. This position paper is going to be discussed in the EU Social Protection Committee.
Reflecting disability issues in the forthcoming Communication on social and health services of general interest	Analysis and consultations	The issue of disability was highlighted in the Commission Communication on Social Services of General Interest, adopted on 26 April 2006, COM(2006) 177 final. The Communication in particular stresses that health care services are critical for the well-being of disabled people. A paper on the quality of social services for people with disabilities has been produced by the EU Disability High level Group and sent to the EU Social Inclusion and Social Protection Committee. This paper defines an EU framework for the quality of social services of general interest for people with disabilities and identifies key elements in this framework.
Studying the economic and financial case of community based settings so as to support the de-institutionalisation process when appropriate.	Analysis on the basis of Commission tender study (VT/2005/021)	An analysis has been undertaken in a study led by the University of Kent. The results are expected by end 2007. A final conference will be held on 15-16 November 2007 in Prague, where the results will be discussed and disseminated. Information can be found at: http://www.kent.ac.uk/tizard/news/eu_decl_conf.html
Studying the possible risks of specific discrimination of disabled people with high dependency or complex needs	Study under the Anti Discrimination Programme 2006 on the basis of an open call for tender VT/2006/014	The study is being conducted by the NGO Inclusion Europe and will be concluded by June 2008. A final conference will be held in March 2008, where the results will be discussed and disseminated. Information can be found at: http://www.inclusion-europe.org/main.php?lang=EN&level=1&s=83&mode=nav1&n1=159
Following up on findings of the Commission study on Disabled People	Dialogue with industry and stakeholders, including representatives of the	A study has been launched on assistive technology (AT) in Europe, the contract starting in 2007. It carries out an in-depth analysis of the currently extremely fragmented European assistive technology industry (covering ICT products and services and their accessibility).

access to assistive technologies.	various health care and social systems.	It will identify appropriate models for liaising between the AT industry and relevant mainstream industries on topics such as interoperability and compatibility of solutions. The study will also include: an overview of the field/sector; identification of actors; identification of the common needs of the industry and obstacles leading to its fragmentation; and an analysis of the situation of the AT ICT industry on relevant international markets. http://ted.europa.eu/Exec.jsessionid=6592B9676C3074F3A9ECAE8E996F570E.instance_1?DataFlow=ShowPage.dfl&Template=TED/N_one_result_detail_curr.htm&docnumber=182938-2006&docid=182938-2006&StatLang=EN
Providing better access to information on health	EU public health programme	In the EU Health Strategy, which covers among other things health services and programmes in the field of public health, the Commission has addressed the need to provide information online in an accessible manner for people with disabilities. http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/health/policy_action_plan/quality_criteria/index_en.htm
Developing an EU strategy on mental health	Commission contribution on the implementation of the World Health Organisation (WHO) European Ministerial Conference on Mental Health of January 2005.	The EU strategy on mental health addresses relevant issues for people with disabilities in the related impact assessment. While it is recognised that mental health problems can now often lead to disability problems, the differences between disabilities and mental health problems are acknowledged as well as the need to have different policy measures to address these issues. http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/mental/mental_health_en.htm
Promoting and developing the concept of independent living of disabled people.	Commission Conference for the European Day of people with Disabilities, dissemination of information, policy development.	The Commission Conference on the European Day of People with Disabilities in December 2005 addressed the issue of independent living. The final report of the conference contains forward-looking reflections on the deinstitutionalisation of people with disability, the quality of social services, and service provision in the community. The conference presentations and the final report can be found at http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/emplweb/events/event_en.cf m?id=245
3. FOSTERING ACCESSIBILITY OF GOODS AND SERVICES		
Examining the possibility of developing a toolkit for evaluating accessibility of ESF projects to people with disabilities.	Toolkit to support Member States to make ESF projects more accessible for people with disabilities.	A first draft of the toolkit was presented at the conference organised by the Commission on the ESF and accessibility with stakeholders on 21 September 2006, where examples of good practices were presented as well as different practices in the Member States. http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/emplweb/events/event_en.cf m?id=645
Contributing to the review of electronic communication framework Directives.	Report highlighting the needs of disabled people	Input was provided to EU COCOM (Communications Committee), the committee dealing with EU electronic communications legislation. Commission proposals for amending the Directives (including reinforced provisions for users with disabilities) including the impact assessment were expected in 2007 and will be followed by open consultations. INCOM (Inclusive Communication Group, bringing together disabled users and industry) will be consulted. Particular attention is paid to accessibility to emergency services for

		<p>people with disabilities and consultation with users.</p> <p>http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/policy/ecommtomorrow/index_en.htm</p> <p>A Communication on the review of the universal service obligation is expected in 2008 and will address provisions for users with disabilities. INCOM will again be consulted.</p>
Measuring progress of e-Accessibility in Europe	Study launched measuring the accessibility of ICT as perceived by people with disability and its evolution.	<p>A first survey was launched in 2006 and is ongoing. The first interim results were received in September 2007.</p> <p>The study will report on the key legislative measures for e-Accessibility in the Member States and will provide data on accessibility to ICT goods and services as perceived by people with disabilities.</p>
Promoting ICT accessibility related issues in RTD projects	Project support for a total value of approximately 29 million euro within the 6 th Research Framework Programme.	<p>In the 6th Community Research Framework Programme, around 40 projects have been financed to address accessibility to goods and services, mobility, web accessibility and independent living.</p> <p>More than €60 million has been invested in these projects.</p>
Defining RTD needs with regards to ICT accessibility related issues in new research programmes	Work plan for the 7 th Community Research Framework Programme.	The 7 th Framework Programme contains an objective under the Information Society programme on independent living and e-Inclusion, addressing e-Accessibility and Ageing. The budget for the corresponding call for proposals is approximately €73 million.
Developing a European standard harmonising requirement for accessibility in ICT.	Standardisation	<p>The standardisation mandate was signed in 2007. It contains two parts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an inventory of accessibility standards suitable for use in public procurement and a study on conformity assessment and - development of a standard with functional e-Accessibility requirements suitable for use in public procurement. <p>http://www.icts.org/DATSCG/M376_started.html</p>
Promoting web accessibility of public web sites and Design for All in ICT	Support to cooperation among key players and users	<p>The Riga ministerial declaration called for 100% public websites to be accessible by 2010. A roadmap is under development for the achievement of this target.</p> <p>A conference was organised by EIAO (project under the 6th Community Research Framework Programme) on the measurement of web accessibility in 2007.</p> <p>The 2007 annual eGovernment survey will measure web accessibility for the first time.</p> <p>The “eInclusion partnership” (informal forum of stakeholders) is currently discussing the possibility of setting up EU Design for All training programmes.</p>
Pushing forward Commission proposal for a regulation on the rights of persons with reduced mobility when	Legislative proposal	<p>Measure adopted:</p> <p>Regulation No 1107/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 concerning the rights of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility when travelling by air (OJ L204/1 26.07.2006) This Regulation gives persons with reduced mobility four</p>

travelling by air.		basic rights when they use air transport: accessibility, non-discrimination, assistance and information.
Pushing forward Commission proposal for a regulation on international rail passengers' rights and obligations.	Legislative proposal	Join text of the Conciliation Committee was approved by the European Parliament on 25 September and by the Council on the 26 September.
Examining the possibility for a legislative proposal regulating rights of mobility impaired persons when using international maritime transport.	Assessment and consultation	In order to determine the appropriate level of protection for maritime passengers, including the rights of passengers with reduced mobility, the Commission had a general independent study carried out and held a public consultation in 2006. The adoption of the proposal by the Commission is scheduled at mid-December 2007.
Ensuring follow-up to the 2005 Services Working Paper on the rights of passengers in international bus and coach transport.	Legislation proposal	A public consultation was launched in July 2005 and a stakeholders' meeting was held on 29 March 2006. An impact assessment study was then launched in December 2006. On the basis of the outcome of the public consultation and the impact assessment study, the Commission prepared a draft regulation on the rights of passengers in bus and coach transport. The proposal is due to be adopted by the Commission in mid-December 2007.

4. INCREASING THE EU CAPACITY FOR ANALYSIS

Measuring health and disability in Europe: supporting policy development through scientific knowledge	Support to, and development of project, within the 6 th Research Framework Programme under the area of Scientific Support to Policies-3.	<p>The coordination action "MHADIE" is in its third year of activity and will finish at the end of April 2008. A final high level conference takes place in November 2007 in Milan. This will allow for the dissemination of policy recommendations and guidelines on the use of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) model to measure health and disability. As foreseen, the ICF model has been applied to existing data, including in the area of education.</p> <p>The participants have actively participated in the debate for a definition of disability in the context of the UN convention and the project results have been presented at the last meeting of the Washington City Group in Dublin in September 2007.</p> <p>www.mhadie.it</p>
Developing and analysing valid statistics on disabled persons and their integration into society.	Analysis of statistics obtained through the European Statistical System (ESS). Call for Tender VT/2005/026	<p>A study was launched to analyse the main findings of relevant Eurostat surveys, i.e. the 2002 Labour Force Survey ad-hoc module on 'Employment of disabled persons' and the 2004 European Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (SILC). A comprehensive report has been issued and an executive summary with the key findings will be disseminated. These findings are reflected in the present Communication.</p> <p>www.applca.be</p>
Developing new survey instruments for disability items	Work on disability surveys within the European Health Survey System.	<p>In December 2006 a grant was awarded by Eurostat for the 'Development of a survey module on disability and social inclusion' (EDSIM).</p> <p>http://circa.europa.eu/Public/irc/dsis/health/library?!=/open_call_proposals/development_integration&vm=detailed&sb=Title</p>

<p>Reporting on and disseminating outputs of Commission pilot projects on mainstreaming of disability issues at decentralised level.</p>	<p>Dissemination of results and information</p>	<p>The first wave of Commission pilot projects has finished and produced relevant results addressing the mainstreaming of disability issues in several policy areas. The second wave of projects is well under way. Information on these projects can be found under</p> <p>http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/calls/2004/vp_2004_008/post_information_table_en.pdf/disability/projectlist_en.pdf</p>
<p>Promoting EU networks of academic expert on disability policies</p>	<p>Network support</p>	<p>A call for tenders (VT/2007/005) was launched in 2007 for the creation of a network of academic experts on disability issues, with a budget of around €500.000 per year.</p> <p>Information can be found at:</p> <p>http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/emplweb/tenders/tenders_en.cfm?id=2085</p>
<p>Investigating quality aspects of care for people with disabilities in regard to developments of social policy and typical examples of service practise, including with focus on the subjective experience of individuals with disabilities.</p>	<p>Support to, and development of, project under the 6th Research Framework Programme. under the area of Scientific Support to Policies</p>	<p>A research project called "Quality of care and quality of life for people with intellectual and physical disabilities" (DIS-QOL)", launched in mid-2005, aims to develop different measurement instruments to assess quality of care, quality of life, and attitudes to disability and to persons with disabilities. Twelve centres have established focus groups in their countries to identify relevant components, test the relevance of the World Health Organisation's quality of life measure instrument, and adapt it to the disability context. Pilot studies are underway. The final report will be available in 2008. The project budget is about €1.4 million.</p> <p>http://cordis.europa.eu/fetch?CALLER=FP6_PROJ&ACTION=D&RCN=74960&DOC=39&CAT=PROJ&QUERY=1147761602865</p>
<p>Exploring the access to mobility for people with disabilities</p>	<p>Support to, and development of projects, within the 6th Research Framework Programme under the area of Scientific Support to Policies</p>	<p>Under the last call for the 6th Research Framework Programme in the SSP area "Quality of life issues relating to handicapped/disabled people", the following three projects were launched in 2007:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — PTaccess (€392 000), to assess the accessibility of public transport for people with disabilities in the Member States and its impact on employment and social integration prospects, in urban and rural areas. Alternative transport solutions, good practices and innovation in making public transport accessible will be analysed, along with the costs and benefits of making public transport accessible. <p>http://www.ptaccess.eu/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — EURO-ACCESS (€424 000) aims to contribute to the development of EU policy towards the accessibility of transport systems in the 27 Member States (and one EFTA country) in order to promote social integration and active participation in society for people with disabilities. The main goals of the project are: to establish an inventory as exhaustive as possible of current legal frameworks and regulations on public transport in the EU; to highlight best practice within the EU in national policies, technical innovation, services provided and their potential connection with the employment of people with disabilities; and to make a recommendation for a common legal framework in the EU on the accessibility of transport systems. <p>http://www.euro-access.org/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — LIVINGALL (€391 000) aims to increase the free movement of people with disabilities and accessibility for all persons to the global

		<p>European labour market. It will provide decision-makers with tools and methodologies for benchmarking and overcoming obstacles to help make free movement policies for the disabled more effective. Learning from best practice is clearly the fastest way to harmonise and benchmark standards that will create a level playing field for free movement across Europe for all people, disabled and able-bodied alike. The aim is not only to study existing policies, but to provide a complete overview of how various initiatives developed to improve the free movement of persons with disabilities matched their actual needs, and to give consequently a wide range of recommendations and possible solutions to overcome the problems at European level.</p> <p>http://www.livingall.eu/index.php</p>
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ANNEX 5: MEMBER STATE DEVELOPMENTS CONTRIBUTING TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EU DISABILITY ACTION PLAN

Austria has addressed the disability issues from a human rights perspective, which has led to an amendment of the Constitution. The Ministry of Social Affairs reported to Parliament about the situation of people with disabilities in 2003, and will report again in 2008 and then every 2 years. The package of legislation (equal treatment and inclusion) introduced in 2005 entered into force in January 2006. The recent implementation of Directive 2000/78 goes even further than required, to cover antidiscrimination in all areas of life, with a transitional period for the built environment and transport infrastructure. An Ombudsman for Disabilities has been established, along with a conciliation procedure before court action is taken. Furthermore, there has been official recognition of the Austrian sign language. A specific programme of financial support for measures to employ people with disabilities has been in place since 2001. A number of best practices in training and initiatives by the social partners are presented in the national report on social protection and social inclusion.

Bulgaria has focused on employment issues, addressing access to and retention of employment, lifelong learning, and accessibility of the public built environment. Furthermore, the law on the integration of people with disabilities addresses the rehabilitation needs of people with disabilities, their opportunities for professional fulfilment, and their social integration. In 2006, the financial resources for implementing such activities were considerably increased.

In **Cyprus**, several legislative and programmatic measures have been taken to address the employment of people with disabilities, providing for vocational rehabilitation and incentive schemes for employers, for example to tackle reasonable accommodation at the workplace. The main incentive offered to employers is coverage of up to 60% of an employee's pay for a year.

In the **Czech Republic**, a new Act on Social Services came into force in 2007. Under this Act, people with disabilities are entitled to a special "care allowance" from which they can buy services that fit their personal needs. Furthermore, in 2005 the Czech government approved a National Plan for the support and integration of persons with disabilities for 2005-2009, covering the following areas: training and education, social security for people with disabilities, employment, health care, accessibility of the local environment, access to information and cultural heritage, prevention of discrimination against people with disabilities, participation by people with disabilities and their organisations in the administration of public life, data collecting, coordination and monitoring of the fulfilment of the National Plan, and the financial impacts of individual measures. Ten relevant ministries and the Czech Statistical Office are in charge of implementing the measures under the National Plan, and once a year submit information to the Czech National Disability Council. The Ministry of Justice has produced a new draft of the anti-discrimination law.

In **Estonia**, a new Labour Market Services and Benefits Act entered into force in January 2006. It contains specific measures to support the employment of people with disabilities in the open labour market: adaptation of workplaces and equipment, support for workers, free provision of technical aids, and support with job interviews. The disability allowance for children has been increased by approximately 25%.

Finland issued a Government report on disability policy in 2006. The report outlines that this policy is based on three main principles: the right of people with disability to equality, their right to inclusion, and their right to necessary services and supportive measures. To this end, the report sets out requirements for barrier-free solutions, communication, children with disabilities, school work, family and housing, ageing, culture and leisure, the participation of minorities and rare disability groups, and the need for information on living conditions. It also describes a set of services and support for equality in various sectors. Finally, intensive work is being carried out at international level within the UN and Europe. A package of development measures to tackle the areas mentioned above is being proposed.

In **France**, the law of 11 February 2005 on equality of opportunities, citizenship and participation of people with disabilities is being implemented. Under this law, a fund has been established for the employment of disabled people in the public sector. Considerable efforts are being made to ensure the effective access of disabled children to integrated schools as well as the effective access of disabled students to higher education. The adaptations and accommodation needed for different types of disability are being studied in the cultural and educational domains. A scientific council for autism has been set up to assure cooperation between experts, stakeholders and families. Accessibility policy is being put into practice: for example, more and more TV programmes are subtitled and specific accessibility obligations are in place to ensure access by disabled people to all public places and public transport and to ensure they are able to vote.

In **Germany**, the General Equal Treatment Act no longer focuses on the provision of care but rather self-determined participation in society and working life by people with disabilities and the removal of barriers to equal opportunities. The Act introduces the concept of a “personal budget”, so that disabled people can get financial support for the services they decide they need. Furthermore, special attention is given to employment to prevent inactivity through, among other things, early intervention, vocational training, attention to the transition from school to labour market, financial aids for employers to train young persons with high dependency needs, and the provision of career advice and guidance.

In **Ireland**, a National Disability Strategy launched in 2004 continues to be implemented through legislation (including the 2005 Disability Act and the 2007 Citizens Information Act, which addresses advocacy service provision), several sectoral plans and a multi-annual investment programme. The strategy is monitored on a regular basis. Furthermore, the Code of Practice on accessible public services and information provided by public bodies was launched in 2006. There is also a target of 3% for the employment of people with disabilities and a new centre of excellence in universal design, addressing buildings and products. Funding is available for projects to support service provision, independent living, the operation of representative organisations of people with disabilities, and awareness-raising. A specific plan to implement the concept of “transport for all”, addressing accessible transport, was put in place in 2006.

Italy has focused on the principle “Nothing about us without us”. Initiatives have concentrated on several topics. Great importance is attached to e-Inclusion and ICT (information and communication technologies). To this end, regulations were adopted in 2005 to implement law No 4 of 9 January 2004, which aims to promote access to new technologies. In this context, the new Ministry of Social Solidarity has renewed its support for special projects in 2006-2007, e.g. NAVIGABLE, a project to develop special software for children with communication difficulties, and Portale SIVA, an information portal on new technologies that has become the fulcrum of the European network EASTIN (European

Assistive Technology Information Network) and of the International Alliance of Assistive Technology Information Providers. Moreover, Italy has been involved in promoting standards for the legal protection of persons with disabilities. RAI, the Italian television broadcaster, signed the "Contratto di servizio" 2007-2009 with the engagement of increasing the rate of subtitled broadcasts to 60% within three years.

In **Latvia**, the policy planning document 'Basic Principles on Policy for Elimination of Disability and its Consequences, 2005-2015' was adopted in 2005 and was followed by an 'Action Plan for Implementing the Basic Principles on Policy for Elimination of Disability and its Consequences 2005-2015', adopted in 2006. The aim of the Action Plan is to eliminate or reduce the risk of disability for persons threatened by disability, to reduce the effect of disability on persons with disabilities and to reduce the risk of social exclusion for all such persons. The main innovation is the focus on preventing disability. The plan is to define the concept of a "person threatened by disability" as well as to define additional services to prevent persons from becoming disabled. In order to improve the employability of disabled people, the state provides support for the participation of unemployed disabled persons in subsidised employment schemes, targeting three aspects — the practice of work, the acquirement of professional skills, and their development. Since accession to the EU, additional resources have been available to Latvia from the EU Structural Funds for the de-institutionalisation and employment of the persons with mental disorders. Furthermore, since 2002 the Construction Law has included a definition of accessibility to the built environment and the requirements for such accessibility. The social inclusion part of the human resources and employment operational programme also includes the activity "Development of social rehabilitation services for persons with impaired vision and hearing and mental disorders".

In **Lithuania**, a new law has been adopted on the integration of people with disabilities to ensure equal rights and opportunities. A key element of the law is the regulation of vocational rehabilitation. Several programmes have been put in place to ensure the delivery of assistive technologies, social services, accessibility to the environment, employment and rehabilitation.

In **Malta**, the key development in 2006-2007 regarding disability issues has been the consolidation of independent living services for persons with a high level of needs to support their life in the community either by providing them with small community houses or providing support services to their families.

In **the Netherlands**, there has been a shift towards the decentralisation of disability policies to the local authorities. The participation of all citizens in the community is the overall goal. Accessibility for all covers the provision of services, technical aids and assistance to persons with disabilities. The implementation of the 2003 Action Plan "Equal treatment in practice" is progressing. A shift is under way from special solutions for people with disabilities to inclusive policies where the needs of people with disabilities are incorporated in the general policies. A guide is provided to government services. It covers a wide set of areas from communication and information to education, employment, transport, the built environment, and services, including banking.

In recent years, the employment legislation governing sickness leave and disability has changed. Employers and employees are now jointly responsible for occupational safety and health, sickness-leave policy and re-integration. After a period of two years of sickness or disability, during which the main priority is to resume work, if necessary in adapted form within or outside the original enterprise or organisation, an employee may be (partially)

entitled to occupational disability benefit. This is laid down in the Work And Income According To Labour Capacity Act (WIA) (see www.szw.nl/english).

Employees who are fully (at least 80%) and permanently occupationally disabled (as determined by the UWV, the institute for benefit schemes) will receive occupational disability benefit. The partially disabled (35-80%) will be entitled to benefit under the Return to Work Scheme (WGA). The main aim here is to improve the employment rate of the (partially) disabled.

Improving the labour participation of all those distant from the labour market is an important priority of the new government. An agreement with the social partners is planned.

Portugal has adopted its first Action Plan, 2006-2009, for the integration of people with disabilities. It is a cross-policy instrument involving 15 ministries in its implementation. The Plan is based on a human rights perspective, with a view to promoting equal opportunities, combating discrimination and ensuring the full participation of people with disabilities. The areas covered include the promotion of human rights, the mainstreaming of disability in policies, accessibility to services, equipment and goods, qualification training, and the employment of people with disabilities and professionals in the area. It provides for implementation and evaluation instruments. Furthermore, the new anti-discrimination law of 2006 addresses the economic, social and individual rights of people with disabilities. Finally, an accessibility law was also passed in 2006 to establish technical norms for public and collective equipment, public buildings and housing. It is implemented by the 2007 national plan for promoting accessibility, which covers accessibility to buildings, transport and ICT.

Romania issued legislation in 2006 to address the rights of people with disabilities. The law provides incentives for employers of people with disabilities and enacts a package of compulsory measures for local authorities to provide full access to the 'physical and information environment'. This includes a regulation on parking permits. The reform of social protection has three lines of action: the restructuring of large residential institutions, the creation of alternative community-based services, and the training of the staff involved.

Slovakia has developed a comprehensive social programme to address the needs of people with disabilities. Special attention is given to assistance for people with disabilities in cases of material hardship and to support for persons with high dependency needs. The new rights and obligations take into account the decentralisation of social services. In 2006, the government also updated the national programme for the development of living conditions for citizens with disabilities, based on the UN Convention. It addresses the removal of barriers as well as integration in the labour market. In 2007, a new concept of special needs education has been developed, based on integration within mainstream education and special needs counselling. Attention is also paid to disadvantaged job seekers, with measures aiming to increase their employability through education and training and the provision of information and counselling. All these measures are complemented by action to ensure the consistent implementation of the Antidiscrimination Act.

Special attention is devoted to the issue of a barrier-free environment, through legislation mandating certain technical requirements for accessibility and educational measures.

In **Slovenia**, disability policy is the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs. Last year, the Ministry established a directorate for persons with disabilities. In the past two years, attention has focused on three areas: the preparation of an overall national programme; measures to improve accessibility to the physical environment, information and

communication; and measures to foster employment. In this context, the government has adopted national guidelines to improve access for persons with disabilities to the physical environment and to information and communication (7 December 2005) and an Action Programme for Persons with Disabilities. The purpose of the Programme, which covers the period 2007–2013, is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights by persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their dignity. The Programme comprises twelve fundamental objectives together with 124 measures, covering all aspects of the lives of persons with disabilities.

In addition, the Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities Act has now become fully operational. The new amended Act introduces a number of incentives for employers and persons with disabilities and at the same time renders the labour market much more flexible. In 2007, moreover, the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs has started to prepare an Act on Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities. At international level, Slovenia has participated in the drafting of the UN Convention.

In **Spain**, the main measures derive from the regulatory implementation of Law 51/2003 of 2 December 2003 on equal opportunities, non-discrimination and universal accessibility for persons with disabilities (LIONDAU). In cooperation with civil society, the National Council for Disability, a collegiate, inter-ministerial body affiliated to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, deals with claims of discrimination by people with disabilities at administrative level. Regulations are in place to ensure basic conditions of accessibility and non-discrimination in the general state administration and to facilitate access to and use of public built spaces. Other regulations include: the National Accessibility Plan, which lays down objectives and strategies for accessibility and the ‘design for all’ concept and accessibility as for the overall quality of products, environments and services; the Action Plan for Women with disabilities, under Article 8 of Law 51/2003, which sets out a strategy to address the situation in which women with disabilities find themselves, along with operational objectives and actions; and Law 39/2006 of 14 December 2006 on the promotion of personal autonomy and the care of persons in a dependency situation, which has become the fourth ‘pillar’ of the social welfare system, together with health care, education and pensions. The Law establishes measures to support the independent living of disabled people. The second Action Plan for persons with disabilities, 2003–2007, which is currently being implemented and ends this year, includes various measures to promote the autonomy and care of persons with serious disabilities as well as active policies for reintegrating persons with disabilities within the workplace. This Action Plan is being revised and will include priority measures to meet the obligations under the UN Convention for disabled people. Finally, one of the current priorities is to take the measures necessary for the ratification and application of the UN Convention.

In **Sweden**, the action plan “From Patient to Citizen” continues to be implemented. Special attention is paid to the removal of obstacles to participation (including accessibility to buildings and to information and activities), preventing and combating discrimination and facilitating independent living. The Government has asked a number of key stakeholders to draw up a strategy on how more people with disabilities can earn their own living through work. Coordination among all relevant authorities to mainstream the disability issues addressed in the action plan is a priority. Certain authorities have a particular responsibility for ensuring that the national objectives are achieved. In 2006, a new Swedish Agency for Disability Policy Coordination was established with the aim of supporting the sectoral authorities tasked with implementing the action plan. There is also antidiscrimination legislation covering employment, education and, since 2006, children. In 2006, a

parliamentary committee on discrimination presented a final report containing proposals to consolidate the legislation against discrimination and coordinate the work of the various Ombudsmen involved (Equal Opportunities Ombudsman, Disability Ombudsman, Ombudsman against Ethnic Discrimination, Ombudsman against Discrimination based on Sexual Orientation) in order to strengthen protection against discrimination, irrespective of the grounds.

The **United Kingdom** continues to work towards its vision: ‘By 2025, disabled people in Britain should have full opportunities and choices to improve their quality of life and will be respected and included as equal members of society’. Its strategy focuses on promoting independent living — giving disabled people choice, empowerment and freedom through more joined-up and individualised service delivery. In December 2006, Equality 2025 — the United Kingdom Advisory Network on Disability Equality — was launched. The Network comprises a group of independent disabled people who will build relationships with disabled people and disability organisations across the country in order to advise the Government on their views, needs and experiences. It currently has 21 members, who are all disabled people with a variety of skills and experiences. The UK launched an Independent Living Review in July 2006 in order to identify imaginative and practical solutions to support independent living for disabled people. This is a cross-government project, taking a life course approach, from young people in transition to adulthood up to and including older people. The UK is also piloting a scheme where each disabled person is provided with an individual budget that can then be used flexibly in a way that can best meet that person’s needs. The pilot scheme brings together different combinations of funding from a variety of sources.

Furthermore, the UK is looking at ways to take forward the findings of its Information Needs of Disabled People Project, which was established to produce an information strategy to ensure that disabled people have access to the information and advice they need and in the way they want to receive it. Finally, in December 2006, the new Disability Equality Duty came into force. Its aim is to bring about changes in the way society treats disabled people. It ensures that all public bodies — such as central or local government, schools, health trusts or emergency services — pay ‘due regard’ to promoting equality for disabled people in every area of their work.

ANNEX 6: THE EU ACTION PLAN 2008-2009: ACTIONS AT EU LEVEL

PRIORITY ACTION	INSTRUMENTS	TECHNICAL OBJECTIVE
1. Fostering accessibility of the labour market		
Exploring flexicurity measures for people with disabilities	Expert exchanges and thematic peer review of practices on flexicurity addressing disabled people, to be carried out through the Disability High Level Group and the Employment Committee.	To identify and support typical flexicurity pathways for people with disabilities, notably through analysis and dissemination of good practices.
Encouraging supported employment and helping corresponding programmes achieve their full potential.	High-level expert exchanges within the new EU Network of Heads of Public Employment Services on accessibility of employment services and matching of labour market needs with those of disabled persons. Commission services discussion paper on supported employment reflecting the guidelines of the European Employment Strategy. This paper will be discussed in the Disability High Level Group and submitted to the EU Employment Committee.	To increase and improve supported employment, including under National Reform programmes, so as to improve the employment situation of people with disabilities in the open labour market..
Facilitating access to information on reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities in the workplace	Analysis of data, facts and success stories of companies on the basis of a study under the PROGRESS Programme for 2007 with a view to identifying models of good practice and carrying out of a cost benefit analysis (VT/2007/007). Results are expected by the end of 2008.	To facilitate the reasonable accommodation of people with disabilities at work by providing industry and business, including SMEs, with guidance and tools.
Providing guidance on the incorporation of social criteria into public procurement	A guide on the incorporation of social criteria into public procurement will be elaborated on the basis of a study.	To publish a guide on the incorporation of social criteria (including disability issues) into public procurement
Improving the integration of disabled persons in the field of education and youth.	"Lifelong Learning" and "Youth in action" programmes, with a specific priority in 2008/2009 calls for proposals.	Improving the integration of disabled persons in the field of education and youth contributing to improve the employability of persons with disability.
Using the potential provided by Cohesion Policy's integrated approach and multi-level governance to support the business case of disability and accessibility for disabled persons	Implementation by Member States, regions and the wider partnership under the Convergence, Regional Competitiveness and Employment, and Territorial Cooperation operational programmes negotiated and decided in 2007 on the basis of Council Regulation (EC) 1083/2006, Regulation (EC) 1080/2006 and Regulation (EC) 1081/2006	The community strategic guidelines on Cohesion (Council Decision 2006/702/EC) include the prevention of discrimination on the basis of disabilities and accessibility for disabled persons as horizontal principle, as well as referring to a number of specific areas for potential action addressing access to the labour market including inclusive education and skills.
2. Boosting accessibility of mainstream goods, services and infrastructures		
Transport systems and services		

Air transport: enforcing the rights of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility.	Regulation No 1107/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 July 2006 concerning the rights of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility when travelling by air (OJL204/1 26.07.2006)	To ensure proper application of the provisions of Regulation 1107/2006, through measures targeting national authorities in charge of enforcement. To create a permanent network of national authorities convened and chaired by the Commission.
Rail transport: enforcing the rights of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility.	Regulation on rail passengers' rights and obligations (text agreed by EP and Council, publication pending, entry into force 2 years after publication).	To ensure proper implementation of the Regulation with regard to assistance for and non-discrimination against disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility.
Maritime transport: Establishing the rights of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility.	Legislative initiative most probably a Regulation based on article 80 of the Treaty	To follow up the Commission's proposal. To ensure proper implementation.
Bus and coach transport: establishing the rights of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility.	Legislative initiative most probably a Regulation based on article 71 of the Treaty	To follow up the Commission's proposal. To ensure proper implementation.
Examining preferential tariff schemes in public transport in Member States.	A study will start in 2008 and results are expected in the second half of 2008.	To assess preferential tariff schemes in Member States with regard to non-discrimination on grounds of nationality that will also consider persons with disabilities and reduced mobility.
Users		
Protecting vulnerable users	To develop European Rights of Energy user: it would inter alia address issues relevant for people with disabilities	To strengthen consumers' rights on the gas and the electricity markets
Researching the empowerment and security of people with disabilities in access to information (urban accessibility for people with visual impairment or in emergencies; live subtitling for people with hearing impairment or migrants).	Research, user needs analysis, development and demonstration of pilot projects	To develop awareness and demonstrate potentialities for subtitling, voice recognition for the deaf, RFID-guided paths for the blind, etc.
ICT		
Increasing support for projects on ICT for ageing and/or disability under the 7 th Research Framework Programme 2007-2013.	Disability-related research projects launched through regular calls for proposals.	To improve innovative accessible ICT for people with disabilities
Reviewing the framework Directives governing electronic communications; Commission proposals for reviewed Directives and impact assessment expected in 2007, to be followed by open consultation;	Commission proposals to include reviewed provisions for users with disabilities with consultation of INCOM. Legislative process due to take place in 2008/2009. Commission Communication expected in 2008.	To improve the legal protection of people with disabilities, addressing better their accessibility needs. To reinforce the rights of users with disabilities in the review of universal service

Reviewing universal service		
Improving the availability of accessibility standardisation	Follow up and support work on standards harmonising requirement for accessibility in ICT. New proposals under the eEurope Standardisation Action Plan	To support the development of new accessibility standards and related deliverables.
Executing standardisation mandate 376 on European accessibility requirements for public procurement of products and services in the ICT domain	Standards development	To develop a toolkit containing standardisation deliverables on accessibility requirements for ICT suitable for public procurement in agreement with the Public Procurement Directives.
Policy making: Communication on eInclusion strategy preparing for i2010 initiative in 2008	An eInclusion initiative for 2008 involving industry, users and Member States.	To support disability mainstreaming in eInclusion, following up the 2005 eAccessibility Communication, to reinforce stakeholder cooperation and to increase awareness
Working towards a legislative initiative for an accessible, barrier-free information society.	Horizontal approach to legislation on e-Accessibility following consultation of all stakeholders (users, business and authorities).	To reinforce the rights of users with disabilities and promote the functioning of the internal market for accessible ICT.
PUBLIC BUILT ENVIRONEMENT		
Fostering accessibility to the built environment	EU standardisation mandate investigating possible standards for accessibility requirements for the built environment suitable for public procurement in agreement with the Public Procurement Directives.	To improve the overall accessibility of the public built environment, including for people with disabilities
BUSSINESS CASE		
Using the potential provided by Cohesion Policy's integrated approach and multi-level governance to support the business case for disability and accessibility for disabled persons	Implementation by Member States, regions and the wider partnership under the Convergence, Regional Competitiveness and Employment, and Territorial Cooperation operational programmes negotiated and decided in 2007 on the basis of Council Regulation (EC) 1083/2006, Regulation (EC) 1080/2006 and Regulation (EC) 1081/2006	The community strategic guidelines on Cohesion (Council Decision 2006/702/EC) include the prevention of discrimination on the basis of disabilities and accessibility for disabled persons as a horizontal principle, and also refer to a number of specific areas for potential action, including in the fields of transport, ICT and access to finance.
3. Consolidating the EU's analytical capacity		

Measuring health and disability in Europe	<p>First round of European Health Interview Survey (EHIS). It contains 4 survey modules with questions referring to background variables, health care, health determinants and health status. The two latter modules include questions on functional limitations.</p> <p>Continuation of data collection and calculation of the structural indicators for disability-free life expectations (DFLE) / healthy life expectations (HLY) via the Statistics on Income and Living Condition (SILC) survey.</p>	<p>To obtain harmonised data on health status and health determinates including functional limitation for all EU members</p> <p>To improve the quality and comparability of collected data</p>
Measuring the social integration in society of people with disabilities	Implementation of survey module on European Disability and Social Integration (EDSIM), including variables not only on functional limitations but also on participation and environmental factors.	To support the development of national versions of the survey module and its implementation
Preparing the legal basis for EHIS following adoption by the European Parliament and Council of the Regulation on Community Statistics on Public Health and Safety at Work.	Discussion with Member States to prepare the draft of a specific implementation regulation on health status and determinants, including disability issues.	To get the implementation regulation adopted.
Developing indicators and data on eAccessibility	Benchmarking and various studies on ICT for ageing and/or disability to be pursued or launched: Measuring eAccessibility in Europe, SeniorWatch2, assistive technology industry, eAccessibility legislation, etc.	To gather evidence and analysis, to stimulate action, and to monitor progress on the eAccessibility targets defined in the Riga ministerial declaration (on public procurement and web accessibility).
Reviewing the literature regarding the social situation of informal caregivers and care receivers in the EU. Among other things, the review will address the situation of people with disabilities and that of their carers.	A study will be launched to collect information and good practices in the Member States and analyse the implications at EU level. The study results are expected to feed into the European policies related to disability and demographic issues	To better know what is current practice in the informal care sector in the various Member States, so that they will be in a better position to develop the informal care sector. This sector will be very important in meeting the future increase in demand for long-term care as a result of population ageing. The frail elderly are much more troubled by chronic diseases or disabilities than the young, and their number is expected to triple by 2050.
Launching the European Academic Network on Disability	Operational and financial support through the call for tender launched under the PROGRESS Programme for 2007 (VT/2007/005) with a budget of EUR 500 000 per year from 2007 until 2010.	To gather scientific expertise and support for the development of disability mainstreaming in both EU and national policies, notably with regard to those developed under open methods of coordination.
Evaluating the EU Disability Action Plan at mid-term	External evaluation of the results of the Disability Action Plan and corresponding pilot projects. The evaluation study has been launched through a call for tender under the PROGRESS Programme for 2007(VT/2007/008) with a budget of	<p>To provide feedback on achievements of the EU Disability Action Plan, including:</p> <p>- the direct results achieved</p>

	EUR 200 000.	<p>-the effect of the pilot projects for mainstreaming disability issues</p> <p>-the broader effects in relation to policy making and the Action Plan's strategic objectives.</p> <p>In turn, this analysis will contribute to improving the implementation of the Action Plan and to its future development.</p>
Improving knowledge and analytical competences on rare diseases	A Commission Communication is currently foreseen taking action in the field of rare diseases.	To better address the needs of persons with rare diseases including children and their families and provide for quality support.
4. Actions towards full enjoyment of fundamental rights		
Supporting the implementation of the UN Convention through the establishment of a sustainable framework for future presidencies to strengthen the European human rights approach to disability.	Sustained exchange of information and good practises within the EU Disability High Level Group. As a result, the EU Disability High Level Group will issue regular reports on progress made in the implementation of the UN Convention to the annual EU ministerial disability conferences of EU presidencies.	To identify and assess common challenges and solutions while developing the priorities of the EU Disability Action Plan so that they contribute to the effective implementation of the Convention.
Contributing to the implementation of the provisions of the Convention relating to gender and disability (notably Article 6)	Analysis on the basis of a Commission study launched under the PROGRESS programme 2007 (VT/2007/006). The study is to assess the overall situation of women with disabilities in the EU and the specific obstacles confronting them in the light of their human rights and fundamental freedoms under the UN Convention. A report is expected by mid-2009.	To collect and assess information from scientifically validated sources in Member States and to draw up policy recommendations to improve the situation of women and girls with disabilities in the EU.
<p>Improving the mainstreaming of disability issues in development aid.</p> <p>Examining if adjustments are needed in the relevant Community development cooperation policies or if specific action needs to be taken under Article 32 of the UN Convention relating to international cooperation.</p>	<p>Exploration of the possibilities of introducing disability as a cross-cutting issue in aid.</p> <p>Revised EC Guidance Note on Disability and Development for EU Delegations and Services: http://ec.europa.eu/development/body/publications/docs/Disability_en.pdf</p> <p>Dissemination of the results of the Commission pilot project on breaking the cycle of disability and poverty in developing countries, led by the NGO Licht fur die Welt, which will conclude in December 2007:</p> <p>Disability mainstreaming in developing countries: http://www.make-development-inclusive.org/index.php?wid=1024&spk=en.</p>	To pro-actively contribute to improving the situation of people with disabilities in developing countries.
Supporting awareness-raising for effective implementation of the Convention at the various levels of	Trans-national project with financial support from the Commission under the PROGRESS programme.	To develop training modules targeting in particular disabled people, disability NGOs, practising

governance concerned.		lawyers, judges, civil servants and law students.
Addressing the needs of disabled persons in the European Institutions.	<p>A Commission Communication on diversity policy within the Commission services could be issued. Its disability aspects would elaborate on action to be taken by the Commission as an employer to improve the recruitment and working conditions of people with disabilities in the Institutions including questions related to the accessibility of buildings, as well as support for staff with disabled family members,</p> <p>Follow up the implementation of the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities.</p>	To improve the conditions of employment and life of people with disabilities and their families within the Commission services.
Complementing the Community legislative framework of protection against discrimination.	Proposal for a Directive based on art 13 of the Treaty implementing the principle of equal treatment outside employment inter alia on grounds of disability	To take appropriate actions to combat discrimination based on inter alia disability to apply the principle of non-discrimination to access to goods, services and housing amongst other matters.
Preparing for the conclusion of the UN Convention on the rights of disabled persons.	Commission Proposal for a Council Decision in early 2008 to allow the European Community to conclude the UN Convention.	To conclude the UN Convention on the rights of disabled persons.