



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES  
PROGRAMME FOR DISABLED PEOPLE



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1989

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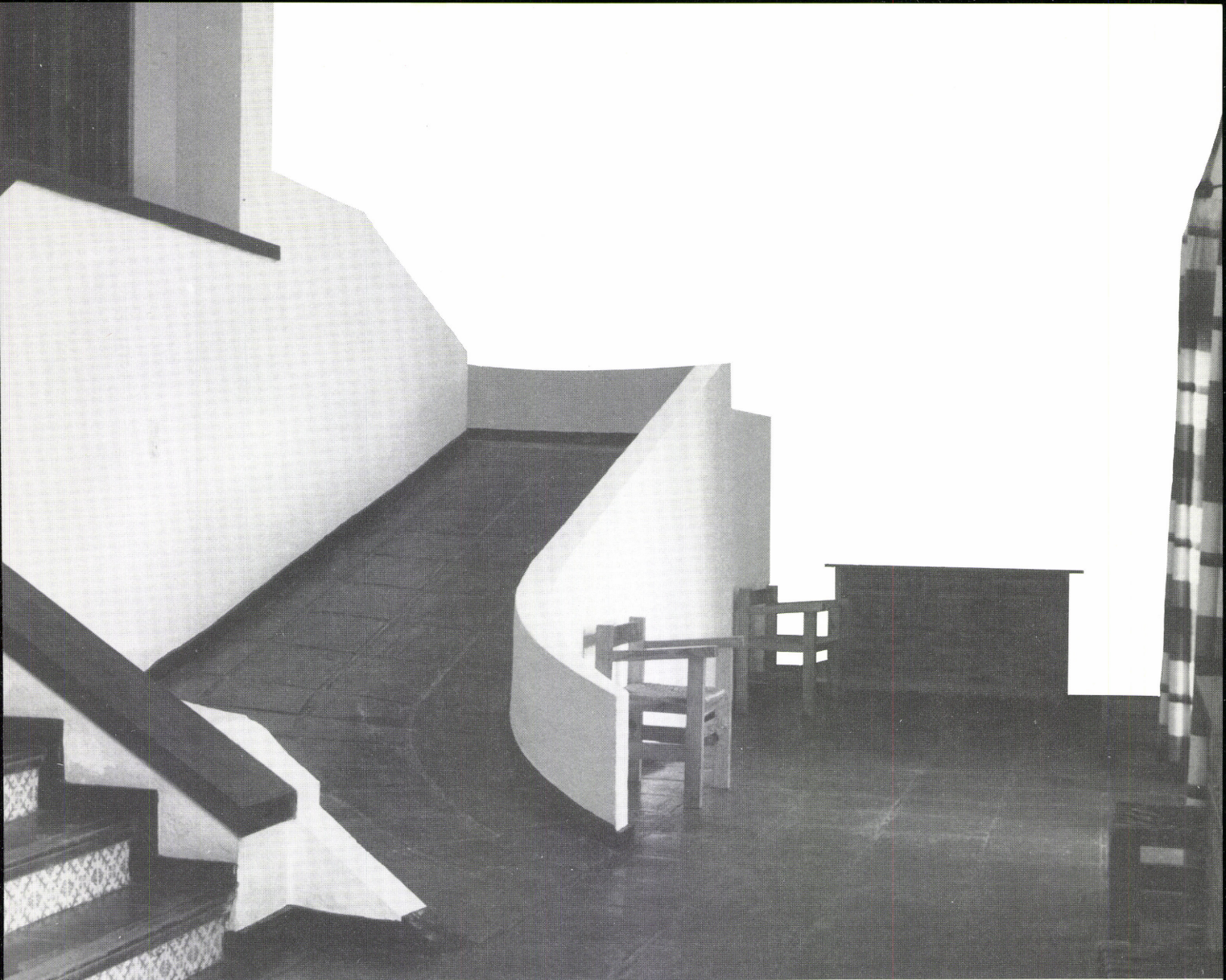


In this issue we cover a wide range of activities that have been taking place in 1989. One of the year's main events has been the HELIOS Independent Living Awards which are being presented this month in Brussels. During 1990 the magazine will feature a series on the award winners, but here we look behind the scenes and discuss the lead-up to this important annual event.

Earlier this year we joined participants from the Social Integration Network for a group study visit to Denmark — to find out more about our experiences see pages 6 and 7. There is also a report on the two recent demonstrations of the HANDYNET system, which focused on the technical aids module.

The Commission supports many activities in the areas of creativity and sports among people with disabilities. A brief glimpse of some of the exciting projects being funded in 1989 can be found on pages 14 and 15.

We look forward to bringing you more events and news about HELIOS in 1990. In the meantime we wish you a very merry Christmas and a successful, happy New Year.



## THE HELIOS EUROPEAN AWARDS : INDEPENDENT LIVING FOR DISABLED PEOPLE

**In December the first winners of the HELIOS Independent Living Awards are collecting their prizes in Brussels. Here we discuss the lead-up to this exciting event.**

We are often told the need is for disabled people to be part of the community, to share in its activities, to help in making its decisions. But before this comes the even more vital phase of organising their own decisions and controlling their own activities. This is what is meant by "Independent Living", and the various components of HELIOS all work towards this aim of the disabled person being able to rule his own destiny, to decide what he wants to do and, probably more important, what he does not want to do; to go where he wants to go when he wishes, and to be given access in every sense of the word.

We often forget that "the disabled" as a group do not exist, but that one in ten of the population is a person with a disability and they are to be found in every section of society. Therefore, every member of society must be aware of disabled people, and ideally all our facilities and services should be available to them.

### A rewarding experience

In December 1989, one aspect of HELIOS will complete its first phase. Plans have been made for annual awards to examples of good practice in promoting independent living. Throughout 1989, a jury of experts from every member state has been studying applications. The jurors are eminent in their own fields — architecture, planning, social administration, engineering, management and above all, disability. They have considered the project reports and visited many of them. They have watched videos of the activities at the three jury meetings held in the first half of the year.

Independent Living is a complete concept, which involves every activity of life. If one of those activities is not freely available, full independence may be lost. It was said many years ago of physical access for disabled people that it was like a chain with many connecting links — if one of those links was broken, the access was as useless as the chain.

The jury were asked to make awards in three areas:

- a) **Transport and Mobility**
- b) **Access to Public Buildings and their environment**
- c) **Adapted Housing and support services**

They were not surprised that many of the proposals included more than one aspect. Suitable transport for disabled people must relate somewhere to suitable housing. An accessible public transport system will connect with accessible public buildings.

The response to the request for submissions was remarkable. The jury was impressed that in such a short time projects were submitting such full documentation and their enthusiasm is a good sign for future years.



accessibility award

transport award

housing award

### Community-wide effort

Entries came from every member state and gave a splendid picture of efforts to ensure that disabled people had independence in every sense of the word. They ranged from first attempts at solving a difficulty to schemes which had developed over the years. A plan for a sailing boat to be used by disabled people demanded a jetty suitable for boarding, and finished off as a yacht club with every part of it suitable for its disabled members. Public transport to the airport started from railway stations with an accessible network and finished with a totally accessible airport. Only the transport to the airport was entered. The jury was seeing how our cities, towns and villages are being changed and every juror emphasised that though there were over 100 entries, they knew many others in their own countries — this was only the tip of the iceberg!

The most significant feature of the entries was that they were not "for" disabled people but mostly "of" them. Disabled people played their part in the establishment and management of these projects. They were truly "independent" living and were giving power to disabled people.

### European Conference to promote independent living

The awards for 1989 reach their peak in Brussels in December when the Commission will have approved the recommendations of the jury. The award-winners will gather for a two-day European conference on the three areas of the awards. During the conference Her Majesty Princess Juliana of the Netherlands will present the awards. It is expected that

Mrs Papandreou, the Commissioner for Social affairs, other commissioners, Permanent Representatives of Member States and their Ministers for Disabled People, will attend. It is hoped that the exhibition of the awards will visit other Member States and that a book of all the award-winners will be published so that we will not lose the knowledge gained in 1989.

Above all we plan publicity in each Member State for their national projects, to arouse interest and heighten the level of public awareness. We hope that every state will know that award-winners from their country are on their way to Brussels to receive an award and that their return with that award will also be recognised.

### The power of persuasion

The awards scheme should be the vehicle for showing to the world the needs of disabled people and how they can be met. Politicians demand and implement policy and they respond to political pressure. The awards and other aspects of HELIOS aim to trigger that pressure and impress upon Parliament and other leaders that much remains to be done, that there is an opportunity to improve the social aspect of the community for disabled people, that they can be given independence, the opportunity for education, the right to training and the hope of employment, the dignity of self-support and that possibly taxpayers may be turned into tax-payers.



Group study visits, an important way to transfer experience and technical expertise between member states or just a form of social tourism? We join participants from the Social Integration Network in sampling some Danish experiences.

A group of mentally handicapped people have seized the opportunity to develop a community-based cafe open only to other disabled people, their families and friends. "We want it as a place for ourselves" explained Edmund, one of the cafe users.

But can we justify a form of segregation when our overall aim is integration?

Just one of many interesting issues raised by members of local model activities (LMAs) from France, Luxembourg, Spain and the UK during a study visit to Denmark. Social workers, educators, directors of social services and community support workers came together with one common interest: independent living projects for mentally handicapped people.

## THE SOCIAL CONTEXT

In Denmark, social policy and the basis for funding services for mentally handicapped people has been successfully decentralised. The switch from large, usually isolated, institutions to smaller community-based units seems to be taking place smoothly. This success is partly because Denmark has a policy of local self-government, resulting in an increasing number of functions being delegated to local and regional levels.


A wide range of activities have sprung up as a result of this decentralisation. Our visit was to a group of initiatives all managed at local level in the counties of Vejle and Storstrom.

The so-called "upside-down process" relating to both policy and management is the main principle behind the LMA North Project in Vejle county. This LMA has the active participation of 400 individuals including mentally handicapped people, their relatives, professionals and administrators. All have a direct say in developments which form a coherent programme including housing, employment and leisure activities. After only one and a half years, 10 independent flats, three group homes as well as a community-based cafe have been created.

## A DETERMINED APPROACH

Perhaps the most striking aspect of our visit was the Cafe Amalie, based centrally in the town of Horsens and run by mentally handicapped people through a users committee. The cafe serves many functions other than just as a place to eat; it offers employment possibilities as cooks, waiters and waitresses and even as D.J.s during the regular discos — one of a number of leisure activities and events.

As an example of self-advocacy, the cafe is obviously a success. However it is not at present open to the public; for now the mentally handicapped people running it want to maintain it as a place for themselves. Anne Astrup, project leader for the LMA explained: "WE see integration as something to pursue. But what we want for them is not necessarily what they need. A part of integration is giving the possibilities and choices that we (non-mentally handicapped people) have."



**GROUP STUDY VISITS:  
A DANISH EXPERIENCE**

## A NEW WAY OF THINKING

The wishes of the cafe users are being respected by the educational support team: a decision which displays a lot of courage and confidence on their part in recognising that the policy of integration cannot be hurried. Mentally handicapped people need time to adjust and to gain the confidence necessary for them to be comfortably integrated into the community. These needs are being met. The users have attended courses covering such areas as how to express yourself, how to stand up for your opinions, and democratic decision-making. "The key word is self-determination which replaces social care. Perhaps the main feature of the project is that the disabled people have learned, through courses, how to gain influence, make their own decisions and accomplish them", Anne Astrup told us.

In acknowledging these needs, the support team are working within a period of two years to see a change in the running of the cafe, so that it will eventually be open to all.

The Cafe Amalie is an excellent example of what can be achieved within the movement of decentralisation. We saw how this movement is affecting the larger institutions when we visited Forsorgcentret Breyning, a large mental handicap centre in Vejle county which is currently being scaled down.

## EXERCISING THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE

One part of the institution houses a group of elderly people, who have lived there for most of their lives. This area has been made as com-

fortable as possible and is managed by the residents themselves in keeping with the regional policy. All have their own room except for those who have chosen to share with a particular friend. And although this group of individuals have been given the opportunity to move to community housing units, they have chosen to stay in what is, after all, their home.

It felt only right that these people's wishes have been respected. But it could be argued that people who have lived in institutions for most of their lives learn to feel secure there. The institution can be experienced as offering protection from the uncertainties of life outside. Given these factors, can we actually claim that these people have really been given a choice?

## THE PRINCIPLE OF INDEPENDENT LIVING

The visiting group then moved on to visit the second LMA in Storstrom county. The aim of this LMA is the total closure of residential institutions for the mentally handicapped and the promotion of quality of life within the community. Sven Nielsen, the project leader for this LMA, helped explain: "Our objective is to change the culture—both that of the institutions and that of society—to change the surroundings and the system of social services in order to support the disabled". To make this possible three major guidelines have been drawn up:

- the principle of least intervention / to improve autonomy
- the principle of closeness / social and family life
- the principle of entirety / social questions, including all aspects of social life.

These are incorporated within the "Live and Neighborhood" schemes in Storstrom county, where normal family housing within the local community is being offered to mentally handicapped people. This is indeed different to an institutional philosophy and we can expect the young people who are spending their formative years within these small, friendly community-based units to have quite different expectations and demands.

## POSITIVE STEPS ON THE ROAD TO INTEGRATION

In Denmark we were able to see where these new policies for independent living and self-determination, those actively encouraged by the HELIOS programme are leading. It was generally agreed that Denmark has made very positive progress and the quality of life for all the mentally handicapped people we met has obviously improved a great deal. However we were only seeing part of the process — there is still some way to go.

We were impressed by the caution being shown in not forcing too many changes upon people who have until recently been living in institutions. But for the children and young people who are spending their formative years within community-based family units, this is not a problem: they will always have been members of the larger world in the community.





## NEW EVENT FOR THE NETWORK OF CENTRES

### **THE THEME-BASED SEMINAR: NEW POSSIBILITIES FOR EXCHANGE**

The theme-based seminar is an exciting addition to the network's programme, helping to broaden technical knowledge and expertise. Meetings are structured to allow intensive discussion around the theme, leading to objective and concrete results.

### **A NEW EXPERIENCE**

The first seminar took place in Maastricht, the Netherlands on the theme "Employment possibilities for mentally ill people". Centres and LMAs delivered written papers in advance. Experts from outside, working in the field, presented their experiences. It was important to have this external input as the subject is relatively new to the network. For many participants it was the first time that they learned directly from colleagues about other approaches and experiments for the vocational training of psychiatric patients.

One of the conclusions of the working groups was that the theme should be examined in more depth, and that there should be a permanent recognition for psychiatrically ill people within the framework of the network.

### **A TRIED AND TESTED EVENT**

This formula worked well, and was repeated for the second time in Worms, when the theme was "Rehabilitation systems in the European Community and (re)insertion in employment".

Small groups of between 25-30 people with different backgrounds enabled lively talks and debate, with reports by Professor Dr Storm of Rehabilitation International and Mr Grammenos, an expert of the European Commission, providing the basis for discussion. Participants gave ideas and suggestions for work in the coming years, and provided each other with new elements and innovative developments on vocational training and employment in their countries.

### **IMPORTANT COLLABORATION**

Mixed participation is an important element of the theme-based seminar. Both in Maastricht and Worms, LMA and outer network members were present. This means that those members of the HELIOS networks with vocational rehabilitation activities in their work are meeting together and bringing their own experience and viewpoint to these events. There was a lot of know-how from a lot of different angles, which is particularly important when the theme of a seminar is broad-based.

### **IDEAS FOR THE FUTURE**

The plan is to run between 4-5 theme-based seminars each year. Future themes could include sports and rehabilitation, special employment possibilities for blind and deaf people, and the influence of new technology. Suggestions are always welcome.





## THE GROUP STUDY VISIT IN PRACTICE

### SCHOOL INTEGRATION

LOCAL

MODEL ACTIVITIES

PUT

“ON THE SPOT”

**The 80 Local Model Activities (LMAs) of the HELIOS programme are given many opportunities for exchange. In this article we feature one aspect — the group study visit.**

More and more LMAs are being put on the spot, thanks to the group study visit. Participants have the chance to find out what is happening in other situations and experience for themselves what is being achieved. They can discuss questions, problems and ideas in-depth, and often learn something to improve their service back home.

Reports from the study visits are held centrally in the HELIOS Documentation Centre. The group study visit is therefore a practical AND tangible way of sharing experience and skills between LMAs and between member states. We take an example from each of the networks.

Visits between activities within this network are particularly useful in a real, highly practical sense. By sharing information and ideas, new ventures can learn and benefit from the experience that has already been gained. And recent initiatives may be developing new and innovative approaches of interest to the more established programmes.

This was the case during a visit by LMA “Belgium, Francophone” and LMA “France” to LMA “Valladolid” in Spain. Participants were able to see integration at work in a variety of educational settings. The aims and working methods were coherent, but the problem of financial resources was an element to be resolved. The visit ended with a round table where the visiting group and a large representation of the Spanish LMA were able to discuss different educational realities and the difficulties these present.

Forthcoming visits are now being further developed, with plans to discuss one of the year’s work themes—special systems and integrated situations, the learning environment—as part of the programmes.

So far, all participants have found the visits rich and fruitful, providing an opportunity for them to establish contacts which they hope to develop in the future. It is these relationships which will begin to foster a mutually agreed European policy for integration in schools.



## ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

Information Technology is an area that has enormous potential for disabled people. Many of the projects participating in this network use computers for the training and employment of disabled people. National barriers are not a problem as computer systems use internationally marketed software; the sharing of experiences across member states can only strengthen this rapidly expanding enterprise.

This is clearly illustrated in a study visit by LMA Hannover (West Germany) to LMA Dublin (Ireland). The visiting group were particularly interested in a computer workshop which has been designed specifically to allow mentally handicapped people to work in a normal office environment, using up-to-date PC technology. As official employees of the local Health Board, the workers receive a salary which—although only one third of what they might receive on the open labour market—is considerably more than they could earn within a sheltered workshop.

The German group also visited a project titled, “Teleworking Application and Potential”, where people work from their own homes using a PC and modem. The visitors stated that they were amazed at how many severely disabled people were involved in this project, including people with cerebral palsy, spina bifida and blind people. Their only criticism was that this kind of work might lead to the isolation of the individual. However they were most interested in the way that this Irish LMA is researching and using small gaps in the market to create real job opportunities for disabled people. This is an experience that can be used by all the LMAs within the Economic Integration network.

The group also visited the developmental department of a Remedial Clinic where software and hardware for use by disabled people is being investigated, including robot workers and speech synthesisers. The visitors were very impressed by the high level of development and standards, noting that the Irish seem to have found solutions to problems that are considered either not solvable or too expensive in West Germany.

As a result of this study visit, the LMA Hannover is now planning a European Scientific Congress with the theme: “Computer Technology in the area of disability”, to be held in West Germany.



## SOCIAL INTEGRATION

Many of the projects within this network are working with mentally handicapped people. Although there is a great diversity of activities, all adhere to a common policy: de-institutionalisation.

Some member states have been able to implement a community care policy more quickly than others and this was highlighted during a group study visit to LMA Storstrom and LMA Vejle in Denmark by LMAs from France, Luxembourg, Spain and the UK. The UK team reported that they were impressed by the progress towards community care that is taking place in Denmark, a country that shares the same philosophy as the UK.

The group visited a scheme taking place in Storstrom county, where small groups of disabled people, often with severe disabilities, are living in normal family houses among the local population. The team from Luxembourg was interested to see that it is possible to function in structures (small individual apartments or group homes) which have no specially adapted technical equipment and enable independent living in the largest sense. However these small units still offer security and protection to the residents. "The isolation of the disabled person, which is a possible consequence of de-institutionalisation, is thus avoided", concluded the report from Luxembourg.

The most striking feature of the visit was the total respect given to the disabled person in Denmark. The level of self-advocacy, and the creation of user committees where mentally handicapped people can participate in the decision-making, are elements that all participants will try to incorporate within their own projects.

Some themes of reflexion discussed during the study visit were: methods of decentralising large institutions; the greatest normalisation possible (family units at the place of origin); flexibility in work (alternative employment, part-time employment); training of personnel in the new approach; involvement of disabled people and their families in the planning and running of projects; coherence in housing, employment and leisure.

The UK report concluded: "The group study visit is not just for learning and exchange, it also justifies and reaffirms what we are doing." This factor can be very important, particularly if a project is working in isolation or attempting to promote new and innovative schemes.

This important exchange was followed-up in November when the same LMAs, together with several others, visited Luxembourg and discussed the theme: "The concept of autonomy for mentally handicapped people".

## CONCLUSIONS

Group study visits give participants working for the same goal, but within different local, financial, legislative and cultural situations, an opportunity to exchange ideas, and see how certain elements can be adapted in their own situations. They provide an undoubtedly positive opportunity for sharing experiences and developing working relationships, and make an important contribution towards establishing a coherent policy for integration in all member states.

It has only been possible to give brief examples in this article. If you would like fuller details about any of the group study visits, please contact the HELIOS Documentation Centre.





**HANDYNET DEMONSTRATES THE WAY AHEAD**



A potential user can perform measurements on any part of a technical aid and in any direction.



The ability to communicate in all nine Community languages may be a little beyond most of us but **HANDYNET**—a European Information and Communication system in the field of disability—already has a data input and retrieval system that provides an automatic translation facility.

Enormous interest has been generated by two demonstrations of the multilingual HANDYNET system. In June, some 150 experts—including representatives from national governments, non-government disability organisations and social partners—were invited to Brussels for a major presentation of the system. In September, Dusseldorf was the setting for another demonstration, in front of over 2000 members of the public who visited the HELIOS stand during the week-long Reha '89 International Exhibition. Both demonstrations focused on technical aids for use by disabled people.

The demonstration in Brussels was opened by a representative from the Commission, who introduced the HANDYNET system. The Director of the HELIOS programme then spoke of European Unity, and looked forward to 1992 and the constitution of a Europe which includes disabled people as full partners, a Europe where political and social barriers can be broken down. A European communication system like HANDYNET is needed in this vital work, providing the logical links between the goal of integrating disabled people, the policy to promote the development of technical aids and by providing the means to pool information and experience gained in the field of disability.

#### Focus on technical aids

A feature of the system is that it provides standardised technical and functional descriptions of technical aids, with images to enhance the textual information. Together with a detailed search on data, where the initial search is done

using text (to reduce the volume of selected records), the demonstration included a preview of how images can be used to browse quickly through this selection as one method of finding the aid of your choice.

We were also shown how it is possible to view the image of an object—for example a wheelchair—from different angles, giving the potential user a three dimensional idea of the product. It is also possible to add to the technical specifications by actually measuring, for example, the radius of a wheel. And most importantly for some of us, you only need a rudimentary knowledge of computers to carry this out.

The system also holds a computer based directory of commercial and non-commercial bodies involved in the research and development, manufacturing, and distribution of technical aids. Part of this database holds details about legislation and regulations in the European Community.

#### A "truly European" system

But for those seeing the system in action for the first time, probably its most striking feature is that it can turn data input in one national language into other Community languages, with all the accents and even the full Greek alphabet. It is still the only on-line system in existence which is capable of this. However, there are limitations to this magic! Automatic translation is only available on words taken from HANDYNET's thesaurus, HANDY-VOC. Good quality automatic translation of free text is at the moment just a dream.

The system was described as having been "conceived in a spirit of user friendliness" and as we saw, this included multilingual guided input, as well as output. Computer specialists and professionals in disability have worked together to ensure that the system can be used with a little training by those who have no previous experience of computers. Special outputs are now under development using braille and voice synthesizers for visually disabled people and people with communication problems.



### An Information AND Communication system

Another important role of the HANDYNET system is as a communication tool. Electronic mail and an electronic journal ("notice board") will be available for use by all those involved with the HELIOS programme and enable conversations and news to pass quickly between members of the communication network.

The general consensus after the Brussels demonstration was favourable, and a report by the European Commission to the Council has recommended that the work should be carried on into the 1990s and that a new information module, on employment matters, should be developed. A questionnaire given to visitors to the HELIOS stand in Dusseldorf backed this up — 90% of respondents thought both that there should be a common European policy in favour of disabled people and that the important work of the HANDYNET system should be continued.

This positive response from national experts and potential users serves to underline the great value of HANDYNET, a system initiated by the Commission and created by the motivation and skills of practising experts, both able and disabled people, working in the field of disability. The result is a practical, pragmatic response to the information needs of disabled people Community-wide, with potential access to the system for all disabled people and their enablers.



## N.G.O.'s AND HELIOS

**The nine NGO members of the HELIOS Consultative Committee meet together several times a year: here we report on recent discussions.**

A stronger collaboration between the NGOs and the HELIOS activities, to improve the flow of information from European to local level, was discussed at the meeting. All the group expressed great interest in the idea, especially for collaboration with the Local Model Activities Networks. This could be achieved by NGO representatives becoming members of the local coordination committees, which are responsible for steering activities at local level. The NGOs will make a report on their findings for possible collaboration, to be discussed at the next meeting of the Consultative Committee.

### Information exchange

The Information Service gave details about the HELIOS magazine, and in particular the possibility for organisations to have extra copies for distribution at important events and conferences. A seminar bringing together the editors of the main NGO magazines is a point to be considered at the next meeting.

There are some 30 disability NGOs working at European level. The Commission representative stressed the need for better coordination to ensure that there is only one European NGO dealing with one area, so that work is not duplicated.

The nine NGOs agreed to share details of all meetings and information at European level with other non-government organisations. Their contact addresses can be found below:

Dr Prof A. Storm  
Rehabilitation International European Community Association (RIECA)  
PB 30  
B-6080 Charleroi (Montignies)  
Belgique

J. Chapman  
Eurolink Age  
60 Pitcairn Road  
Mitcham  
Surrey CR4 3LL  
UK

Mme J. Van Remoortel  
Conseil Régional Européen  
World Federation for Mental Health  
c/o Belgian Association for Mental Health  
369 B Kortrijksesteenweg  
B-9000 Gent  
Belgie

Mr A. Verney  
European Regional Secretariat  
World Federation of the Deaf  
c/o The British Deaf Association  
38 Victoria Place  
Carlisle CA1 1HU  
UK

Mr A. Lampreia  
Disabled People International – Europe  
APD  
Largo do Rato  
P-1200 Lisboa  
Portugal

Mme A. Belpaire-Saverys  
European Association of the ILSMH  
(International League of Societies for persons with mental handicap)  
Avenue Louise – Louizalaan 248  
b.17  
B-1050 Bruxelles/Brussel  
Belgie/Belgique

Mr Tom Parker  
European Blind Union  
c/o RNIB  
224 Great Portland Street  
London W1N 6AA  
UK

Mr W. Lay  
Confédération des Organisations Familiales de la Communauté Européenne  
Rue de Londres – Londenstraat 17  
B-1050 Bruxelles/Brussel  
Belgie/Belgique

Mr W. Hirrlinger  
Action Européenne des handicapés  
214 Wurzerstrasse  
D-5300 Bonn 2  
BRD

**Creativity can be defined as the capacity to find new and innovative solutions to problems. It is the capacity that allows for the expression of our most sophisticated human attributes, the capacity for creating and maintaining art and culture. Creativity is not diminished by any form of disability and can potentially be expressed by everyone.**

What do drama workshops in Hannover, a new arts centre in Liege and a sculpture exhibition in Brighton have in common? They support creativity among disabled people in the European Community, and are some of 36 innovative projects being funded by the European Commission in collaboration with EUCREA (The European Association for Creativity by, with and for disabled people) in 1989.

Several of these projects promote creativity for mentally disabled people by making a wide range of artistic and therapeutic activities open to them. One example of this type of initiative is Creahm, a project based in Liege, Belgium,

which is working in the areas of visual and performing arts. By getting in touch with their own potential for creativity, mentally handicapped people are being helped in making the transition to community life.

#### **A CREATIVE PARTNERSHIP**

A further exciting area of Creahm's work is the establishment of the "European Centre of Alternative Art". This centre, also supported by the Commission, will make the art produced by disabled people more accessible to the general public. This is one way to further cooperation between able-bodied and disabled people. The Creahm project invites established artists to work alongside mentally handicapped people, which does more than just foster partnership; it can blossom into an equal relationship. Mentally handicapped people often exhibit a spontaneity and originality in their work that can make established artists envious. This kind of partnership, based on a mutual regard for creativity, helps in the important work of integration.

#### **COMMUNITY-WIDE PARTICIPATION**

To qualify for financial support from the Commission, projects must involve cooperation between at least four member states. Workshop Hannover in West Germany is bringing together participants from Denmark, the Netherlands, Italy and Greece. This project, which

enhances possibilities for blind and visually disabled people to experience fine art, drama, music and dance, will be fully documented through photographs, slides and a written report. An exhibition is planned at the end of the year.

A similar project is being run by the organisation CAROUSEL in the UK, providing training for professionals to use the creative arts in work with mentally handicapped people. Participants from Holland, Luxembourg and Belgium have been invited to Brighton in the UK for a two week workshop. They will each be accompanied by a person who has learning difficulties. Working as a group, the participants will create sculptures to be exhibited. The first week of the exhibition will be specially for disabled people from local day centres and hospitals, and it will open to the general public for the second week.

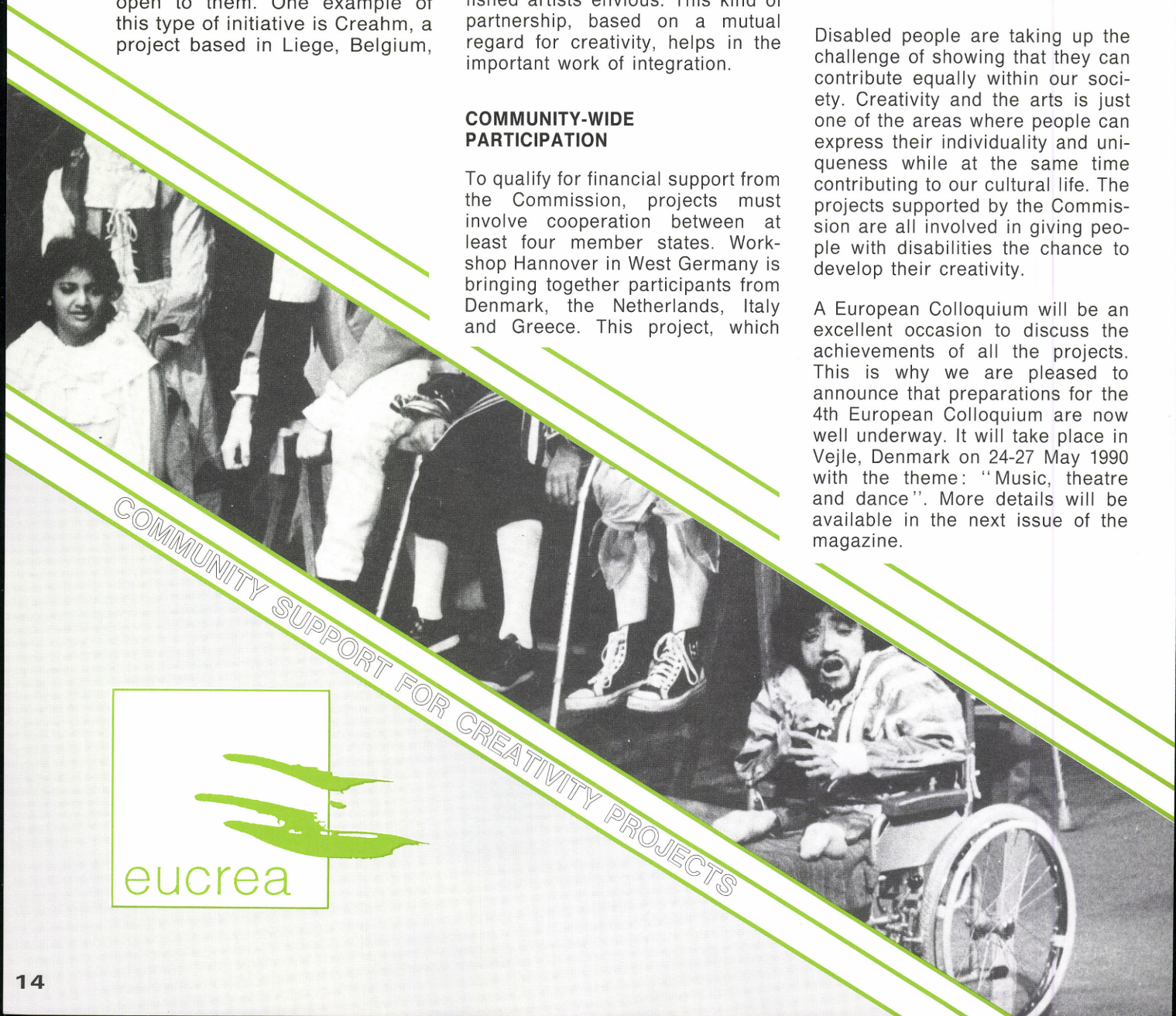
#### **A UNIQUE APPROACH TO ART**

Disabled people are taking up the challenge of showing that they can contribute equally within our society. Creativity and the arts is just one of the areas where people can express their individuality and uniqueness while at the same time contributing to our cultural life. The projects supported by the Commission are all involved in giving people with disabilities the chance to develop their creativity.

A European Colloquium will be an excellent occasion to discuss the achievements of all the projects. This is why we are pleased to announce that preparations for the 4th European Colloquium are now well underway. It will take place in Vejle, Denmark on 24-27 May 1990 with the theme: "Music, theatre and dance". More details will be available in the next issue of the magazine.



COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR CREATIVITY PROJECTS



SPORT FOR  
DISABLED PEOPLE  
WINS COMMUNITY  
BACKING



**The activities of disabled people in the area of sports are growing fast. Hundreds of events are organised Community-wide each year. Through the EC Secretariat "Sports for disabled", the Commission has supported a number of exciting activities in 1989.**

Hundreds of spectators were able to see Robin Hood earlier this year. Not the legendary character from years ago but a major sporting event for disabled people staged in Nottingham, UK. More than 500 athletes from 25 countries took part in the Robin Hood International Games. This week-long competition, held in July, included track and field events, swimming, power lifting, table tennis, soccer and baccia — a game similar to bowls adapted for people with cerebral palsy.

The Games generated enormous press and public interest. It is an excellent example of one of the many exciting projects receiving support from the EC Secretariat in 1989. If you have the chance, we recommend that you go and see some of the different aspects of sports for disabled people taking place in the European Community.

Events in Belgium have so far included the European Archery Championships in Antwerp, the Special Olympics for mentally handicapped people in Woluwe-St Pierre, the Flanders Cup (a European Track and Field Tournament) in Hasselt and the European Open Cycling Championships in Menen. In October, the Netherlands was the venue for the first European Championship in Electric Wheelchair Hockey.

Several ongoing projects are being supported: the EC Data Bank on sports for disabled people; a Consultancy report for the European Commission — an investigation into sports activities for the disabled in all EC countries; and a promotional film showing the work of the Secretariat in Portugal, shot during the European Workshop for Disabled Youth and now available.

Applications for funding should always be made in plenty of time as the planning of the Secretariat is one year in advance. Further details about how to apply, or information about any of the events we have mentioned, are available from:

EC Secretariat for Sports for Disabled  
Heijenoordseweg 5  
**6813 GG Arnhem**  
**The Netherlands**  
Tel. nr. (0) 85-526726  
Fax nr. (0) 85-424138  
Telex nr. 45780 indis n l



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## Editorial team

Director : A. Maron  
Assistant Director : C. Louro  
Expert responsible : L. Joniaux  
Assistant Expert : S. Wackett

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