

# helios

Flash

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「FEATURE」

## Transfer in the HELIOS activities

Transfer is a valuable and effective means to achieve the HELIOS programme's aims of promoting integration and equal opportunities for disabled people. In non-technical terms, it could be said that knowledge or know-how is transferred when participants apply what they have seen and learned from contact with other partners in the HELIOS network to improve their own activities in support of integration and equal opportunities for disabled people.

The original aim in publishing this special *HELIOS Flash* issue was to answer the question: what transfers take place in the framework and as a consequence of the HELIOS programme? To find out, we put that question to some 30 participants in the exchange and information activities (EIAs) and representatives of European NGOs.

### Transfer: the theory

A great many other Commission programmes and initiatives share the goal of transferring knowledge and know-how — to make European businesses more competitive on international markets in some cases, and in others, such as HELIOS II, to promote social cohesion within the European Union.

The transfer principle was also a major concern in previous Community programmes for the integration of disabled people: HELIOS I (1988-1991) and before that INTERACT (1983-1987). The report "Transferable activities in the district projects" <sup>(1)</sup>, for example, proposed a definition of transfer related to the principle of good practice: "The main purpose [of the Community programme's activities]

*is not only to learn, this in itself being rather much, but to learn from the good practice of other people, with the aim of using tested experiences and knowledge in one's own activities. This process [is] called 'Transfer'."* <sup>(2)</sup>

Definitions of the concept of transfer vary from one discipline to another (psychoanalysis, psycho-pedagogy, sociology, technological development, etc.). In the present case, namely the activities of the HELIOS programme, we shall be looking at transfer as a process rather than a result, and more precisely as one factor in a learning process in which discovery, "transposition" and imitation play a key role: first take a look at areas where others are innovative

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## A guide to activities

The participants in the **exchange and information activities (EIAs)**, which span four sectors (functional rehabilitation, integration in the field of education, economic integration and independent living), are designated by their national governments. With the arrival of the three new EU Member States, their ranks swelled from 676 in 1994 to 780 in 1995. They are divided into 57 theme-based groups (between 13 and 17 per sector). Each of these will generally conduct three study visits a year. At the end of each year, two or three seminars are held per sector to review the work of the past 12 months. In addition, all four sectors have a study group chaired by a member of the HELIOS Team of Experts and comprising one representative of each theme-based group and a representative of a European NGO. The study groups might be said to steer the exchange and information activities of their respective sectors.

The term **Europrogrammes** refers to the European activities of 80 European disabled people's NGOs cofinanced by the Commission as part of the HELIOS programme. These are chiefly exchange and information activities such as conferences, study visits and courses. An average of 250 Europrogramme activities take place each year across 12 sectors.

(cont. from page 1)

- and effective, then endeavour to transpose and imitate their methods, adapting them to the given context. We shall not be analysing the results of HELIOS transfers or reviewing good practice already transferred — that would have required resources beyond the scope of a feature article. Besides, we should not forget that HELIOS II is far from over: the identification of effective transfers of good practice will probably have to wait until the end of 1996.

Within the HELIOS programme, study visits are often the key to discovery, but participants are not simply passive spectators. Time is always set aside for discussion, to enable participants to compare and conceptualise their ideas and observations. The next stage is to put the new and interesting methods observed into practice. Transfer is thus a means of encouraging innovation — and speeding it up by eliminating some of the research and development stages. But it is never a cure-all, least of all in the social field: social innovation, however momentous, can never be replicated identically in another country, where the context will inevitably be different (economic development, legislative framework, lifestyle and culture, etc.).

## Four kinds of transfer

The first type of transfer is **individual** and takes place through observation of experience and good practice abroad, when participants in the programme activities discover, observe and gather information on other ways of working. How much of it do they subsequently remember? What does the experience teach them? At this stage, they are actively seeking information that they can use to improve their own methods.

But transfer implies that each participant also passes on information, in at least three ways.

One of these is **transfer to colleagues**, dissemination of the information obtained: the individuals who take part in EIA study visits and Europrogramme seminars never do so in a purely personal capacity — they always represent an association, university or ministry, etc. We therefore asked them how they go about disseminating what they have learnt from participation in HELIOS activities among their colleagues or fellow association members. This internal circulation of information is often extended to take in other organisations working in the same geographical area or in related fields.

So the participants return, their heads full of exciting new ideas, and their thoughts turn to practical implementation: informing (and winning over) those administrative and political authorities responsible for implementing new examples of good practice in the field of integration and equal opportunities for disabled people. We therefore asked participants what strategies they employed for a third form of transfer: **transfer to the public authorities** at local, regional, national and European level.

The fourth type of transfer is **raising public awareness**. Progress on integration and equal opportunities for disabled people requires a change of mentality, a shift in attitudes and cultural mores. We therefore wanted to know whether participation in HELIOS activities had been an opportunity for public awareness-raising.



## Facilitating transfer during study visits

We deliberately focused our questions on what happens once the activities are over. One of the people we interviewed was in no doubt that what matters is what happens not at the visits or seminars, but afterwards, between activities, in putting the experience to use.

Nonetheless, by way of example, here is how **Dr Rolf Quick**, a German participant in EIAs in the economic integration sector, describes how subsequent transfer can be facilitated during the study visit:

- presentation by the host of the administrative system and integration policy in the country visited;
- work and discussion of the group's main themes in workshops (e.g. raising business awareness of the benefits of working with disabled people);
- visits to companies which employ disabled people;
- discussions with representatives of the host organisation, the local authorities, employers, trade union representatives, etc.;
- comparison of the methods observed with the participant's personal experience;
- the questionnaire each participant has to complete at the end of every visit (which was designed with the help of the study group for the economic integration sector).

The end-of-year seminars are an opportunity for further information and exchange, which can prompt additional transfer.

More transfer takes place within the study group for each sector, which orchestrates information transfer between the participants. ■

## Exchange across the compass points

No discussion of the integration of disabled people in the European Union is complete without the classic reference to the social policies of the Nordic countries, which are cited as examples in practically every field relating to physical, mental or sensorial disability. And EIA participants from the southern States are generally unstinting in their praise for the achievements of their northern partners in terms of accessibility and community services, for example. But exchange within HELIOS should not be limited to the North-South axis: transfers operate across all points of the compass.

**Justino Gómez Nieto** of the CERMI (E) puts the demise of the cliché of North-South transfers succinctly: *"we southern Europeans have traditionally believed we were less advanced than the central and northern regions. But better mutual understanding has shown that to be a fallacy"*.

For **M. G. Orlandini**, director of education responsible for nursery and primary schools in southern Piedmont (I), the trip to Spain was a revelation. *"The meetings with our Spanish neighbours in particular gave me new ideas on the psychosociological relationship between teacher and child, training for professionals, software and distance learning. Spain presents a very interesting model for the use of new technologies. HELIOS is helpful in this respect, because it has enabled us to discover systems in southern Europe that we never knew existed"*.

While southern Piedmont uses examples of good practice from Spain to improve its methods, the south of France looks to Italy for inspiration, as testified by **J.-P. Maily** of Montpellier (F): *"the exchange activities with Italy*

*have provided a store of information on mental illness, which we can now transfer to groups in this field. We have also set up a guidance and resettlement project for disabled people in conjunction with the ENAIP in Bologna: an experiment in transnational exchange in the form of training placements. The main aim was to draw attention to the sense of incompetence associated with disability. We wanted to find out what organisational arrangements and structures are needed to improve the attitude of disabled workers, restore their self-confidence and develop their skills"*.

Geographical proximity can be a factor in the choice of future partners. *"Ideally"*, agrees **David Rodriguez**, lecturer in educational sciences in Portugal, *"all HELIOS's work should be focused more on forging ties at regional and national level using national structures. Otherwise all the experience being amassed will be lost"*.

So things are happening in the southern regions, but we should be wary of confining activities to crossborder exchanges.

The last word should perhaps go to **J.-P. Maily**: *"whatever the country, the concern is the same: an integrated approach to the disabled person. What accentuates the differences is the diversity of legislation in the various countries and the ongoing process of legislative change (e.g. in Italy, Spain and Portugal). A degree of philosophical concordance is apparent, on the other hand, in the European humanist approach. We are all looking for the broadest and most fertile concept to guide our analysis and action. Nationalities vary, but the philosophy, the human dimension, remains the same"*.



## Individual transfer

**What have you gained from your participation in the activities of the HELIOS programme in terms of knowledge and know-how of relevance for your own working environment?**

In some cases, HELIOS gave participants their first taste of travelling abroad for the purposes of their work. Practically everyone expressed enthusiasm for intercultural exchange and their experience of other countries and customs. It seems HELIOS is rallying even sceptics and neophytes to the European cause.

Cléon Angelo, of Greek origin, is secretary of the Belgian national housing association for disabled people (ANLH) in Brussels. Although very active in the social integration/independent living sector, he admits that his initial expectations of HELIOS II were low. "Yes," he acknowledges, *"I had my prejudices. But I have been pleasantly surprised: the debate and exchange has been of greater benefit to me than I expected. I had not imagined I would come into contact with such interesting ideas and practices. And what is fascinating is the cultural background of those campaigning for independence"*.

Birger Perlt is an educator at a social education centre in Storkovenhavn (DK). When we contacted him he had taken part in just one study visit, to Belgium: *"I discovered that the disability culture varies from country to country, which is positive and at the same time frustrating because it made me realise that harmonising all these cultures would be a huge and very difficult undertaking"*.

Beyond the initial culture shock, the replies we received may be grouped under four main headings which reflect the initial effects and results of the activities:

- information-gathering on structures, systems and concepts in the various countries;
- information-gathering on or discovery of new solutions or practices, on various scales;
- increase in prestige and confidence among participants/boost for organisations;
- formation of working groups to develop joint projects and establishment of new European networks.

## Structures and concepts: not by comparison alone...

Every Member State of the European Union has developed its own rules and structures for the assistance, reception and integration of disabled people. Most study visits begin with an introduction to general conditions in the sector in the host country.

Dr Arne Voss, a 52-year-old neurologist who runs a rehabilitation centre in Gailingen (D) tells us: *"During the study visits, we learnt a lot about the know-how of rehabilitation and integration in the other European countries. (...) The concept of integration of handicapped people in Italy and in a quite similar way in Spain and Portugal were new and should be discussed in our country. The different models of postgraduate studies and therapeutic education are a challenge to make it better in our own country. In the therapeutic and scientific societies we will*

*discuss and prepare the necessary papers. (I am a member of various scientific societies.) It was good to hear that many problems occur in the same way in every country visited. (Difficulties in teamwork, burn-out syndrome among workers, lack of money, etc.)"*.

Sonke Asmussen, of the Ministry for Culture and Sport in Stuttgart (D), takes a different view: *"I have been confirmed in my impression that measures to improve conditions for disabled people are essentially similar in the various countries, despite national differences in standards, education systems and legislation. But I am aware that my colleagues in the group do not share that opinion"*.

And participants coming back from a study visit tend to question not only what they have just seen but also more familiar methods in

their own countries. John Curran, principal of a school in Dublin (IRL) notes: *"It is of great value to be able to look at the different practices in different countries and to compare our own stage of development with that of other systems. The Irish educational system is at a point of change. In the next few years, there will be significant reform and major system changes with new legislation and new structures being established. Participation in the HELIOS study-visit activities gives me a wider view of the context of the planned changes in Ireland."*

It is natural that, in seeking to understand, participants should compare what they see on study visits with what they know. But Danielle Pécriaux, a schools inspector for the Ministry of Education of the French-Speaking Community of Belgium, cautions





Claude Berg:  
"looking at what is  
happening elsewhere"  
(photo: on a study  
visit in Arlon)

against the temptation to pass judgement: *"it seems that people taking part in European exchanges for the first time always compare what they see with what they are used to. But we are not there to draw comparisons; we are there to gain an insight into the situation on the ground and, in particular, legislative provisions in the host country. We should not be giving our opinion on what we see during a study visit, but asking questions. And if those questions prompt our hosts to question and examine their own methods, so much the better"*.

**Claude Berg**, director of the social undertaking La Lorraine in Arlon (B), emphasises that *"it is important to look at what is happening elsewhere, in social undertakings in Berlin or in the restaurants and shops which employ disabled people in Denmark and Greece"*. But we should be aware that the same term is sometimes used to describe two different things. For example, in some countries the expression *"sheltered workshop"* refers to simple *"occupational centres"* of no real economic value, where the staff have no opportunity for personal development and some

times, apart from the non-disabled managers, do not even receive any pay. That was why, as **Jan Holvoet**, managing director of WAAK v.z.w. in Kuurne (B), recalls, *"our group organised a survey with the University of Stuttgart to classify and review organisations which describe themselves as sheltered workshops. The conclusions of the report will be published before the end of the year"*.

## Good practice and good ideas

A number of participants gave us examples of ideas and practices they have encountered during HELIOS activities.

Some are specific instruments, such as a school desk in Denmark designed to enable teamwork between three or four pupils while leaving each one an individual workspace. Another participant discovered a conventional phone book in Italy which used symbols to indicate all the public buildings accessible to disabled people. So simple when you think about it...

**Johan Wesemann**, chair of the European Disability Forum and director of the European Union of the Deaf, went to London at the invitation of the Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID) to see Typetalk, a telephone relay service for people who are deaf or hard of hearing set up with British Telecom. In his report, **Mr Wesemann** suggests that *"we should now be looking at the possibility of developing the same service in the framework of the European Union in countries which do not yet have one or are perhaps unaware that such a thing exists"*.

**John Dickens** works in Bangor (Wales) for Agoriad (Welsh for "key" or "opening"), an organisation which trains and places disabled workers on the open labour market. Agoriad plans to open a hotel at the end of 1995 with staff composed half of people with learning difficulties. John is no starry-eyed stranger to the world of business: the decision to open the hotel was made on the basis of serious market research. The project was largely inspired by a similar experiment in Edinburgh which John learned of on a HELIOS study visit.

**Cléon Angelo**, for his part, acknowledges that his participation in HELIOS led him to discover two parallel concepts spanning the whole spectrum of European disability organisations: independent living and peer counselling (counselling by disabled people for disabled people).

These brief accounts indicate that the EIAs and Europrogrammes give participants an opportunity to hear about good practice or elements of good practice in use elsewhere which can be transferred to their own environment. We should note, however, that some of the replies we received were far more

vague and contained no specific examples, just general comments on the value of the exchanges and meetings.

It is also worth mentioning another case where theoretical exchange and discussion fed directly into a practical initiative. **Danielle Pécriaux** drew on the work of her HELIOS theme-based group to launch an innovative project in Mons (B) in September 1995. The special education system in Belgium is both highly structured and quite separate from the mainstream system; it is rare for students in special schools to have contact with their mainstream counterparts. In the project **Danielle Pécriaux** described to us, a class of eight children with learning difficulties between the ages of five and eight will have lessons at a mainstream school. Most activities will take place with three mainstream classes on the site. To summarise the process very briefly, the HELIOS group first discussed the personal experience of its members; **Danielle Pécriaux** then drafted an abstract of the discussions; the project was launched in Mons, largely on the basis of this theoretical digest; and debate within the group will continue as the project progresses.



## Self-confidence and better structures

When we asked **Lucien Bertrand**, head of the outpatient rehabilitation service of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, what had been of greatest benefit in the study visits he had attended, there was no doubt in his mind: *"the reassurance, the renewed confidence in one's own work, and, at the same time, seeing that Luxembourg is not alone, that we are not the only ones facing these problems..."* Nearly one respondent in three gave a similar reply: participation in HELIOS gives the programme's partners greater confidence and influence and indeed a degree of prestige which can be of no small help in dialogue with policy-makers at national level.

**Paola Cattelino**, a social worker with the Servizio Informazione Disabili (SID) in Aosta (I) states: *"HELIOS II has not changed my outlook, but it has been helpful in confirming my view of disabled people's requirements for the future, and at the same time giving me new ideas. I am currently working with the Italian government on an adapted housing project — a logical follow-up to HELIOS's work"*.

Likewise, **Mr Vardakastanis** acknowledges that participation in the European Disability Forum has substantially raised the profile of the Greek National Federation of Disabled People, which he chairs, affording it international status and considerable national prestige.

Participation in HELIOS has brought many organisations fresh management know-how. **Guy De Leen**, of the NGO Confédération européenne des laryngectomisés, is unequivocal on the matter: *"associations of disabled people are now moving away from charitable work towards self-help activities. Participation in HELIOS, RI-ECA's coordination of the sector within the programme and contact with highly organised NGOs all promotes greater professionalism in our activities and curbs paternalism"*.

**John Curran**, who is very active in EIAs in the education sector, also begins by stressing the moral support HELIOS gives participants: *"Perhaps the biggest advantage to my*

*own work and that of teachers in my school is to reaffirm the value of what we have been doing. It is a great support to discover that the ideas we had on integration of children with special needs in our school are part of a Europe-wide movement and that we are not alone. This gives new impetus to our work"*.

Some of the programme partners we interviewed told us that their designation as participants in HELIOS had given them more influence with local policy-makers, who in turn had gained a degree of prestige. **John Curran** paints a more complex picture: *"It seems that the benefit of participating in HELIOS is seen at the level of improving the knowledge and experience of the individual participants. There does not seem to be an awareness that this knowledge and experience could be combined to benefit the direction of change of the system as a whole. Of course, it could be argued that the individual participants like myself should become a force for change within the system. This is true. Yet, it is also true to say that most of the participants who*

## Catherine Cousergue, from dream to reality

Toulouse, the red-roofed heart of south-west France, a few hundred kilometres from Paris, is home to Catherine Cousergue, administrator of the GIHP (group for the integration of physically disabled people) for the Midi-Pyrénées, and the centre of her fight to improve the quality of life for disabled people.

Catherine contracted polio as a young child living in Morocco with her parents. As there was no special education provision there, she was able to attend a mainstream school. Her parents later decided to return to Paris, where Catherine had to undergo a number of operations. She thus continued her schooling in Garches, right by the hospital, in a mainstream establishment where one-third of the pupils were non-disabled and two-thirds disabled. *"I feel sure that having access to a mainstream education was my big break,"* Catherine con-

fides. A year later, her parents moved to Toulouse, where for the first time Catherine found her way to the mainstream system barred, and had to enrol in a special school.

Her toing and froing between Toulouse and Paris finally resulted in her completing her secondary education half at a mainstream school in Paris and half at a special school in Toulouse. *"I am sure that without that I would never have passed my degree in medicine. It is a very long course which involves a lot of teamwork and requires strong personal ties"*. Catherine has degrees in pharmaceutical medicine, medical statistics and medical computing. Ideally qualified, in fact, to work in a pharmaceuticals laboratory. *"But unfortunately,"* she says, *"no laboratory dared take the risk of recruiting me"*.

Catherine Cousergue is very aware of the contribution she can make as a woman. Her busy schedule is shared between her administrative duties at the GIHP and her professional activities in medical publishing and pharmaceutical research. The HELIOS programme's EIAs have taken her to Denmark, Italy and the Netherlands. *"The first visits are a bit overwhelming because it is all so new,"* she remembers, *"but I think the HELIOS activities have allowed us to save time. Particularly as regards the quality of the documentation we have received. We have also gained know-how on accessibility and an interest in current practice in the Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian countries. We have learned from the technical documentation on access to public buildings and housing prepared by the Belfast team in Northern Ireland, and from work in Denmark on pedes-*



## Joint projects and new networks

are involved in HELIOS are extremely busy and over-stretched at present. (...) HELIOS is only one small part of my activities and while I have been asked to represent Ireland on this activity, I do not get any additional support or resources to enable me to do so. (...) [There] is simply not enough time to devote to promoting or advancing the new ideas and practices among colleagues in other schools or at a national level. To do this would require that the authorities recognise the important contribution the experience and ideas of HELIOS participants could make to the development of our national system. This would mean that they would take steps to gather and collate this information and make sure that it was available to others and that it would form part of the body of knowledge to be drawn upon in forming the new policies and practices in our system."

It is undoubtedly true that the HELIOS programme has contributed to improving communication and coordination between disability organisations and institutions in Europe, at European and, in some cases, national level. The new and closer links forged should in theory further the work of organisations and institutions in the disability field.

Some respondents spoke of the value and indeed the necessity of pooling their efforts on joint projects.

The accounts of the NGOs responsible for organising the 1995 European Day of Disabled Persons are illuminating on this point <sup>(3)</sup>.

On a mandate from the forum, three NGOs formed a coordination and monitoring committee to prepare the third European Day of Disabled Persons, scheduled for 3 December: Autisme Europe, the European Regional Council of the World Federation for Mental Health (ERC-WFMH) and the International League of Societies for Persons with Mental

Handicap-European Association (ILSMH-EA). "There is bound to be some transfer between the three organisations, because we all work in closely related fields," believes Anne-Sophie Parent (Autisme Europe). "We are accustomed to exchanging information," adds Josée Van Remoortel of the ERC-WFMH, "but since we started work on the 1995 European day the quantity and quality of that information has increased tenfold, not always on matters directly related to the organisation of the event".

Similarly, it is worth mentioning, among the EIAs in the economic integration sector, the distinctive activities of theme-based group No. 8 (identification of opportunities and difficulties on the open labour market). The group's members from Belgium, Denmark, France, Portugal and the United Kingdom have agreed to concentrate their efforts, knowledge and ideas on a joint project: AURELIE, a vocational training centre for car mechanics. The centre's 28 trainees are all disabled people; many of them are also

trian precincts and public transport. These projects have been very useful for putting ideas across in France. For example, I have circulated all the publications from the Anglo-Saxon countries I have received among local, regional and national construction operators and designers in France. I have also sent copies to the Ministry for Amenities and Infrastructure. And we have launched a training project for architects under the HORIZON programme".

Dr Cousergue is also a journalist. The following is an excerpt from an article she wrote on HELIOS for the French medical journal *Le Généraliste* of 25 April 1995: "My time in Denmark, visiting projects throughout the country, was truly a revelation of what an accessible environment can be — for non-disabled and disabled people alike, children, adults, elderly people, preg-

nant women, people laden with luggage or heavy loads, and so on".

Catherine Cousergue ended the interview with HELIOS Flash with a suggestion: "I think it would be a good idea if participation in HELIOS activities facilitated access to other Community programmes for disabled people (HORIZON, the education, training and youth programmes, etc.). The existing structures are too unwieldy: each time you contact a different department you have to go back to square one. More flexible structures are needed to improve and give new impetus to our work". Point taken, Catherine, but the question remains of where the centralisation of information should take place: at the Commission, in national ministries or at local authority level...

C. Cousergue  
and her group in Denmark:  
"truly a revelation of what an accessible  
environment can be".





▶ experiencing social exclusion and are in danger of dropping out of the system altogether. The idea is to develop a method and channels for recycling scrap car parts. Furthermore, making use of the ideas and practices developed by one member of the group, the London-based Disability Matters, AURELIE endeavours to place the trainees in mainstream jobs. Unusually, the group's 1995 study visits have all been held in Liège. The object has thus moved beyond information exchange to pooling efforts on a practical venture. Clearly a choice is involved. But the result is perhaps more intensive activity, and the focus is certainly more concrete. Besides, in the view of **Raymond Kenler**, the director of AURELIE, the priority must be action, not endless discussion.

To facilitate transfers, therefore, it is perhaps more worthwhile to move beyond the theory and discussion stage and concentrate on joint practical initiatives. This steps up and facilitates communication, increases motivation and ensures a more effective transfer of ideas and good practice.

In some cases, this pooling of efforts develops new collaborative ties, new networks, which then lead a separate existence outside the HELIOS programme. Several EIA participants, among them **John Dickens** in Wales, told us they were preparing a HORIZON project with partners encountered within HELIOS. **Peter Davies**, of the functional rehabilitation service in Glasgow (Scotland), spoke of a large-scale project with five British

participants and a number of European NGOs. One other idea is to set up a Scottish disability forum. **Justino Gómez Nieto**, the former director of the CERMI (Consejo Estatal de representantes de minusválidos de España), also reported increased contacts and collaboration in his country, describing how HELIOS has sparked new forms of coordination between European and Spanish disability organisations, the public authorities in Spain and the European institutions.

## On the move

**John McFarlane** is a vital link in the various European networks of disability organisations: in addition to participating in the EIAs, he is a member of the study group for the social integration/independent living sector and has a long career of involvement in a variety of other European activities (TIDE, HORIZON, etc.). John retired from professional life on account of his disability and receives a pension from his former employers, the British Steel Corporation. But, not content simply to tend his lawn in the small town of Kettering in the heart of rural England, John is constantly on the move from one meeting and one plane to the next.

His efforts are not wasted, as the **Northamptonshire Council of Disabled People (NC of DP)**, which John chairs, can testify. The council represents 120 local and regional disability organisations; it provides a range of services, including legal advice and general information on such matters as sexuality.

John initiated the formation of a county access group within the NC of DP, comprising representatives of disabled people, county planning officers and the local authorities. The group is consulted on every local project

relating to transport and access to new public buildings, cinemas, shopping centres, etc., and the authorities have agreed to take its opinions on board. The council is older than HELIOS, but **John McFarlane** maintains that its participation in the programme activities lends it a kind of prestige and added credibility that impressed the local authorities and speeded up the establishment of the access group. HELIOS feeds in to the NC of DP's work. John notes that *"the EIAs have given us new ideas and supplied information on what and what not to do. At least that way we can avoid repeating others' mistakes"*.

And the media? Catching the attention of the media and changing attitudes to disability is no easy matter, but the NC of DP has more than one trick up its sleeve. In addition to running a press service, the council broadcasts on local radio and the regional BBC network. Does HELIOS get a mention in all this? Not really, John admits, but *"we are preparing a disabled people's week for September, and we will be mentioning HELIOS then."* And the local authorities see the programme as a source not only of prestige but of information and suggestions from elsewhere in Europe.

To conclude, **John McFarlane** suggests that *"the HELIOS exchange visits are only the tip of the iceberg: the work that goes on in between visits — preparing them, maintaining contact, etc. — tends to be forgotten"*. This submerged part of the HELIOS iceberg, he says, is less publicised and receives no financing or additional staff — a situation which clearly discourages some participants and certainly reduces the benefits of the visits. But John remains undaunted and the workload in between meetings does not alarm him, as the endless stream of paper pouring from his fax machine indicates. *"The EIAs open doors, but it is up to the participant to cross the threshold and make the most of the exchanges."*



# Transfer to colleagues

## What strategy do you or your organisation use to share the benefits of your participation in the HELIOS activities with your colleagues and other local and national partners?

Had we wanted to be more rigorous in our investigation, we would not have contacted the direct participants in the HELIOS activities; instead, we would have asked their colleagues what they know about HELIOS and what information they obtain from the programme.

The participants themselves all replied in good faith that they endeavour to transfer what they learn from study visits and seminars to their colleagues.

The classic method is the staff meeting. HELIOS is put on the agenda and staff members returning from visits and conferences have an opportunity to talk about them. A written report is of course essential.

**Y. Vardakastanis**, of the Greek National Federation of Disabled People, identifies three methods of transfer: the traditional approach of indirect transmission of information in writing, direct transfer at meetings and conferences, etc., and the use of new technologies. *"Of the three, the federation cannot be faulted on methods one and two, but is far less effective as regards method three".*

**Claude Berg** tells us he prefers to talk about HELIOS in informal conversations within his social undertaking. At regional level, he uses his position as vice-chair of the Walloon association of sheltered workshops to present and disseminate his reports on the programme. That gives him an opportunity to discuss HELIOS with colleagues, some of whom are also involved in programme activities.

**Conxa Bugié**, chair of the Catalan association for early attention (ACAP) summarised her transfer strategy as follows: *"I disseminate information on the HELIOS activities, the study visits and the conclusions of the working groups in four ways:*

- to association members by means of specific information sessions on HELIOS and via the association's monthly newsletter;
- to local officials through existing coordination channels;
- to national officials by means of written reports;
- otherwise via articles in the ACAP magazine."

**Raymond Ceccotto** of Esch sur Alzette (L) is the director of one of the centres of the Luxembourg association of parents of mentally disabled children and one of the organisers of the national HELIOS II information days in Luxembourg. He showed us a simple but effective tool used in that country for the HELIOS information week held in September

1994. In the final report, each EIA participant completed a clear and concise presentation form containing six boxes: presentation of the project promoter, involvement in HELIOS (theme-based group, etc.), schedule for the coming months, experience of HELIOS, expectations, and suggestions and comments. None of the boxes was more than six or seven lines long. The result is a provisional review of transfers within the 15 Luxembourg EIAs, in just a few pages. Since the document was drafted in mid-1994, only six months after the launch of the EIAs, it contains little information on results, but a similar review is eagerly awaited in time for the next HELIOS information day in Luxembourg. Similar documents have undoubtedly been developed in other countries as well.

Nor should the humble camera be forgotten. Why not follow the example of some participants and systematically take snaps on study visits? A few photos can suffice to make the driest report more readable, thus facilitating the transfer of information. **John Dickens** has a map of Europe on the wall of his office in Bangor, dotted with large close-ups of all the participants in his theme-based group. *"The photos give my colleagues a better idea of the people I am working with, whom they sometimes have on the phone"* - thereby helping them to identify with and feel part of a European initiative.

**John McFarlane :**

*"The EIAs open doors, but it is up to the participant to cross the threshold and make the most of the exchanges."*





## Transfer to the public authorities

What initiatives do you take to pass on the information and ideas gained from HELIOS activities to the public authorities (municipal, regional or national)? Do you have plans for these authorities to replicate practices in use elsewhere?

One of the participants interviewed, who had been most eloquent on the subject of his work and involvement in HELIOS, paused over this question: "now that's another matter altogether..." It was perhaps the question which most surprised some respondents, possibly because their relations with the public authorities are very different.

One EIA participant is attempting to establish relations with politicians in the region and is even considering inviting one to take part in a study visit in a neighbouring country, but, he tells us, "contact with the national authorities is virtually non-existent. As for the national information days in the capital, they are no more than speechifying".

Others, in contrast, are in almost daily contact with the competent authorities and even with ministers' offices. Take **Claude Berg** of Arlon (B): "no, I have no particular strategy as regards the administration or policy-makers, but it does not seem necessary, since a representative of the authority responsible for the integration of disabled people in Wallonia belongs to the same HELIOS themed group as I do..."

Some of those questioned are in fairly direct contact with policy-makers in their capacity as members of advisory bodies or agencies operating under the authority of the ministries responsible for social policy.

So in theory the information is passed on, at national HELIOS information days in particular, but assessing its real impact is not easy. Is there not a danger of complacency among participants ("we did a good report on that"), which could hide a lack of interest in HELIOS and European integration in general on the part of senior officials? Submitting a report to political representatives or to a national or regional network is no guarantee of transfer.

What genuine impact will the most authoritative report have on the lives of disabled people if it is not read, analysed and put to use?

**Jean-Pierre Mailly**, of the centre for rehabilitation and occupational reintegration in Castelno-lesz (F), takes part in EIAs in the economic integration sector. He described the process of transfer to the public authorities as follows: "information on the work of the French participants in the EIAs is transferred at annual meetings organised by one of the two government delegates on the HELIOS Advisory Committee. This delegate represents the public authorities, but we do not know what influence either he or we have with them. We also have all sorts of contacts with the regional authorities in connection with various projects, partnerships and training agreements. We are involved in a HORIZON project for youngsters with learning difficulties in the Hérault département. So we have two points of contact with the public authorities: local government and the central government's Ministry for Labour in Paris".

## Just ordinary families

COFACE, the Confederation of Family Organisations in the European Community, represents 75 family organisations in Europe, including associations of parents of disabled children such as the UNAPEI in France and the European NGO AP3.

Its director, **William Ray**, sees COFACE's participation in HELIOS as vital: "it makes general-interest family organisations more aware of the issue of integration for disabled people, as genuine integration often starts within the family. (...) And our participation in HELIOS has prompted fresh debate within COFACE: for example, the approval of a convention on bioethics by the Council of Europe sparked extensive discussion within HELIOS's European Disability Forum. We took up the debate in COFACE, which has issued an official opinion on the subject".

**Nadine Meeus**, chair of the COFACE Commission on Families and Disabled Persons, is not one to be dazzled by a few international visits and meetings, and gives her assessment of the confederation's participation in HELIOS straight from the shoulder: "our meetings within HELIOS showed us even more clearly than before that some rehabilitation professionals see families where one member is disabled as pathological. COFACE must use its involvement in HELIOS to put across the idea that families with one or more disabled children are first and foremost just ordinary families: they are not a deviant minority, and they should not be cast in that role".

COFACE's Commission on Families and Disabled Persons and its involvement in HELIOS particularly its seat on the European Disability Forum make it in a sense an interface between

the family on the one hand and the disability organisations and rehabilitation professionals on the other. Witness the survey which COFACE is currently conducting in some 10 European countries, with financing from the European Commission under the NGO Europrogrammes of the HELIOS programme. The purpose is to find out more about the attitudes of parents of disabled and non-disabled children regarding disabled pupils in mainstream classes, disabled teachers, etc. in short, in COFACE's words, it is "a survey of parental views on disability in schools".





## Transfer to the general public

We asked participants to tell us about the steps they take to inform the general public or raise awareness of the issue of integration and equal opportunities for disabled people in general, and more specifically to publicise what they have learnt from participation in the HELIOS programme.

Some of the organisations which take part in the EIAs have a highly effective communication policy based on presentation videos and brochures, newsletters for a restricted readership, articles in the press, open days and so on. However, institutional communication of this kind is not directly linked to the HELIOS programme, save the occasional reference to participation in the EIAs — a European connection the organisations publicise to enhance their image.

Other EIA participants would not appear to have a clear strategy as regards public opinion in general and the media in particular. They include those organisations which belong to a ministry or large administration and thus cannot operate their own communication strategy.

A third category of participants are waiting for more tangible results before contacting the media, among them Paola Cattelino, who told us: "I do not feel the need to inform the media for the time being", and Danielle Pécriaux: "there is no point in talking to the press [about the project] for the moment. First we need to inform the people concerned".

So there is no systematic transfer of the results of HELIOS activities to the general public. In Italy, M. G. Orlandini tells us: "we disseminate information through the press. Particularly La Stampa in Turin. We pass on a lot of information on HELIOS II activities".

David Rodriguez (P) says: "I write articles for the press myself, but I think the national HELIOS information day is the highpoint of liaison with the media". Cléon Angelo reports that "in Madeira [during a study visit in the social integration sector], the local television's strategy made me realise an important point: it was contributions by disabled people themselves that gave the meeting a whole new dimension and made it come alive".

If we want to bring the activities of the HELIOS programme into the public eye, we must stage events to obtain media coverage: hold conferences, organise cultural or artistic activities or, as some governments and the coordinating European NGOs already do, circulate a HELIOS newsletter, for example. Peter Davies agrees: "we translate the information we receive from HELIOS and disseminate it across Scotland, but that is not enough. We need an event to draw attention to HELIOS, because little is known about it here. That is why we plan to organise a seminar with the NGO EBIS (the European Brain Injury Society) to raise media awareness and disseminate information on HELIOS".

Claude Berg's words to a journalist on his social undertaking La Lorraine also speak volumes: "La Lorraine is going to diversify its operations by setting up a cooperative (...); the idea germinated as a result of the HELIOS programme, which is an opportunity to discuss and put forward proposals on disability issues" (regional news page of the Belgian daily *Le Soir*, 13 July 1995).

For their part, the NGOs publish information on the Europrogrammes, the EIAs, HANDY-NET and the HELIOS programme in general in their newsletters and magazines. Quite naturally, their articles can be more critical.

The 1995 European Day of Disabled Persons will also be an opportunity for a vast transfer exercise, both among disability organisations and to the general public. The three NGOs organising the event are fully aware that what is needed is a carefully targeted media strategy to reach beyond the converted, political allies, etc., and are eager to take up the challenge. In addition to the conventional press conference, the organisers are planning information campaigns in the media and at primary and secondary schools.

December's award ceremony for the HELIOS competition will be, along with the European Day of Disabled Persons, the most important media event in terms of awareness-raising.



## CONCLUSION

Our aim in this feature on transfer has been to turn the spotlight — literally the flash — on one aspect of the HELIOS programme's activities as seen through the eyes of participants. Evaluation this is not: that particular exercise is being tackled by an independent body, with very different means, aims, methods and ambitions.

The people we interviewed for this article all have their own ideas on the aims and importance of the HELIOS programme. Some are more critical than others, but all share a passionate commitment to their work or voluntary activities in the field of disability. We are aware that they are all very busy people, and would like to thank them for taking the time to meet us and answer our questions.

In our efforts to identify the processes of transfer at work within the HELIOS programme we have taken a fairly theoretical approach and thus inevitably moved away from the more practical considerations of the physically and mentally disabled people concerned. But we should not forget that the central issue is whether the transfers we have described have or will have a real impact in terms of improving the quality of life of disabled people in Europe...

This feature was prepared by Miguel Gerez, freelance journalist, and Yves Dricot, expert at the Information Service of the HELIOS Team of Experts (HTE), with the collaboration of L. Franken, L. de Leuw, C. Russell, V. Soriano, M. Kyriazopoulou, N. Bedlington, Y. Galton and P. Lamoral of the HTE.

(1) C. Russell, "Transferable activities in the district projects", prepared by the INTERACT team under the first Community action programme for disabled people, 1983-1987

See also the report of the HELIOS I European seminar "Internal and external transferability", Álava (E), 26-27 October 1992

(2) Op. cit., p. 3

(3) On the organisation of the European day, see article p. 16

## "I am not disabled"

The film "I am not disabled", produced by the Faculty of Physical Education and Physiotherapy of the KUL (Katholieke Universiteit te Leuven, Belgium) and cofinanced by the European Commission (DG V/E.3, Integration of disabled people division) within the framework of the HELIOS programme, was awarded first prize and the United Nations medal of peace at the Medianet Award 95 film festival in Munich (Germany) in June. 600 films from 35 countries competed for the prize.

"I am not disabled" had previously won awards at international festivals in Norway and the United Kingdom. The film shows the example of four people with disabilities to demonstrate the importance of adapted physical activity and sports in promoting rehabilitation and self-confidence.

For further information on the film, contact:

Prof. H. Van Coppenolle  
Faculty of Physical Education and Physiotherapy  
Katholieke Universiteit te Leuven  
Tervuursevest 101  
B-3001 Leuven, Belgium  
Tel. and fax: +32.16 32 91 26



## HELIOS programme

### Enlargement

Since 1 January, the three new Member States of the European Union have gradually become involved in the HELIOS activities. Following the budgetary authorities' approval of the supplementary and amending budget, the participation of the new partners is effective as of August. Readers will remember that there are 39 partners from Austria, 39 from Sweden and 26 from Finland (see *HELIOS Flash* No. 9, p. 2).

### Programme evaluation

Many of the organisations involved in HELIOS II activities will shortly be receiving a questionnaire from the research team, headed by the Tavistock Institute in London, which is undertaking an external evaluation of the programme on behalf of the European Commission. An objective and external evaluation of the programme was one of the provisions included in the Council decision establishing HELIOS II.

Those of you who receive a questionnaire will be invited to describe your organisation's experience of the programme and to give your views regarding the impact of the programme on your area of work. This information will be invaluable to the Commission in improving implementation of the programme and developing proposals for future activities, and we invite all the organisations involved to complete the questionnaire and return it to the Tavistock Institute as soon as possible.

### The successor to HELIOS II

The Medium Term Social Action Programme adopted by the Commission on 12 April provides for a broad-based consultation exercise on the possibility of a Community measure to follow on from the HELIOS II programme, which ends on 31 December 1996. This, along with the HELIOS evaluation currently under way, will give the Commission the information it needs to complete its analysis and reach an opinion on the possible shape of a new Community action programme for disabled people, particularly in the light of the new objectives set out in the White Paper on European Social Policy and the social action programme.

For the purposes of the consultation exercise, Mr Larsson, Director-General of DG V, has sent out a questionnaire to a number of partners of the HELIOS programme.

### National information days

The provisional programme for national HELIOS information days over the coming weeks and months is as follows:

<b>France:</b>	17-18 October
<b>Norway:</b>	20 October
<b>Sweden:</b>	30 October
<b>Denmark:</b>	8 November
<b>Spain:</b>	14 November
<b>Ireland:</b>	23 November
<b>Portugal:</b>	15-16 January 1996
<b>Belgium (Flemish Community):</b>	19 January 1996

For further information, please contact the relevant Advisory Committee member.

### National newsletters

*HELIOS Flash* now has several counterparts at national level, exclusively devoted to the programme and its activities in their respective countries.

- **Netherlands:** *HELIOS Nieuwsbrief*, Landelijk Comité HELIOS II, c/o Mevrouw van Charante, postbus 169, NL-3500 AD Utrecht, tel.: +31.30 31 34 54
- **Portugal:** *Boletim Informativo*, Secretariado de Apoio da Comissão Nacional HELIOS, av. Conde Valbom n° 63, P-1000 Lisboa
- **United Kingdom:** the first issue of the *UK HELIOS Newsletter* is due out in October. Contact: Department of Health, Social Care Group, Room 333, Wellington House, 133-155 Waterloo Road, UK-London SE1 8UG, fax: +44.171 972 41 32



## Other Commission news

### New Director-General at DG V

It was in May that Mr Alan Larsson took up office as Director-General of the European Commission's DG V for Employment, Industrial Relations and Social Affairs.

Mr Larsson was born in 1938 in Bredaryd, Sweden. He trained as an economist and went on to a career in newspaper and television journalism before holding a number of political posts, including as Under-Secretary of State for Labour and Employment (1974-76), Minister of Finance (1990-91) and Member of Parliament (since 1991). The new Director-General has also held various senior positions in trade unions and professional associations in Sweden.

### Disabled people: the figures

DG V's Integration of disabled people division and Eurostat, the Statistical Office of the European Communities, have just published an update of the major report by the Centre de politique sociale et économique européenne, "*Personnes handicapées: données statistiques*". The first section discusses the definition of disabled person and the methodology adopted. The second section presents and analyses the main statistics available on disabled people in the EU countries (with the exception of the three new members).

The revised report is available at the basic price of ECU 20 from the official EU publications sales points. ISBN 92-826-9653-7.

For information on sales points, contact the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2, rue Mercier, L-2985 Luxembourg, fax: +352.48 85 73.

## Other news

### Lifts directive

A proposal for a directive submitted by the Commission to the European Parliament and Council on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to lifts has had to go before the Conciliation Committee. The proposal was prepared as part of the move to harmonise industrial legislation with a view to completing the single market, and concerns manufacturing standards for lifts in new buildings in EU countries, and more particularly a number of technical points regarding their modernisation. But final adoption of the text was held up by disagreement on one last point: access to lift cars for disabled people.

The European Parliament delegation called, with the support of disability organisations, for access and use to be guaranteed for people with reduced mobility, including wheelchair-bound and blind people. Manufacturers' representatives indicated that tailoring lift designs to disabled people's specific needs

would not present financial difficulties, but that legislative disparities would, as manufacturers would have to adapt their products and installations to national regulations.

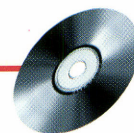
As the Council did not wish to take up Parliament's opinion, the matter was put before the Conciliation Committee.

Mr Alain Poupou, the EP delegation's rapporteur to the committee, remarked: "*finding a solution was not easy. Firstly because the directive is intended to remove the obstacles to freedom of movement, yet construction standards on access for disabled people are covered by national laws. And secondly because this was the first time that a concern for meeting the needs of disabled people was expressed in an industrial harmonisation directive for the single market*".

In the end, the Parliament and Council delegations agreed on the following wording: "*In the case of lifts intended for the transport of persons, and where its dimensions permit, the car must be designed and constructed in such a way that its structural features do not obstruct or impede access and use by disabled people and so as to allow any appropriate adjustments intended to facilitate its use by them.*"

The Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to lifts was finally adopted on 22 June. The reference number is 95/16/EC, and the directive is published in the Official Journal No. L 213 of 7.9.95.





## Collaboration with NGOs

A training course on the HANDYNET system (consulting the CD-ROM and using the E-mail facility) was held in Belluno (I) from 28 June to 1 July 1995. The course was designed for representatives of NGOs on the European Disability Forum and experts from the national HANDYNET coordination centres. Classroom training alternated with practical sessions to improve participants' knowledge of databases, multimedia and the information superhighways. But the course also gave the impetus for far closer cooperation between the NGOs and HANDYNET.

Readers will remember that forum members were recently equipped with 33 E-mail terminals (see *HELIOS Flash* No. 10, p. 1). A number of suggestions for further areas of collaboration were mooted by the NGOs

at the end of the course. They may be summarised as follows:

- supplying European NGOs with free copies of the HANDYNET CD-ROM;
- equipping European NGOs with additional E-mail terminals;
- involving NGOs in the HANDYNET study groups (thesaurus, classification and research into new technologies);
- including a forum representative on the HANDYNET coordination group;
- running national training courses organised jointly by the NGOs and national HANDYNET coordination centres;
- training NGOs in the forum on the ISO classification of technical aids and the WHO Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicaps;

- ensuring ongoing evaluation of HANDYNET by the end users, i.e. disabled people.

The Commission welcomed the proposals, but has yet to examine their implementation. At any event, the course has strengthened cooperation with the NGOs representing disabled people.

The course was co-organised by the Commission with assistance from the HELIOS Team of Experts and SIVA (the Fondazione Pro Juventute Don Gnocchi of Milan, headed by its director, Renzo Andrich). It was supported by the municipal authorities of Belluno and Italian government representatives on the HELIOS Advisory Committee.

## Declaration against social exclusion

In May, some 100 European employers signed and adopted the European Declaration of Businesses Against Exclusion, first suggested by the former Commission president Jacques Delors in January (see *Flash* No. 9, p. 4). In the declaration, the signatories undertake to combat exclusion by avoiding redundancies and providing appropriate accompanying measures where job losses are inevitable. The document is published in the form of a good practice guide, and makes explicit reference to disabled people. The signatory businesses have also decided to set up a European network to build on and strengthen the declaration's impact on other businesses.

The declaration is also mentioned in the Commission's Medium Term Social Action Programme (see *Flash* No. 11, p. 1). More specifically, the Commission indicates that it would be prepared to finance a data base on innovative business practices to combat exclusion, and that it will explore the possibility of extending the scope of the document to include the social partners, civic and voluntary bodies, foundations and trusts.

For further information on the European Declaration of Businesses Against Exclusion:

*London Enterprise Agency*  
4 Snow Hill  
UK-London EC1A 2BS  
Tel.: +44.171 236 30 00  
Fax: +44.171 329 02 26

## Paris - Ile-de-France for all

The Comité national français de liaison pour la réadaptation des handicapés (CNFLRH — national French liaison committee for the rehabilitation of disabled people) has just brought out a tourist guide to Paris and the Ile-de-France for people with reduced mobility (and people with visual and hearing impairments). The publication comprises six chapters dealing with transport, walks, culture, recreation, life in Paris, and the Ile-de-France. Available in English and French, price FFr 60. An excellent guide: accurate, handy and well presented.

For information, contact:  
CNFLRH  
236bis rue de Tolbiac  
F-75013 Paris  
Tel.: +33.1 53 80 66 66  
Fax: +33.1 53 80 66 67



## NGOs: Europrogrammes

Below are some of the Europrogramme activities scheduled for the coming months. The titles given are not necessarily definitive. For further information, contact the organisers or the coordinating European NGO mentioned.

- Seminar on **adaptable housing**, org.: European Institute for Design and Disability, Diepenbeek (B), 24-29 October 1995.  
Contact: Mobility International, tel.: +32.2 410 62 97, fax: +32.2 410 68 74
- "European conference on multidisciplinary activities in community care", org.: Eragintza Foundation, Bilbao (E), 26-29 October 1995.  
Contact: ERC-WFMH, tel.: +32.2 280 04 68, fax: +32.2 280 16 04
- "Seminar and conference on ergonomics in the workplace", org.: RI-ECA Ireland/NRB, Dublin (IRL), November 1995.  
Contact: RI-ECA, tel. +32.2 230 43 97, fax: +32.2 230 53 90
- "Autonomy and quality of life of the brain injured", org: European Brain Injury Society, Barcelona (E), November 1995.  
Contact: Autisme Europe, tel.: +32.2 675 75 05, fax: +32.2 675 72 70
- "Older people and technology: enhancement of capacities", Bruxelles (B), November 1995.  
Org. and contact: Eurolink Age, tel.: +32.2 512 99 46, fax: +32.2 512 66 73
- "Mental health restraints and ethics", European conference organised by the Danish Mental Health Organisation and the European Regional Council of the World Federation for Mental Health, DK-7190 Billund, Denmark, 10-12 November 1995, fax: +45 35 36 11 36
- "New technologies and learning difficulties", org.: UNAPEI, Paris (F), 22-24 November 1995. Contact: ILSMH-EA, tel.: +32.2 502 77 34, fax: +32.2 502 28 46

# NGOs



## European Day of Disabled Persons

The European Day of Disabled Persons will be celebrated for the third time on 3 December. The theme for 1995 is **full citizenship**, and the event is being organised by Autisme Europe, the European Regional Council of the World Federation for Mental Health (ERC-WFMH) and the International League of Societies for Persons with Mental Handicap-European Association (ILSMH-EA), with the support of the European Parliament and the European Commission (DG V/E.3), as part of the HELIOS programme.

Disability organisations, local and regional authorities and all interested groups are invited to join in the European Day of Disabled Persons. The organisers will also be supporting awareness campaigns in schools throughout the European Union.

Also to mark the occasion, a report on non-discrimination will be submitted to the European Parliament. The document was prepared at a seminar attended by representatives of the NGO partners in the HELIOS programme and national disability councils on 15 and 16 September.

The participants divided into four workshops to discuss:

- non-discrimination: a definition of discrimination and mechanisms to combat it;
- self-determination: control over the decisions that influence disabled people's lives;
- integration: full participation in everyday life (education, employment, consumer goods, leisure and domestic activities) and the life of the community;
- family support: government policies and support programmes for the family.

The non-discrimination report, due to be submitted to the European Parliament on 7 December, will be an important part of the European Day of Disabled Persons, and will fuel the debate in the run-up to the intergovernmental conference in Dublin and the review of the Maastricht treaty in 1996.

To notify local activities for 3 December or for further information on European events, please contact:

Secretariat of the 1995 European  
Day of Disabled Persons  
Boulevard Clovis 7  
B-1040 Bruxelles, Belgium  
Tel. and fax: +32.2 280 14 12