



European Union of Supported Employment Newsletter

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Issue No 6 - January 2008

Dear Members

Welcome to the latest edition of the EUSE Newsletter and I hope you have had a peaceful and relaxing festive holiday.

Since our last Newsletter, the 8th EUSE Conference has been held in Belfast, Northern Ireland and EUSE has updated its constitution and website, as well as having newly elected national representatives. We also have a new President (me!), a new Vice President (Bengt Eklund) and Secretary (Margaret Haddock). The beautiful and historic city of Prague, Czech Republic, will host the 9th EUSE Conference.

Moreover, the new EUSE Council (formerly the EUSE Board) has recently held a productive meeting and more details on all these issues are included in this Newsletter.

I would, in my newly elected capacity as EUSE President, wish to convey my thanks and gratitude to my predecessor, Monica Wilson, who provided excellent leadership and friendship for 8 years.

I hope you find the contents of this Newsletter interesting and informative and I look forward to working with you over the next 2 years.

*Mike Evans, President
European Union of Supported Employment*

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Newsletter Editor:
Mike Evans

Design:
Dundee City Council,
Scotland

EUSE Contact Information:
EUSE Secretariat
C/O NIUSE,
58 Strand Road, Derry,
County Londonderry,
Northern Ireland
BT48 7AJ

Tel: +44 (0)2871 377709
Fax: +44 (0)2871 360125

Email: info@niuse.org.uk
Web: www.euse.org

This newsletter is available in alternative formats such as Braille, Audiotape or Electronically on request.

Report on 8th European Union of Supported Employment Conference

Working for All? 13 - 15 June 2007

The 8th European Union of Supported Employment (EUSE) Conference entitled "Supported Employment - Working for All?" was held on the 13 - 15 June 2007 in the Waterfront Hall, Belfast, Northern Ireland. Six hundred and fifty delegates attended the conference from 36 different countries from Europe and beyond.

The conference was opened by Sir Reg Empey, Minister for Employment and Learning who welcomed delegates to Belfast as well as outlining the Government commitment to vocational training and employment for people with disabilities. He was followed by Ms Anne McAleer who set the challenges for the conference from a service user's perspective based on the "Ready Willing and Able Conference" which was held earlier in the year. Delegates had an opportunity to attend 1 of 3 training sessions, 4 keynote presentations and 4 of 33 parallel sessions. Parallel sessions were also delivered at different audience levels and were in the main participative.

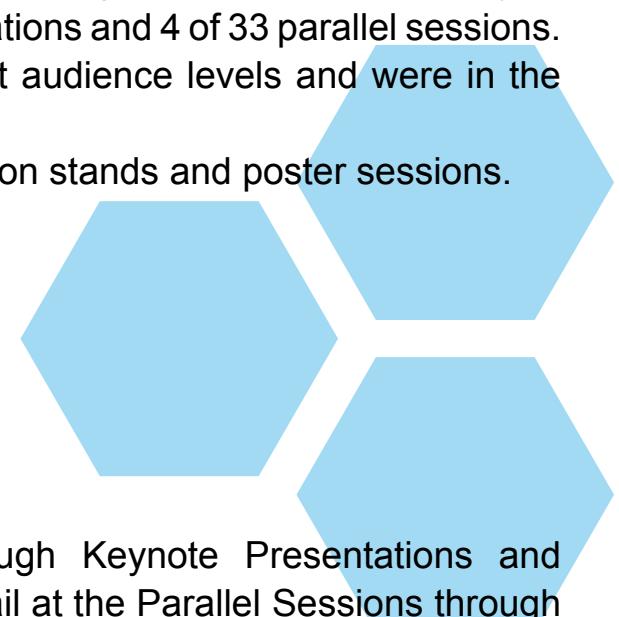
Conference delegates could also visit the exhibition stands and poster sessions.

The key themes of the conference were:

- **Good Practice**
- **Leadership**
- **Managing Change**
- **Mainstreaming**

Each of these themes were addressed through Keynote Presentations and delegates were then able to explore in more detail at the Parallel Sessions through a variety of formats - Presentations, Workshops and Debate.

The conference also marked an end of an era. Dr Monica Wilson, who had been President of EUSE for 8 years, stood down. The founding members acknowledged Monica's contribution to EUSE. Monica had been very instrumental in the development of EUSE and had taken the association to a much stronger, focused and stable position and developed the membership from 8 National Associations to 17 National Associations. The conference delegates also acknowledged Monica's contribution through a standing ovation.



The new EUSE President elected was Mike Evans from the Scottish Union of Supported Employment who now takes over from Monica until June 2009.

Delegates were welcomed to Belfast at a civic reception in Belfast City Hall by kind invitation of the Lord Mayor of Belfast and were entertained by Different Drums, whose combination of traditional drums and dance set the vibrant themes for the conference. A conference dinner was held on Thursday night in the Europa Hotel, where guests danced the night away to the Mindbinders.



An EQUAL information event was also held on 13 June 2007 which complemented the conference and explored Diversity in the Workplace. It was attended by over 150 delegates from all over Europe.

NIUSE would like to thank all the keynote speakers, parallel session speakers, conference organisers and assistants and finally but not least the conference delegates for their active participation and making this conference such a success.



staff of the Northern Irish Union of Supported Employment

NIUSE would also like to acknowledge the financial support from Belfast City Council, EQUAL Programme, Department for Employment and Learning and PROTEUS.

Finally, the evaluation for the conference was completed by 31% of delegates and was very positive, with some very constructive feedback which will assist the next hosts, the Czech Republic Union of Supported Employment for the 9th Conference in 2009 in Prague.



Christy Lynch, Margaret Haddock, Sir Gerry Robinson, Edyth Dunlop and Monica Wilson

EUSE Constitution

The new EUSE Constitution has now been formally ratified and adopted. The main change is that the EUSE Board, which consisted of 10 members, has been replaced by the EUSE Council which comprises 2 representatives from each member nation. The Council appoints the President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer and each nation can have only one representative office bearer.

Each member national association now has the right to cast one vote.

EUSE Website (www.euse.org)

The EUSE website has had a make-over and is now up and running. It aims to provide information and guidance on supported employment principles and issues. The site also aims to provide contact details and links to all members.

We are grateful for Dundee City Council in Scotland, who have agreed to host our website free of charge.

Over the coming months it is our intention to increase the information available on activities, events and publications and to gradually build up the site content.

9th EUSE Conference

After fighting off stiff competition from Copenhagen, Denmark, the EUSE Council voted to hold the 9th EUSE Conference in Prague, Czech Republic.

The Conference will take place in June 2009 and more details will be provided during 2008.

We wish the organisers, Czech Union of Supported Employment, the best of luck with the event and I am sure they can rely on the support of EUSE members and colleagues to assist them organise another exciting event.

EUSE Council

The current Council of the European Union of Supported Employment, which was elected in June 2007, is:

Council Representatives

Austria - Sabine Veitlmeier - Franz Wolfmayr

Czech Republic - Zuzana Bajerová - Alena Schlegelová

Denmark - Henning Jahn - Johanne-Louise Bengtsson

England - Robert Elston - Huw Davies

Finland - Pauliina Lampinen - Ulla Anttila

Germany - Joerg Bungart

Greece - Penny Papanikolopoulou - Kaiti Katsouda

Iceland - Arni Mar Bjornsson - Ingibjorg Margret Isaksdottir

Ireland - Dermot Cunningham - Stephen MacWhite

Italy - Fabrizio Fea

Netherlands - Michael Kamp - Ad Weise

Northern Ireland - Margaret Haddock - Edyth Dunlop

Norway - Oyvind Haara

Portugal - Augusto Sousa - Teresa Duarte

Scotland - Mike Evans - Margaret Linton

Spain - Ferran Bellver - Louisa Arenas

Sweden - Bengt Eklund - Mimmi Darbo

Office Bearers 2007 - 2009:

President - Mike Evans (Scotland)

Vice President - Bengt Eklund (Sweden)

Treasurer - Fabrizio Fea (Italy)

Secretary - Margaret Haddock (Northern Ireland)

EUSE Council Meeting

The first meeting of the EUSE Council was held in Dundee and Edinburgh, Scotland on 25 - 26 October 2007, with 12 of the 17 national association members being represented.

There were a wide range of discussions regarding the activities of EUSE and future plans. Some of the key action points included:

- Membership Renewal Fees to remain the same for 2008.
- To design and implement the new EUSE website.
- To design and issue Newsletter No 6.
- To allocate funding for a Study Exchange Scholarship in Supported Employment.
- To host a strategic, invitation only seminar in Brussels, Belgium in Autumn 2008.
- To develop a Leonardo Partnership bid and to hold a Leonardo Preparatory meeting in Edinburgh, Scotland 10 - 11 January 2008.
- To create a European Supported Employment Toolkit.



Lord Provost John Letford, City of Dundee welcomes Mike Evans EUSE President and EUSE Council members to Dundee, Scotland

Forthcoming EUSE Board Meeting

The next EUSE Council meeting will take place in Copenhagen, Denmark on

- **13 - 14 March 2008** to be organised by EUSE Denmark.

National Association Updates

Ireland - www.iase.ie

IASE Conference

The Irish National Conference took place on 7 & 8 November 2007 and was held in Tullamore, County Offaly.

Training

The Irish association has been working with the Northern Irish Union of Supported Employment and the Open Training College, Dublin in developing and delivering joint accredited training on Supported Employment.

Developments

The Irish association has developed a National Job Shadow Initiative. Job Shadow is a national project designed to give people with disabilities a unique opportunity to get a close look at the world of work and provide the answers to questions and concerns they have about the work place.

People with disabilities throughout Ireland will get the opportunity to spend time discovering and learning about the skills and education required to complete, succeed and develop in the work place.

The Job Shadow Programme will take place on 23 April 2008.

Finland - www.vates.fi

FINSE Conference

This year's annual conference will be held in Helsinki in February 2008. The conference focuses on corporate social responsibility and diversity in the work place. FINSE's President, a former MP, Ms Ulla Anttila, will present an award for the Employer of the Year 2007. This award has been presented annually since 1997 to an employer, who shows a good example by employing a person with a disability following the FINSE and EUSE criteria of supported employment.

Seminar on Welfare Benefits for Job Coaches

A 2-day course in April 2008 in Helsinki for Job Coaches and other counsellors will focus on the Finnish welfare benefit system and different practicalities of vocational rehabilitation.

Networking Seminar

A 2-day seminar in June 2008 in Kokkola for all Job Coaches and other professionals working within the field of supported employment.

Training of Employers

A new form of activity took off last autumn after VATES Foundation attended a national fair for human resource experts and consultants. This new training product has been developed to assist in advising employers how and why they should consider employing people with disabilities and how to keep those who are disabled or who have long term illnesses in work.

Development

The planning of a new ESF project to disseminate, develop and improve the use and quality of supported employment in Finland has started with 6 different key actors in the field.

Discussions with the new Ministry of Labour

FINSE's President and VATES' Development Managers opened up discussions on supported employment and the options to target government funding with the Minister of Labour's Special Advisor. There will be a follow-up of these discussions during 2008.

Greece

Elections

The Greek National Association of Supported Employment held its elections in October 2007 and elected a new board:

- President - Kaiti Katsouda
- Vice President - Penny Papanicolopoulou
- Secretary - Io Zaphiropoulou
- Treasurer - Giannis Sfyridis
- Kostas Lytras and Angelos Koutoumanos are members.

During the month of November, ErgAxia of Theotokos Foundation distributed questionnaires requiring employers to indicate how well informed they are about the services provided by Supported Employment, the manner in which they receive this information and whether they are satisfied by the support given to themselves, their heads of department, fellow workers and the person with learning disabilities they employ. An open question gives employers the possibility to suggest improvements. Results are pending.

Employers

The Greek National Association of Supported Employment will organise an event during 2008 whereupon employers will be awarded a prize for being the most involved employer.

Presentations

Mrs Penny Papanicolopoulou presented a speech on “Supported Employment Services in Athens” during a symposium in Northern Greece, which took place on 5 - 7 December 2007. The event was organised by TACT - Hellas.

Germany - www.bag-ub.de

Conferences

The German Association for Supported Employment (BAG UB) held its annual conference from 14 - 16 November in Suhl/Thuringia. Over 300 persons discussed key issues of the vocational integration of disabled people under the principal theme “Work environment and Integration - Impulses for the future of equal participation”.

“**Teilhaben 2008**” is the title of a major conference about the transition from school to work of people with learning difficulties which will take place in Berlin on 29 February - 1 March 2008. The conference will be organised by national key organisations, eg the BAG UB. It will be held in German language. More information at: www.teilhaben2008.de

Activities and Products

The BAG UB took part in the German EQUAL-Developing Partnership (DP) “Talents, Development of Self-determination and Choices” and in the corresponding transnational partnership “Working Towards Diversity”.

The EQUAL-DP ended at the end of 2007. Two products were developed in the context of the national and transnational partnership:

“Working Towards Diversity” is the name of a brochure published in both English and German. It contains different concepts, methodologies and individual case studies and discusses issues such as how to realise empowerment strategies. It also contains strategies of co-operation with employers that have been developed in the participating countries.

“Qualitätskriterien für die Vorbereitung, Begleitung und Auswertung von Betriebspraktika” is the title of a brochure which is published only in German. Based on an empirical study in enterprises where young people with learning difficulties gained work experiences.

Legislation

From the beginning of 2008, disabled people in Germany will have the right of direct payments (personal budgets) for all areas of their life. Although there are many administrative problems to solve and barriers to overcome, it will facilitate more choices and self-determination for disabled people.

The German government is going to establish Supported Employment as a service for school leavers.
