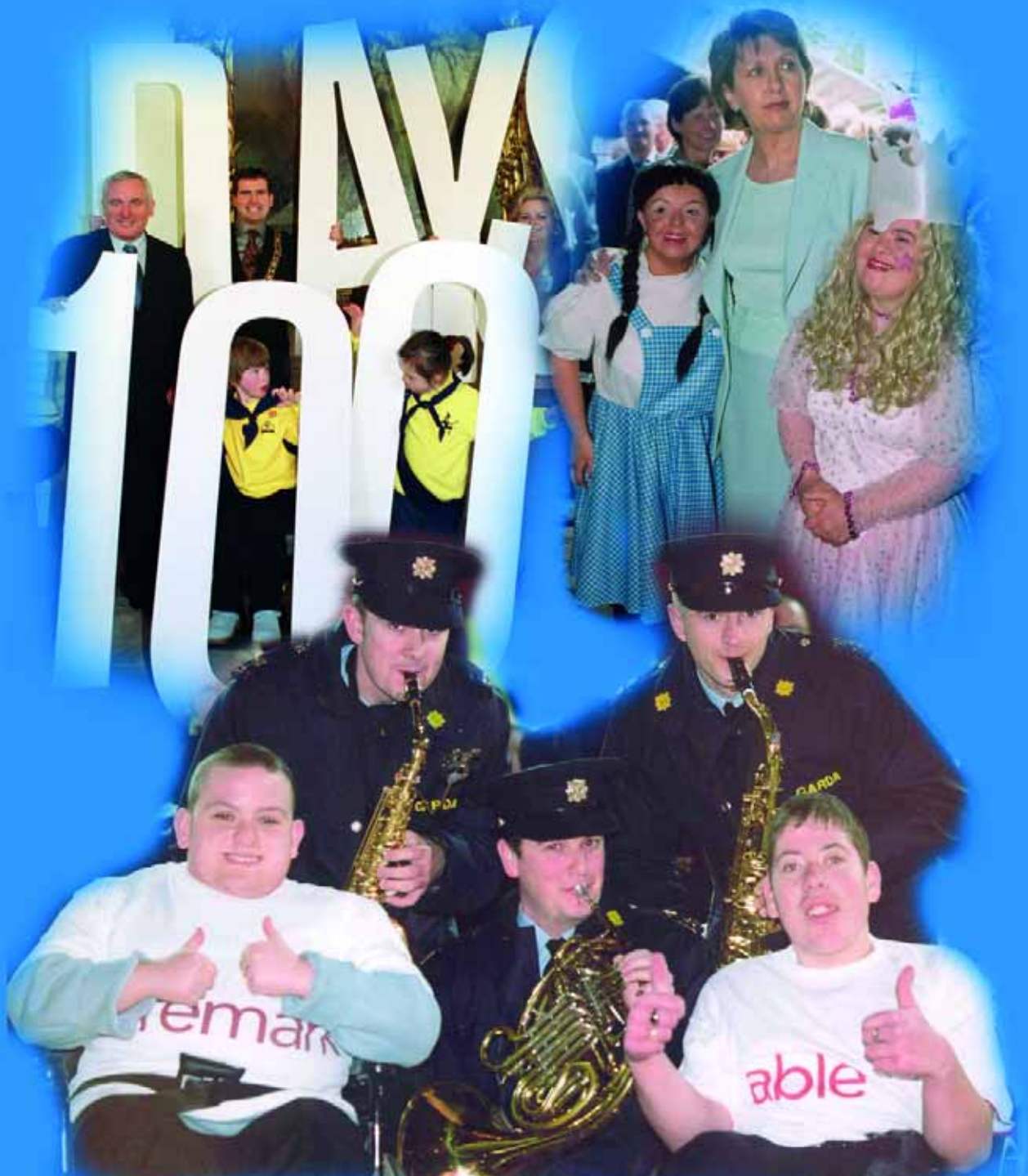




Rehab  
NEWS  
Winter 2003

**Special  
EYPD  
Edition**



*Making the Difference*

# *Published by the Rehab Group*

## *Editorial*

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**Acknowledgements**

Photographs courtesy of *Sportsfile*; *The Racing Post*; Ted Blackshaw; Joe Tierney and *Photocall Ireland*.

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ISBN IFFN 0709/6676

Printed by Turner Printers, Longford

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A European-wide campaign has been launched to seek equality in the world of work for people with disabilities



## Workability International

A ground-breaking strategy to end discrimination against people with disabilities in the European labour market within a decade has been unveiled by Workability International – the world’s largest organisation representing employers of workers with disabilities.

The Reykjavik Declaration was issued by Workability International Europe during the European Year of People with Disabilities as new EU figures revealed that unemployment among people with disabilities in member States is now more than three times higher than for the rest of the working age population.

The organisation – whose 18 European members employ over 800,000 workers

with disabilities – is calling for a partnership between Governments, employers and people with disabilities in an effort “to reach a position within 10 years where the proportion of working-age Europeans in employment equals that of the rest of Europe’s working-age population”.

Workability International president Frank Flannery said the strategy is based on six proposals including the adequate financing of employment services for people with disabilities by national Governments; properly resourced employment supports; the development of a collective voice for providers of employment and training services for

people with disabilities and a greater role for employers generally.

“Equality of opportunity in the world of work is still a pipedream for millions of people with disabilities around Europe, despite the undeniable cost benefit case for getting them into the workforce,” declared Mr Flannery.

“But through these six achievable steps we can wipe away generations of discrimination and create a Europe where people with disabilities are judged on their abilities and where all citizens are finally given the opportunity to contribute fully to the economic and social

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life of their communities and nations.”

### **Proposal 1 - programmes and resources**

Within the continuum of employment services there is a lack of adequate funding. We propose that more resources should be switched to those programmes known to be successful in securing employment for people with the whole range of disabilities, recognising their individual abilities and requirements. In this context sustainable funding of service providers must be guaranteed to allow them to invest in their services within a policy of continuous improvement and best practice.

### **Proposal 2 - provision of specially supported employment**

It must be recognised that there is a

continuum of employment requirements to suit the situations of people with disabilities. Mainstream employment is not an option for many people with more severe disabilities, either in the long or short term. Like everyone else, they should have the opportunity of contributing, through their work, to the economy of their countries, thereby reducing the number of disabled people who are economically inactive. We propose that special employment provisions (e.g. sheltered workshops or supported placements) should be strengthened and resourced for this purpose within a commercial environment which actively promotes progression to the mainstream whilst providing a secure base to return to, if it becomes necessary.

### **Proposal 3 - the vital role of employers**

Like everyone else and wherever possible, most disabled people want to join mainstream employment, either directly or via another employment provision. Therefore it is vital that service providers understand the concerns, needs and demands of employers. Employers should take steps to facilitate this, whilst publicly demonstrating their good intentions. We propose that mainstream employers in each Member State of the EU should establish and join a body like an Employers' Forum on Disability and similar organisations elsewhere. An European Employers' Forum on Disability should be established as well.

### **Proposal 4 - collective voice of European service providers**

To bring influence to bear on the European Parliament and Commission



“ We have an ambitious goal and whether we achieve it or not is dependent on our own commitment to work collectively to create an irresistible force for change and the commitment of Europe’s leaders to ensure that every citizen, not just in the EU, but across the Continent enters the labour market from an equal baseline ”

via established consultation arrangements, it is important for providers of employment and work services to people with disabilities to speak with a single voice. It also strengthens dialogue with other European partners who are already so organised, e.g. UNICE, ETUC, EDF. We propose that Workability International-Europe and other similar service providers take immediate steps to establish an effective body to provide a unified voice as the bridge between disabled people and employment.

### **Proposal 5 - measuring effectiveness and trends**

We understand that Eurostat will soon be providing annual employment statistics, which will include information on the number of disabled people of working age in employment or unemployed. Firstly, we propose that the term ‘unem-

ployed’ should include all economically inactive disabled people of working age. Secondly, this information should be used each year to monitor progress towards equality of employment rates as between able-bodied and disabled people in the labour market and as a basis for national action plans to accelerate progress towards equality.

### **Proposal 6 - the accession countries**

Positive measures should be taken to support Accession States to improve employment opportunities for their disabled citizens. The experience of Workability International-Europe can be of significant assistance to the development of services for people with disabilities in these and other emerging European countries. We propose to set up a working group of our members to develop an action plan to ensure that our

experience is made available to them in practical and accessible ways.

.....

Following the publication of the Declaration at Workability International’s 2003 AGM in the Norwegian city of Bergen, a major lobbying exercise is now underway to seek its endorsement throughout the EU institutions, as well as among national Governments across the entire Continent of Europe.

“We have an ambitious goal and whether we achieve it or not is dependent on our own commitment to work collectively to create an irresistible force for change and the commitment of Europe’s leaders to ensure that every citizen, not just in the EU, but across the Continent enters the labour market from an equal baseline,” concluded Mr Flannery.

**Rehab Recycling Partnership continues to go from strength to strength despite considerable recent challenges**

Pictured at the Quinn Glass announcement (left to right): Sean Quinn, Quinn Glass; Minister for the Environment, Martin Cullen, TD, and Bob Rowat, general manager, Rehab Recycling Partnership.

Irish glass recycling has received a double boost with the announcement of record deposits at Rehab's nationwide bring bank network just weeks after the signing of a cross-border deal which has saved the industry here from collapse.

A nationwide survey revealed that Rehab Recycling Partnership (RRP) reprocessed 129 million bottles and jars in the last 12 months – an increase of some 25 per cent on the previous year.

The latest growth comes after RRP reached an agreement with County Fermanagh-based Quinn Glass, with the assistance of Minister for the Environment Martin Cullen and the Irish packaging compliance scheme, Repak, which covers virtually all consumer glass deposits in the State.

The deal was crucial because of the closure of the Ardagh plant in Ringsend, which left Ireland as the only EU member State without the capability to reprocess its own waste glass and prompted fears that recycling would become economically unviable here.

Under the agreement, which will secure the jobs of 105 employees at Rehab Recycling Partnership – including 58 with disabilities until the end of 2006, a minimum of 635 million bottles and jars will be transported from the company's network of 1,600 bring sites nationwide to the giant Quinn plant in the North.

“Without this contract we would be



# Sheer Glass!

heading for an environmental catastrophe here due to the lack of viable markets for our waste glass,” said Bob Rowat, general manager of Rehab Recycling Partnership which is responsible for the vast majority of consumer glass recycling in this country.

“The simple fact is that attempts to open the Ardagh plant have failed; we do not generate enough waste glass here to justify the construction of a new glass manufacturing facility at an estimated cost of €150 million; and the cost of shipping our glass overseas for recycling is prohibitive. Therefore, in the absence

of this agreement we would now be facing the prospect of having to use up our increasingly scarce landfill space to dispose of the most easily recycled source of waste in this country, not to mention the humiliation of multi-million euro fines for failing to meet strict EU recycling targets. On top of that there is the irreparable damage that would be done to Ireland's green image abroad and the economic consequences for our tourism industry in that event.”

In addition to the role of Minister Cullen and Quinn Glass in securing the future of Irish glass recycling, Mr Rowat



“This agreement between Rehab Recycling and Quinn Glass is most opportune and enables local authorities to plan ahead with certainty in relation to the continued expansion of the glass ‘bring bank’ network. It will further facilitate the continued expansion in the national recycling performance which has increased significantly in recent years,” Minister Cullen stated

paid particular tribute to Repak for their increased financial support for the industry and stressed that without this the agreement with Quinn Glass would not have been possible.

“The end result is that the way is now clear for the Government to proceed with its planned infrastructural investment in glass recycling which, once implemented, will lead to a threefold increase at the very least in glass recycling volumes over a four year period.”

He urged the Government, however, to provide funding for research into alternative uses for waste glass to ensure that

we can continue to recycle the growing volumes that improved infrastructure and greater public awareness will bring.

Sean Quinn, Managing Director of the Quinn Group stated that Quinn Glass is in a position to recycle all the glass collected in Ireland and is delighted to be involved in this agreement. He also thanked Rehab, Repak and the Minister for the Environment, Mr. Martin Cullen for their assistance.

“This agreement between Rehab Recycling and Quinn Glass is most opportune and enables local authorities

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Area	Jan-Aug 03 tons	Increase %	Bottles (000's)	Bottles per head	Ranking	Busiest site	Tons	Bottles (000's)
Sligo	607	66	1973	34	1	Dunnes Sligo	76	247
Galway	2001	13	6503	31	2	Westside	156	507
Leitrim	234	36	761	30	3	Carrick on Shannon	40	130
Kerry	1194	21	3881	29	4	Tesco Killarney	101	328
Cork	3922	32	12747	28	5	Supervalu Carrigaline	117	380
Kilkenny	591	45	1921	24	6	Loughboy S/Centre	105	341
Tipperary	1009	39	3279	23	7	Thurles Parnell St	52	169
Limerick City	339	61	1102	20	8	Henry Street	65	211
Mayo	721	30	2343	20	9	Newport Landfill	48	156
Kildare	990	33	3218	19.6	10	Tesco Naas	152	494
Dublin	6,742	13	21,912	20	11	Tesco Stillorgan	178	579
Roscommon	314	82	1021	19	12	Ballaghderreen	45	146
Meath	771	54	2506	19	13	Navan Civic Amenity	241	783
Cavan	305	135	991	18	14	Tesco Cavan	67	218
Monaghan	196	92	637	12	15	UDC Car Park	63	205
Louth	377	68	1226	12	16	The Mell	71	231
Waterford City	69	17	224	5	17	Superquinn	44	143
<b>Total</b>	<b>20612</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>66989</b>	<b>17.1</b>				

“  
*The RRP survey revealed that the people of Sligo are Ireland’s top recyclers. A total of 34 bottles and jars were recycled for every man, woman and child in the county during the first eight months of the year*  
 ”



to plan ahead with certainty in relation to the continued expansion of the glass ‘bring bank’ network. It will further facilitate the continued expansion in the national recycling performance which has increased significantly in recent years,” Minister Cullen stated.

Meanwhile, the RRP survey revealed that the people of Sligo are Ireland’s top recyclers. A total of 34 bottles and jars were recycled for every man, woman and child in the county during the first eight months of the year. Next best were Galway and Leitrim with an average of 31 and 30 containers recycled per head of population.

The biggest increases in glass recycling came in Cavan, where yields soared by 135 per cent compared to the corresponding period in 2002. In Monaghan the increase was 92 per cent, whilst Roscommon recorded a growth rate of 82 per cent.

But despite the record yields, around 200 million glass containers were still be dumped in Ireland’s rapidly shrinking

landfill during the last year – enough bottles and jars to span the distance from Dublin to Boston, according to Mr Rowat.

He said consumers are the chief culprits with less than one in five glass containers used by Irish households making it into the recycling stream. Meanwhile more than half the waste glass emanating from commercial sources was reprocessed over the 12 month period.

“In fairness, however, there is a considerably lower concentration of bring sites in Ireland compared to other European countries, which makes it much more difficult for people to participate in the recycling process,” he conceded.

“At present there is around one public bring site for every 3,000 people in this country. But in Austria, which has a recycling rate of 84 per cent, there is one site for every 270 people - over 10 times more per capita than in Ireland.”

Mr Rowat added that RRP, which is

responsible for over 90 per cent of glass processing in Ireland, has submitted plans to the Government to enlarge its nationwide bring bank network from 1,600 to 3,600 sites by 2006.

This would increase the bring site density here to one site for every one thousand people and would have the capacity to bring Ireland’s glass recycling rate above the 60 per cent mark.

“Whilst improvements to recycling infrastructure can have a significant impact, it is clear that there must also be a change of attitude among the vast majority of people in this country who simply don’t recycle at all at present.

“There’s absolutely no sense in people protesting against incineration on the one hand and then needlessly clogging up scarce landfill by throwing out their empty bottles and jars on the other. Glass is the easiest packaging material of all to recycle and if we were really serious as a nation about protecting the environment, we’d be recycling a lot more.”