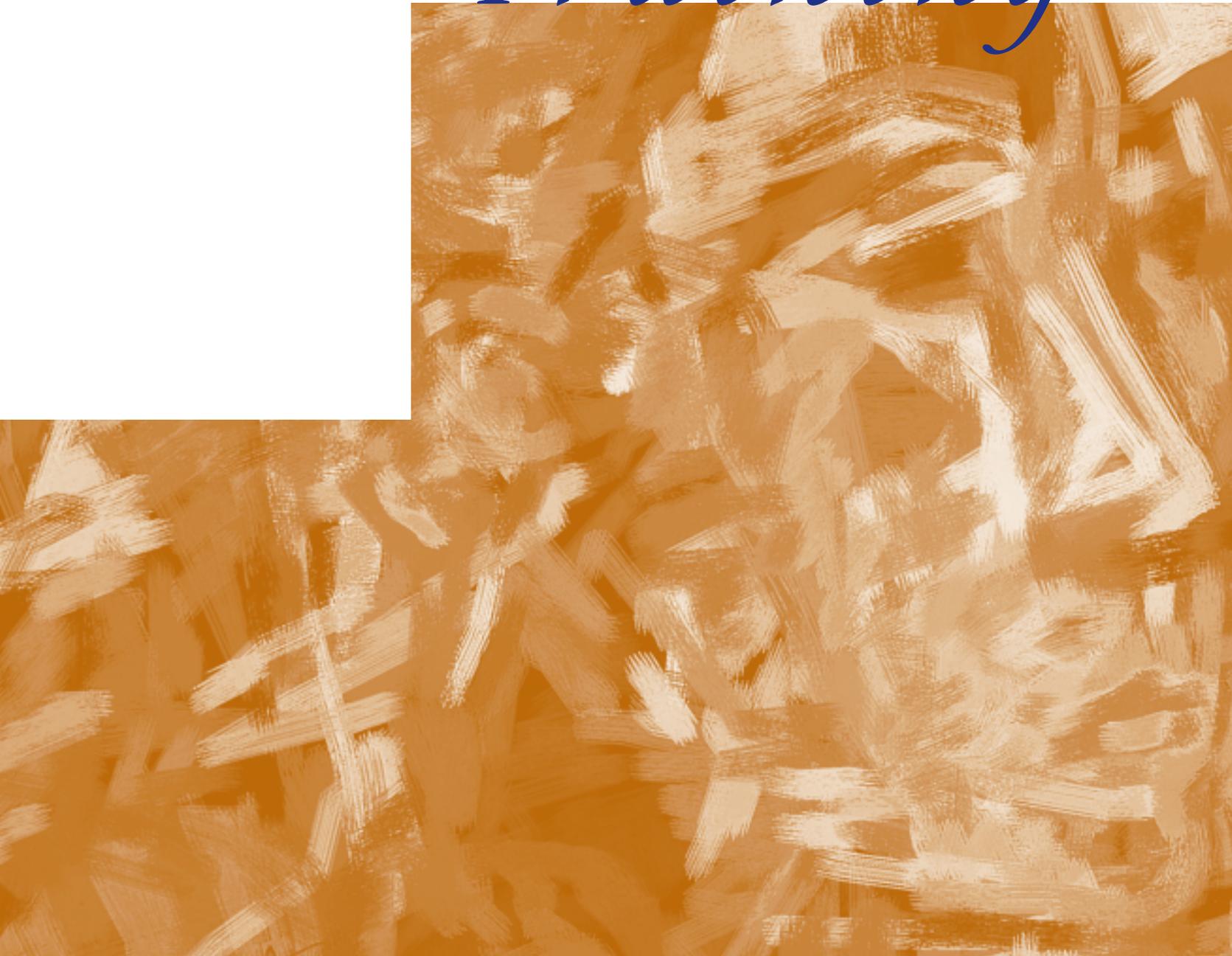


# *Training*



# Guidance for disabled students

*The 'Tremplin' ('Springboard') Association, set up in January 1992 by four industrial groups (Elf, Total, Rhône-Poulenc and IBM), now includes 16 major undertakings in the business district of Paris, La Défense*

With financial support from AGEFIPH (Association de Gestion du Fonds pour l'Insertion Professionnelle des Personnes Handicapées), Tremplin operates upstream of integration and targets disabled students with at least the *baccalauréat* certificate.

The association takes steps to promote their future integration into the world of work: they can draw up a coherent career plan at an early stage, thanks to summer traineeships in Tremplin partner firms from the first year of university, and cope with the world of work as it really is, making choices appropriate to their situation.

Tremplin also endeavours to improve training for young disabled people by offering them two-year apprenticeship

contracts following on from their secondary school leaving certificate (*baccalauréat*). They are assigned a personal tutor within the company and on completion of the contract have better qualifications and greater experience of the demands of working life.

By bringing together 16 undertakings in a joint, practical project, Tremplin helps to raise their awareness with regard to the employment of people with disabilities, overcoming their prejudices and thus reinforcing their own integration policies.

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# Training/employment contracts

*Italian law has required companies to take on people with disabilities since 1992. Regional bodies cooperate in integration schemes under vocational training programmes. One SME recruited, trained and then hired five disabled people.*

A.Co.Se.R (*Azienda Consorziale Servizi Reno*) is a Bologna service company, a subsidiary of SEABO, a firm specialising in waste recycling. Before becoming part of this group, A.Co.Se.R had recruited five disabled employees and their jobs were secured in accordance with Italian law on the hiring of disabled people.

These five disabled employees were recruited by a joint committee comprising two company representatives and three trade union representatives. The local health office issued them with a suitability for work certificate. A.Co.Se.R could have just adhered strictly to the statutory recruitment quota. However, it offered additional training to the disabled people, cooperating with the *Comitato Bolognese Formazione Giovani Lavoratori*

(Bologna Committee for the Training of Young Workers) and the *Servizio Inserimento Lavoratori Handicappati* (Disabled Workers' Occupational Integration Service), two bodies reporting to the city of Bologna Labour Office. They also cooperated with the local health office in developing a scheme for integration and setting up vocational training.

During the training, the programme managers, the *Comitato Bolognese Formazione Giovani Lavoratori* and SILH, regularly assessed the five disabled people and their progress in integration. In order to improve working conditions, they determined what ergonomic alterations were needed and proposed appropriate solutions. After two years' training, the dis-

abled employees (mainly hard of hearing) were recruited to fill a number of different posts (environment supervisor, administrator, secretary, customer service).

The scheme was subsidised by the City of Bologna's *Assessorato alla Formazione Professionale* which comes under the Regional Council. The latter deals with vocational training through its different departments. The training/employment contracts are the fruit of close cooperation between all these various bodies.

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## Milan: traineeships in woodworking

*Tecno Varedo is taking part in a scheme for the occupational integration of people with disabilities. After a three-month traineeship, two disabled workers were recruited in 1990 and a third in 1992.*

The measures taken by Tecno are part of a pilot project — launched by the USSL (*Unità Socio-Sanitaria Locale*) — to promote the integration of physically and mentally disabled people into the world of work. Under an agreement signed by Tecno Varedo and the trade unions, disabled workers were recruited and followed a special three-month training course. A team of psychologists and occupational physicians provided backing for the persons concerned throughout the traineeship. On its completion and following successful assessment, three applicants have been taken on under open-ended contracts.

The initiative was subsidised by the Lombardy Region and supported by the Occupational Integration Service (SIL), so the woodworking establishment did not incur any additional expenditure.

The scheme should also be seen in the local context: the local authorities in the area covered by the USSL have set up the *Consorzio Desio-Brianza per la Formazione Professionale*; the main activity of this association is promoting the integration of disabled people in companies. The Consorzio organises and funds vocational training to help the persons concerned at all stages of jobseeking and integration.

It also contacts potential employers, putting forward disabled people who can be integrated into their teams in various kinds of jobs depending on their skills.

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# All together now

*Training nine deaf people all together for the first time: this project was launched by Siemens in the electrical engineering industry in Austria. One of the special features of this high-tech training was a sign language comprising technical terms.*

Until recently Siemens, a firm with 12 000 employees including 280 disabled people, had never trained more than two disabled people at a time. At the initiative of the trade unions and the works council and in cooperation with the Federal Social Assistance Office, nine disabled people are now undergoing three and a half years' training in electrical engineering.

To qualify for the training, the deaf people sat a number of tests to get an idea of the work they would be expected to do. Thanks to this first contact the firm was able to assess the safety measures and adjustments to be made to receive and train so many disabled people at once.

The training combined theory and practice, being organised at a vocational training centre and a company workshop. All the participants were offered an hour of speech therapy a week and two sign

language interpreters were also recruited to provide assistance during the courses.

Something was still missing, however, for many technical terms cannot be translated into sign language. The disabled employees developed new signs and wrote them down for use with future trainees. Subject contents and teaching methods were also reviewed, updated and made more accessible to all participants whether hard of hearing or not.

Funded by the European Social Fund, the Vienna Federal Social Assistance Office, Lower Austria, Burgenland and Siemens, this scheme is still under way and provides the disabled people with their own income, helping them to learn and practice a high-tech skill. The economic aspect should not be overlooked: these employees are no longer receiving State assistance. Siemens wants to be in the vanguard and hopes that this training scheme will serve as an example and

encourage other companies to take similar steps for disabled people.

To ensure the success of the initiative, the administration had to be dealt with by an outside organisation, not Siemens itself. The company would have been unable to fund the additional administrative work by itself so the Federal Social Assistance Office was responsible for managing the operation.

On completion of their training, all the disabled people will find work in Siemens, Vienna or in its sister plants.

## Contact

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*‘Our training was organised at the same time as that of our hearing colleagues. It was not easy at the outset. The theory was more of a problem for us than the practice. We use simpler sentences so the handbooks were too complicated for us. In conjunction with the Siemens trainers, we modified the courses and the subjects in such a way that we can now follow the theoretical training better.*

*At the beginning we had difficulties in communicating with non-deaf colleagues. The communication difficulties also sometimes gave rise to quite hilarious situations. In the meantime some of our colleagues have even learned sign language. They have become more patient. There is a very good working atmosphere.*

*I like the training a lot. Once it has come to an end, I will have the opportunity of a job with Siemens or in a sister factory. My dream is to acquire further qualifications and train in computer technology.’*

Young apprentice with Siemens, Vienna



# Gardeners: trained and hired

*The city of Vienna is giving youngsters leaving special schools the opportunity to learn the practical and theoretical aspects of gardening, training them for simple manual work as under-gardeners. The aim is to provide practical training in gardening for two years and facilitate subsequent recruitment. Eight future under-gardeners are currently in training.*

The city of Vienna is providing training for young people with 'green fingers' who have completed their education in special schools. The scheme, organised in conjunction with the trade unions, is intended for young disabled people with disadvantaged social and cultural backgrounds whose future working lives are more often than not uncertain. The city of Vienna selected eight trainees for the scheme with a view to taking on those who are suitable to work in the city gardening departments.

Two specialists are in charge of the training. During the two-year course the participants work for a few months at a time in the different city gardening departments. Practical courses are also organised to help them in dealing with various routine tasks, for example, in dealings with administrative services. The cost of the training (wages for apprentices and trainers) is met by the city of Vienna and the Labour Market Service (AMS).

When the scheme was launched some prejudice was encountered among the staff who thought that the young people could not produce a high standard of work. The trainees' willingness and their aptitude for gardening rapidly dispelled any such doubts. The disabled youngsters are fully integrated and respected by all their colleagues.

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## Making integration easier

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*Training programmes and traineeships in companies: the Lisbon Employment and Vocational Training Institute organises measures for disabled people. Launched in 1982, they are still meeting with some reluctance.*

The *Instituto do Emprego e da Formação Profissional* (IEFP) is a public body reporting to the Ministry of Employment and Solidarity. Its officials are specialised in the training and occupational integration of people with disabilities and they work in close cooperation with the national social security services, experts, trade union organisations and undertakings. The firms involved in this project, which operate in highly diverse fields, regularly send the Institute a list of vacant posts.

When a disabled jobseeker contacts the Institute, a team of psychologists and doctors assesses capacities for work. If the person meets the recruitment conditions, the firm is contacted and a meeting is organised. It thus operates as a recruitment agency. However, if the disabled person is considered unsuitable for a vacant post, the Institute organises training adapted to his particular situation. Traineeships in companies (trial periods: on their completion their skills are assessed) help the disabled people to move gradually into the world of work.

The Institute also runs major awareness-raising campaigns among employers. The financial contribution from the social security services, which meet the costs of the traineeships, can be a decisive factor in the recruitment of disabled people.

The Employment and Vocational Training Institute also supplies the equipment needed to adapt worksites and workstations. In 1996, 28 disabled jobseekers satisfied these recruitment conditions. Nine of them have set up their own companies.

# Gaining experience by practising a trade

*ARCIL, a body catering for the needs of people with disabilities, works in partnership with local companies in order to promote vocational training for disabled people and also their integration into the world of work. By way of example, ARCIL is working together with a car repair firm to develop the practical skills of three people who have disabilities. The aim is thereby to ensure their integration in the world of work.*

A small car repair firm, which also markets cars, has decided to introduce people with disabilities to the trade of car mechanics. The Lousã association for the rehabilitation of people with disabilities (ARCIL) has selected the people for the project on the basis of a search profile. Three people are undergoing theoretical and practical training on the basis of a contract concluded between the firm and a training establishment. They are integrated in the firm and are confronted directly with practical tasks. Psychologists, therapists, social workers and instructors are involved in this training which takes up 40 hours per week over a period of four years.

The working conditions and working hours reflect the special needs of the disabled trainees. Through their contacts with their colleagues and the customers they are fully involved in the life of the firm and are acquiring work discipline. The technical instructor is supported at educational level by a representative from a rehabilitation institute. Evaluations both of the disabled trainees and of the training institute allow the progress of the initiative to be monitored.

The cost of training and the allowances paid to the disabled workers are met by ARCIL. The association also encourages independence among the disabled people

in the use of their own or public transport: it subsidises their costs. This initiative, which offers scope to disabled trainees to become familiar with the world of work, called for measures to raise awareness in the garage's staff of four. It is also worth noting that in the past the person in charge of this small firm has himself been responsible for training people with disabilities.



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## Training by colleagues

*Recruitment, training and involvement. This is the approach adopted by Svenska Spel, the Swedish national lottery body, which has recently integrated six disabled employees into its team of more than 450. The experiment has gone smoothly, and the new recruits feel totally fulfilled in their work.*



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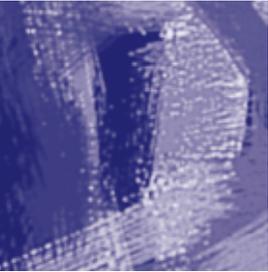
Until 1997, there were two Swedish national lottery institutions, Svenska Penninglotteriet and Tiptjänst. The two then merged, giving birth to Svenska Spel, which has 468 employees.

The Swedish national lottery organisation has been developing a policy for the employment of the physically and mentally disabled for around 15 years. Recruitment and training were the specific measures in which this State organisation wanted to invest in partnership with the employment office and the trade union associations. Six disabled workers have been recruited under the initiative and provided with in-house training.

This training did not require the presence of specialists. The new workers were integrated by their colleagues. Their wages were covered by State subsidies during their training period, at the end of which Svenska Spel offered them open-ended employment contracts. Two wheelchair-users work in telephone sales, and two employees with hearing difficulties work in the financial department. One person with a mental disability distributes the internal mail, while the other works in the security service. Few ergonomic modifications were needed, and the few changes that had to be made did not involve a significant cost.

The institution did not need to resort to an awareness programme. Integration at the workplace was a formality, with the able-bodied looking after the disabled in a completely natural manner. Another point to mention is that Svenska Spel has also reintegrated workers who have become disabled during their working life.

## In unison



*Unison, a British trade union representing public-sector employees, has 1.3 million members, 12 % of whom are disabled. The union has been implementing policies on behalf of its disabled workers since 1985 through its union and vocational training programmes.*

Taking a broad approach to disability, Unison's initiatives for disabled employees are carried out in cooperation with disabled people's associations and specialists, for example, sign-language interpreters.

Unison wants to improve access to employment for disabled people and also help them retain their jobs. To that end it organises union and vocational training programmes for its disabled members. It

also makes sure that all necessary ergonomic measures are taken to facilitate their integration at the workplace. All Unison's activities are funded from its members' subscriptions and private funds.

This British trade union regularly promotes awareness-raising campaigns throughout its branches on the integration of disabled people into working life. Moreover, the force lent by Unison to

these schemes (its membership continues to expand) is a sign of the strength of a broader front leading the way to vocational integration for disabled people. The United Kingdom as a whole is making good progress in integrating disabled people into the world of work.

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