

## **PLENARY IV: “EMPLOYMENT AND RECRUITMENT OF DISABLED PEOPLE IN THE MEDIA”**

Improving the image of disabled people in the media inevitably means providing access and job opportunities to disabled people in those media. The media should seek to increase the number of disabled professionals in their workforce and also be proactive in the provision of work experience placements for young disabled professionals. This will often require the elimination of physical barriers as well as the willingness to undertake workplace adaptations.

Some European media are more proactive than others in this field. In this plenary session, speakers representing very different media such as the BBC, Spanish regional media RTVA, ZDF and France Televisions, will present their points of view regarding the employment of disabled people in the media, as a concrete tool to improve the quality of their programmes and ensure an accurate portrayal of disabled people.

**Ms. Wendy Harpe**, Senior Diversity Manager at the BBC Diversity Unit, has a great experience in the field of diversity, with a strategic responsibility within BBC of disability and age. She will present BBC policy and concrete initiatives in employing disabled people, one of the most proactive media in this field.

**Mr. Juan M<sup>a</sup> Casado Salinas**, is the Head of Institucional Relations at the radio and television of Andalucía, a media strongly committed to fight stigmatization and discrimination against disabled people. He will explain how through a permanent dialogue with disability organisations and the employment of disabled people, RTVA has improved the image of disability among their audience.

**Ms. Hiltrud Fischer-Taubert**, from the German media Zweite Deutsche Fernsehen (ZDF) will present the point of view from the German public broadcaster and the influence of the German government in the current recruitment policies within ZDF.

**Mr Olivier Harland**, in charge of the harmonization of programmes (Unit « difference ») within French Radio and Television channels will present the work of his unit, particularly regarding the exchange of disability programmes in Europe and the functioning of this unit as a “media and disability observatory”.

The plenary session will be moderated by **Mr. Patrick Worms**, *Vice President of Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide/ Brussels*

### **Key issues for discussion:**

- Should media develop, in co-operation with disability organisations, disability awareness training for their employees, in order to avoid stereotypes and stigmatization?
- Should universities include disability awareness modules in the studies for journalists and other media professionals?
- How can media increase the number of job opportunities for disabled employees? Which measures should be developed to support the disabled staff?