

## **PLENARY V: "ACCESS TO THE MEDIA AND ITS NEW TECHNOLOGIES."**

Disabled people, including people with sensory impairments regularly watch television. Like their fellow citizens they watch television for entertainment, news and information, socially and for company. Digital Television has the potential to make broadcasting more accessible for disabled people. At the moment, without political intervention, it looks like the market is not fulfilling this potential.

**Mr. Marcel Bobeldijk**, is the President of the European Board of the International Federation of Hard of Hearing. He will present the point of view of the Hard of Hearing people and their families regarding media accessibility, focusing on the problems related to the lack of subtitling in the media; sign language interpretation providing translation of the spoken dialogue and printed translation of the dialogue and sound effects.

**Ms Leen Petré** is the European Campaigns Manager Royal National Institute of the Blind. She will tackle different questions regarding audio description for blind and partially sighted people, additional narration and the importance of the receiving equipment

**Mr Paul Gardiner** is the Head of Technical Standards & Information of the Independent Television Commission in the UK. He will provide the broadcaster's point of view on accessibility and new media technologies.

The session will be moderated by **Mr. Gerry Stallard**, from Stallards Consultancy Services LTD/Media Access

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

- Do decision-makers, broadcasters and manufactures want to exclude disabled people from enjoying the same right to access broadcast services as for any other citizen?
- Does it help or hinder a solution when we strictly separate the broadcasting service and the receiving equipment?
- Can a voluntary approach deliver accessibility in this area or do we need mandatory requirements?
- Can standardisation provide some of the answers?
- Is there a framework that allows for approaches adopted by different countries and examples of best practice to be shared across Europe?
- What role can broadcasters play in making digital television more accessible?
- What role can national governments and the European Union play in making digital television accessible for disabled people?