



A wheelchair user and employee of Carrefour gives a thumbs up while working in the electronics section of a Carrefour store.



International  
Labour  
Organization

# Newsline

of the ILO Global  
Business and Disability  
Network

[www.businessanddisability.org](http://www.businessanddisability.org)

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## Network meetings

### Special Session on the Network highlights the business case for hiring people with disabilities, 11 June 2012

On 11 June 2012, the ILO held a special session to bring awareness to the ILO Global Business and Disability Network and the business case for hiring women and men with disabilities as part of the International Labour Conference.

The session brought together experts representing businesses and employer groups who helped make the "business case" for hiring and retaining disabled people. The "business case" argues that hiring a qualified person with a disability brings greater benefits beyond just filling an open job. People with disabilities can contribute to a company's overall competitiveness through benefits such as increased productivity, greater market share and lower job turnover rates.

Jean-Christophe Deslarzes, Executive Director of Human Resources and Organisation, Carrefour, offered a strong endorsement for including people with disabilities in his company's workplace: "Developing an inclusive workforce will create shareholder value since, at the end of the day, the revenue drive comes from the employees who work for us."

Many employers are sharing their good practices on implementing inclusion strategies through the Network. Javier Constante, Commercial Vice President of Performance Plastics Europe, Middle East and Africa, Dow Chemical, stated that one of the reasons behind Dow Chemical's joining the Network was because "we wanted to find successes and show our successes in building a business case for hiring people with disabilities".

Stefan Tromel of the International Disability Alliance (IDA) noted the timeliness of the Network in light of the more than 117 countries that have now ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – a comprehensive human rights convention for people with disabilities – and the important role companies play in sharing the business case with each other.

Commenting on the broad range of tools and resources made available to all members of the Network, Valerie Guertler-Doyle, Head of Diversity Inclusion, Novartis said the publication of company practices was "a goldmine of ideas" in helping her develop a corporate disability diversity strategy". Ronnie Goldberg, Executive Vice President and Senior Policy Officer, US Council for International Business (USCIB), commented that USCIB's decision to join the Network was a result of interests from its member companies, including Dow Chemical.

Representatives of employers' organizations, multinational companies and ILO staff tune in to learn about the business case for hiring people with disabilities.



Ravi Peiris, Director General, Employers' Federation of Ceylon (EFC), added that the Network provides a platform to show credibility to EFC member companies that they can make direct contributions to hiring untapped talent and increasing labour force productivity.

The event also marked major milestones in the development of the Network: a formal membership agreement, a strategic plan, and an active Steering Committee whose members include Accor Hotels, Adecco, Carrefour, Casino Group, Dow Chemical, Infosys, Mphasis, Novartis, Standard Bank, the USCIB and the IDA.

## Steering Committee meets in Geneva to discuss membership expansion and ways to promote the Network, 11 June 2012

The Steering Committee met in Geneva on 11 June 2012 to search for ways to expand the Network's membership so that it includes companies from wider sectoral and geographic representation.

The quest for new members comes at a timely moment as the Network has a recently established an official membership agreement and is seeking for financial contribution. The agreement allows the Network to formally engage with potential or new members at an early stage and lays out the partnership provisions for the signing company and the ILO. The Steering Committee agreed that all current members should

The session was attended by more than 100 people, including employers' representatives, business leaders and ILO staff. As well as raising awareness on companies that have successfully integrated disabled workers into their workplaces, the session provided an opportunity for several employers' organizations to consider joining the Network.

To watch a 5 minute video clip of the session, please visit:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y07oAd3eoKk&list=PL73A22D93B709417B&index=1&feature=plpp\\_video](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y07oAd3eoKk&list=PL73A22D93B709417B&index=1&feature=plpp_video)

sign the agreement by the end of 2012 and that new members should sign upon joining.

To recruit more members, the Steering Committee suggested introducing the Network in various diversity and disability forums where global companies with a specific interest in non-discrimination issues are present. The Committee will also build a marketing plan to strategically expand the Network's outreach.

Other items discussed included a review of a company profile template that will be used to introduce policies, practices and initiatives related to disability of Network members and a country profile template, which will outline the legislation and policy environment, resources and partners who can assist with disability inclusion efforts at the national level.

# More news from the Network

## Launch of the French and Spanish versions of the Network's web site

The Network's web site is now available in French and Spanish. Both versions provide information about the Network and its members and offer links to key publications and resources related to disability in French and Spanish.

For the French site, please visit:

<http://www.businessanddisability.org/index.php?lang=fr>

For the Spanish site, please visit:

<http://www.businessanddisability.org/index.php?lang=es>

## First official and contributing Network members: **Accor Hotels, Carrefour, Casino Group, Novartis and Standard Bank**

During the period of May and June 2012, the Secretariat sent out the Network's membership agreement to the lead contact of all company members. By signing the agreement, members enter into an official relationship with the ILO and formally commit to work towards the implementation of the *ILO Code of Practice on Managing Disability in the Workplace*. Further, members agree to participate in activities in accordance with achieving the Network's goals.

To date, five companies – Accor Hotels, Carrefour, Casino Group, Novartis and Standard Bank – have signed the agreement and also offered financial contributions to help sustain the Network.

Among the five, Carrefour was the first to sign off and become a contributing Network member. "I've always been convinced in what the ILO Global Business and Disability Network stands for and its potential to transform the global workplace to be more inclusive of people with disabilities. I look forward to seeing the Network grow and witnessing more disabled persons working in Carrefour stores as well as other companies", said Ms Mathilde Tabary, CSR and Social Responsibilities Manager at Carrefour and Steering Committee member of the Network.

A financial contribution is not mandatory to become an official Network member. Members may offer in-kind contributions, such as sponsoring a meeting, providing technical expertise to develop a Network product,

offering technological support to host webinars or support in other ways.

Below are simple guidelines to become an official Network member.

- Review and sign the membership agreement
- Make a voluntary annual contribution of at least USD 10,000 to USD 30,000 or more
- Participate in Network activities
- For questions, please contact: [businessanddisability@ilo.org](mailto:businessanddisability@ilo.org)

## Members in spotlight

### Walgreens hosts first-ever CEO Summit focused on the employment of people with disabilities

On 4 June 2012, Walgreens gathered top-level executives from more than a dozen major US companies and government officials to launch a nationwide public-private sector initiative to advance employment of people with disabilities. The companies and officials plan to work together to achieve common goals, including to identify and resolve employment barriers facing people with disabilities, share experience and best practices, raise awareness on the significant benefits of hiring people with disabilities and expand participation.

The first-ever CEO Summit was held at Walgreens' Windsor, Connecticut distribution centre, where about 50 per cent of the workforce has a disability but all employees work as equals with the same responsibilities and performance standards. The Summit was an informal dialogue among CEOs and designated representatives to discuss how the private sector can come together to reinforce the business advantage of having disability inclusion as part of a corporate strategy.

Summit participants included government officials led by US Senator Tom Harkin of Iowa, US Congressman Pete Sessions of Texas, US Senator Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut and Delaware Governor Jack Markell. Participating companies comprised of ILO Global Business and Disability Network members, such as Ernst & Young, IBM and Walgreens, as well as Amerigroup, Ascend Performance Materials, Best Buy, Clarks Companies, GE Lighting, Lowe's Home

Improvement, Lundbeck, McLane Company, Merck, Office Max, SAP AG, Procter & Gamble, UPS and Walmart.

Following the Summit, the officials and companies made a commitment to schedule additional activities with expanded participation, starting with meetings at the US Business Leadership Network annual conference in Orlando Florida in October of this year; summits in Dallas and Washington, D.C, a web site to share information and best practices and future activities to expand and promote the employment of people with disabilities and address barriers.

"One thing we've learned from the Walgreens experience is that if companies set big goals and put themselves out there, and work with the right partners to help them build a talent pipeline of eager, productive and loyal workers with disabilities, the results of such efforts are stronger and more productive companies and a loyal productive workforce", said Senator Harkin, the Chairman of the US Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions and lead Senate sponsor of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Since 2007, Walgreens has been actively recruiting people with disabilities to work in its 21 distribution centres. The results are a company division with 10 per cent of its workforce consisting of people with disclosed disabilities in the same jobs, with the same pay being held to the same standards working side by side with the rest of the workforce, and holding every

type and level of position at the centres.

Walgreens' new goal is to fill 20 per cent of its distribution centre jobs with people with disabilities and is now applying lessons learned at the distribution centres across the company with the recent launch of company wide solution to better enable its retail stores to employ people with disabilities.

To read more on the Summit and Walgreens' efforts, please go to Walgreens' news room at: [http://news.walgreens.com/article\\_display.cfm?article\\_id=5604](http://news.walgreens.com/article_display.cfm?article_id=5604)

## Wipro offers job opportunities for students with hearing impairments

Mysore - the city of palaces and the cultural capital of Karnataka, India and a popular tourist destination known for its celebrations - witnesses a different kind of celebration at Wipro, Mysore: that of diversity and inclusion. One of the first locations of Wipro Limited to have hired and included people with disabilities, it celebrates the inclusion of students with hearing impairment within the workforce.

Wipro, Mysore began with mentoring students with hearing impairments, an effective way to create more awareness of diversity and inclusion. "We involved 10 students from the National Institute of Speech and Hearing and 10 managers from Wipro Kochi in this initiative. Through this program, we went beyond



### Wipro Mysore

Five people with hearing impairments undergo training as they launch their career at Wipro. Two employees (left and second left), sign to communicate with the instructor.

spreading information and sensitizing managers to hearing impairment. Over a period of 6-9 months, the students and managers communicated through emails and text messages," quotes Isaac George who champions the cause. He adds, "Later we interviewed a batch of 25 eligible students and offered jobs to six of them at Mysore".

Next came the question of placing the newly recruited employees on the right jobs. Putting priority on matching jobs to the technical competencies of an employee, Wipro engaged in a job analysis exercise and found that seven of the eight jobs met the employees' competencies. This gave further clarity in terms of training, support and sensitizations needs.

Wipro now has a sign language interpreter who interprets for some of the students and also teaches managers and training teams how to sign. This makes inclusion more effective.

Wipro has taken a big leap towards creating a more inclusive environment for persons with hearing impairment and is serving as a role model for others to emulate.

## Serasa Experian launches a national network on disability in Brazil

"I am very excited to witness a roomful of corporate, government and NGO representatives eager to promote people with disabilities in the workplace within Brazil" said Joao Ribas, Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator, Serasa Experian, as he addressed the participants of the 26<sup>th</sup> Forum on the Employability of People with Disabilities in Sao Paulo. This Forum, held by Serasa Experian every three months to exchange experiences related to hiring people with disabilities, put a specific emphasis on gathering employers interested in starting a national network on disability in Brazil.

The idea of building such a network emerged after Joao attended the ILO Global Business and Disability Network's Buenos Aires meeting in 2011. The ILO Network provided an example of an initiative that could be replicated at the national level to respond to specific challenges faced by employers when including people with disabilities in the workplace.

The morning session of the one day Brazil meeting on 2 May engaged all different types of stakeholders – from representatives of disabled persons' organizations and NGOs to those from the government and private sector – to discuss the situation of people with disabilities and employment in Brazil. The session included a presentation from Linamara Rizzo Battistella, State Secretary of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Sao Paulo, who described the steps the municipality is taking, such as incorporating a hiring quota of 5 per cent, to include disabled persons in the workforce. Andrea Regina, Manager of Corporate Citizenship, Serasa Experian emphasized that "employers are realizing the business benefits of having a diverse workforce that includes people with disabilities" and added that "at Serasa Experian, people with disabilities are seen as professionals and are hired based on their abilities and qualifications".

Debra Perry, Senior Specialist in Disability Inclusion, ILO, joined as a presenter to introduce the ILO Network. During her presentation, she stressed the importance of securing commitment from the top leadership to extend further opportunities to people with disabilities and to build a strong, successful national disability network.

In the afternoon, a meeting was held for selected businesses, NGOs and governments to form ideas on how to build a national network on disability. The session was attended by more than 50 companies were in attendance, including members of the ILO Network, such as Sodexo, Accor, Telefonica, IBM and Ernst & Young.

The enthusiasm from the meeting was great that on Friday, 4 May, just two days after the Forum, a group of companies as well as ILO's Debra Perry met to discuss the organization of the **Business Network for Social Inclusion** (Rede Empresarial de Inclusao Social). The group put together a Steering Committee composed of nine companies and recruited 14 additional members. In the following days, this group of highly motivated companies drafted the Network's operating procedures and mission statement, created working groups and agreed to hold the Network's first Steering Committee meeting on 10 August.

**Steering Committee Members of  
the Business Network for Social Inclusion**

Accenture  
Raia Drogasil  
Ernst & Young  
Grupo Pão de Açúcar  
GTcon  
IBM  
Serasa Experian  
Telefonica/Vivo  
TozziniFreire Advogados

persons. In particular, the Network will focus on addressing the following issues related to disability: health and vocational rehabilitation, accessibility and assistive technology, formal education, training and professional qualifications, recruitment and selection and building positive disability awareness among teams, management and society in general.

Witnessing the major strides the Brazilian network has made within three months of the initial gathering, ILO's Debra Perry commented "I think the Network will go far, especially since Serasa Experian has the commitment from its top management to lead this effort forward".

To learn more about the Business Network for Social Inclusion and how to get involved, please contact Joao Ribas at [Joao.Ribas@br.experian.com](mailto:Joao.Ribas@br.experian.com)

**About Serasa Experian**

Serasa Experian ([www.serasaexperian.com.br](http://www.serasaexperian.com.br)) is an information services company that provides data and analytical tools to help businesses manage credit risk, prevent fraud and automate decision making. Within its Diversity & Inclusion Unit, Serasa Experian operates the "Employability Programme for People with Disabilities", which offers a 4-month training programme for disabled persons and employs successful trainees thereafter. It also partners with other companies and the government to promote and exchange experiences around employing people with disabilities.

**General Members of the Business Network for Social Inclusion**

Bimbo do Brasil Ltda.  
CFLA Advogados  
Credigy Soluções Financeiras  
Danone  
Delphi Automotive Sistemas do Brasil Ltda.  
Editora Abril S.A  
Hotelaria Accor Brasil S/A  
Jones Lang LaSalle S.A  
Magazine Luiza S\A  
Pró RH  
Saint Goban do Brasil  
Sodexo do Brasil Coml. Ltda  
Suzano Papel e Celulose  
Wtorre S.A

The Network will continue to gather and mobilize companies in Brazil to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities by sharing good practices, forming partnerships and developing products and services to facilitate the recruitment and retention of disabled



The **Business Network for Social Inclusion** held its first Steering Committee meeting at IBM on 10 August 2012. During the meeting, the Committee had the opportunity to visit IBM's Accessibility Laboratory and get a preview of the newest platform being developed. Joao Ribas, who is taking the lead in organizing the Network, sits on the third left.

## Disability & Inclusion efforts at Infosys: A special loan policy for employees with disabilities

The vision of Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) at Infosys is to create an inclusive workplace and leverage the power of diversity to create sustainable competitive advantage. At Infosys, employees from different backgrounds have the opportunity to participate, develop and contribute freely and equitably to the growth and success of the company.

Promoting the inclusion of people with disabilities at the workplace is part of Infosys' D&I initiatives. In particular, Infyability, an employee resource group formed for employees with disabilities, works to create an accessible and inclusive work environment for disabled people. The group runs sensitization campaigns to create awareness among non-disabled employees and invites them to ask questions on how they can make those with disabilities feel included in all aspects of work life. For example, courses on sign language help team members effectively converse with employees who have hearing impairments.

As part of its disability inclusion efforts, Infosys recently established a special loan policy for its employees with disabilities. This policy, a pilot in India, helps employees with disabilities purchase assistive devices that improve their overall ability and quality of life.

The loan was created after Infosys discovered that its disabled employees often faced challenges with the extreme contrasts, from a fully accessible work place to an environment that lacked physical and technological accessibility outside of work. For example, a visually impaired employee who had access to a screen reader at the office would have to depend on help from another person with basic tasks, such as checking personal email, if a screen reader was not available at home.

With the loan, disabled employees can purchase products, such as hearing aids, electronic wheel chairs, screen reading software, and automobile accessories for their personal and permanent use, assisting them to live in a barrier-free environment outside the offices.

## Sodexo Sweden and Samhall partner to create jobs for people with disabilities in Sweden



Samhall provides services and meaningful work for women and men with disabilities in Sweden and supports them to find new jobs with mainstream employers. Sodexo is a food services and facilities management company that is represented in 80 countries around the world. Jointly, Samhall and Sodexo, Sweden have embarked on an ambitious partnership that will result in work for 1000 people with disabilities in the next three years.

Samhall will provide jobs for people with disabilities under subcontracting relationship with Sodexo, first on cleaning assignments and later on jobs such as cooking and switchboard operation. Employees will be treated on an equal basis as any subcontracted employee, i.e. their pay will be based on the hours of work and work accomplished. Additionally, Sodexo and Samhall will analyze the needs of those with disabilities to ensure that they are successfully integrated in the workplace. Awareness training will also be provided to Sodexo managers so they can better support the subcontracted workers.

Of the 1000 disabled persons involved, 200 will have the opportunity to become direct employees of Sodexo or its clients. The arrangements have clear business advantages and contribute to Sodexo's corporate social responsibility goals.

Fredrik T. Strand, CEO of Sodexo describes the collaboration with Samhall as a critical step forward to sourcing talent. "To win assignments, we need access to personnel... Samhall has a unique method for training and matching people with disabilities and has talented employees that can give us a good, long-term staff

supply. In addition, we believe that profitable business goes hand in hand with social responsibility” says Fredrik.

## Upcoming Event

### The ILO and Trust for Americas holds an international forum focused on people with disabilities, Lima Peru, 23-24 October 2012

The ILO’s Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean is partnering with the Trust for Americas, Organization of American States and UNESCO to host an international forum on “Diverse Talents – Equal Rights: Social Inclusion and Employment of People with Disabilities”. The forum will take place in Lima, Peru on 23-24 October 2012.

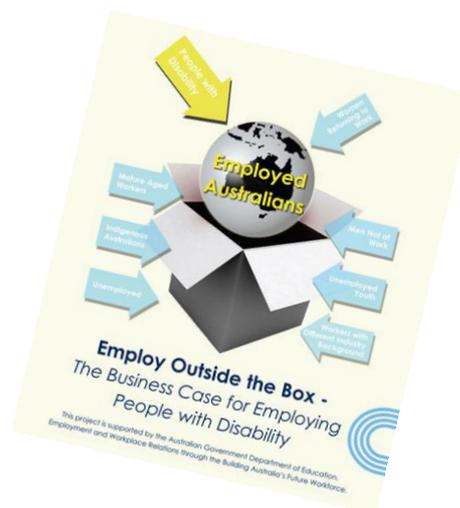
The forum will bring together representatives of the private sector, government and civil society to discuss the challenges faced by people with disabilities in Latin America when accessing the labour market. Participants will also share ideas on how to step up progress to create an inclusive workforce.

Detailed information about the forum, including the agenda, registration and venue are available at: <http://www.amiendo.com/foropcd>. You may also contact [foro@inclusionlaboralpcd.orgfor](mailto:foro@inclusionlaboralpcd.orgfor) more information.

## Featured Resources

### Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry releases **Employ Outside the Box: the Business Case for Employing People with Disability**

The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) – Australia’s representative employer group that participants in the work of the ILO – recently produced an employer guide, *Employ Outside the Box, the Business Case for Employing People with Disability*, highlighting the benefits of hiring people with disabilities. The aim of the guide is to present a powerful leadership statement to employers about



increasing employment participation of all groups in the Australian community, especially those with disabilities.

The National Disability Services and other disability stakeholders provided case studies to the ACCI to ensure the accuracy and relevance of the content. The guide was launched by Australia’s Minister for Education, Employment and Workplace relations, Bill Shorten, on 24 June 2012.

A copy of the free guide is available at:

[http://www.acci.asn.au/getattachment/Research-and-Publications/Publications/Employ-Outside-the-Box/A5\\_EOTB\\_DisabilityFINAL\\_WEB.pdf.aspx](http://www.acci.asn.au/getattachment/Research-and-Publications/Publications/Employ-Outside-the-Box/A5_EOTB_DisabilityFINAL_WEB.pdf.aspx)

### European Commission launches the **Disability Online Tool**

The European Commission’s Academic Network of European Disability Experts has launched a new web resource on disability policies for European countries.

DOTCOM, the Disability Online Tool of the Commission, offers an extensive database on disability laws, policies, strategies and initiatives in the Member States of the European Union. For each of the 34 countries, it includes a summary on 43 selected policy instruments and provides direct comparisons of the policy initiatives taken by different countries to address disability issues relevant to the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and European Disability Strategy 2010-2020.

To access DOTCOM, please go to: <http://www.disability-europe.net/dotcom>

**Kate Nash Associates presents**  
**Disabled Employee Networks: A**  
**practical guide**

*Disabled Employee Networks: A practical guide* is a comprehensive guide on how to set-up, deliver and maintain an employee resource group dedicated to people with disabilities. Developed by Kate Nash Associates, an informal group of consultants who help organizations set up disabled employee networks (DENs), the guide provides advice for employers wanting to establish a DEN and employees who have been running a network for some time and are looking for ways to revitalize it.

The guide along with key Q&As, best practice papers, templates and checklists are available at no cost on the web site:

<http://www.katenashassociates.com/disabled-employee-networks/toolkit>