

# Mainstreaming for Me

2005 - 2006



DISABILITY FEDERATION OF IRELAND

This project was sponsored by the Dormant Accounts Disbursement Fund

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## Foreword

It is my pleasure to introduce you to the final 'Mainstreaming for Me' report. Participants of this project have given us a clear picture of the current situation regarding their experiences of mainstreaming of public services in Ireland. Their experiences, insights and recommendations are shared here in this report. The planning and implementation of this project ran in parallel with the creation and development of the National Disability Strategy. The project is concluded and the National Disability Strategy is now in place. The learning from the project will find useful expression in the implementation of the National Disability Strategy. It can be said that the disability movement and the Government have come a long way, but it is what we do together from now on that will deliver inclusion for people with disabilities.

It is well within our memory that disability was exclusively a health and welfare issue. Now, it is acknowledged as a civil and human rights issue, with the objective being to achieve full and equal participation, right across society, for people with disabilities. This is what the National Disability Strategy is about. At all of the 'Mainstreaming for Me' meetings the views of the participants reinforced the need for co-operation between the disability sector and the Government to face the challenge of ensuring that 'mainstreaming' is understood and implemented with an approach that is person centred and underpinned with positive action measures. As one participant stated

"Unless people with disabilities can get 100% of the services that non-disabled people can get, mainstreaming is not working".

The 'Mainstreaming for Me' project has demonstrated that everyone is ready to work co-operatively. We have learned that when we do take the time and create the space for all the stakeholders to have an honest and respectful dialogue they are very willing to engage. The project evaluation attributed this in part to "the non-confrontational and non-adversarial manner in which the meetings were organised" and recommended that the process used may provide a good model for ongoing consultation. This report will put the spotlight on some of the challenges the participants identified, such as challenges for disability organisations who wish to support the mainstreaming process but find they are having to re-evaluate their own role and work practices to ensure that they use their expertise to promote

and advocate for 'best practice'. They also saw challenges in developing a shared clarity of vision around mainstreaming, such as a vision amongst themselves which will ensure that mainstreaming services are underpinned with specialist expertise. Part of the challenge for Government departments and statutory service providers is the need to continue to carefully monitor the implementation of the National Disability Strategy, whilst also developing inter and cross-departmental approaches which ensure that services and outcomes are focused on the needs of the individual.

To all participants, be they disabled people or from organisations providing services, I make one request; - that we continue to work together looking at what works well and what doesn't and make sure that the experience and learning gets back to the decision makers. I commit DFI to giving its assistance to ensuring that such feedback is delivered and acted upon. Congratulations and thanks to all the participants of the 'Mainstreaming for Me' project for the questions they raise and the recommendations they make throughout this report, and the Regional Reports from this project. The findings from 'Mainstreaming for Me' act as signposts towards identifying solutions to enable the development of a truly inclusive society.

**John Dolan**  
**CEO Disability Federation Ireland**

“ For the first six months, neither I, nor my family, were offered any sort of practical information to help us all deal with the new circumstances created by my acquired disability ”



## **About the 'Mainstreaming for Me' Project.**

### **Introduction:**

The 'Mainstreaming for Me' project took place between April 2005 and June 2006 and was planned to complement and support the creation and implementation of the National Disability Strategy. Disability Federation Ireland (DFI) successfully sought funding for this project from the Dormant Accounts Disbursement Fund to research the current experiences of people with disabilities when accessing public services and also the experiences of service providing organizations, voluntary and statutory, in relation to the planning and delivery of inclusive and accessible services to the public. The overall aim was to allow participants to become more informed about those changes and have a greater understanding of the ongoing challenges for all the stakeholders involved in implementing mainstreaming. This project was also designed to build on previous collaboration between disability organisations and statutory agencies, specifically a series of nationwide seminars organised by DFI entitled 'The Road to Mainstreaming' in 2000-2001 and a major Seminar entitled 'Living in the Mainstream' held in Limerick in 2003.

### **Methodology:**

The Advisory Team for the Project agreed that the methodology used should be conducive to maximising the opportunities for service users and service providers to together discuss the changes that have taken place in Ireland since the commitment by government to mainstreaming policy in June 2000. In order to achieve this, the number of participants invited to each of the regional meetings was set at around twenty-five. Independent facilitators were employed in each region to facilitate the meetings, using a combination of plenary and small group sessions to maximise participation. Two workshops were held in each of the four HSE regions, Western, Southern, Dublin/North-East and Dublin/Mid-Leinster. Meetings of service users took place between September 2005 and December 2005, followed by meetings of service users and service providers in each region which took place during January and February 2006. A report was prepared by the Facilitator after each regional meeting and circulated to all the participants. The findings from the Regional Meetings were then discussed by representatives from government departments and statutory agencies at a meeting on 31st May 2006, and by CEOs on 20th June 2006.

## Evaluation:

The level of interest in this project was high and the evaluation feedback was extremely positive. The quality of the recommendations in the Regional Reports show that over the course of the meetings the participants identified several overarching issues which if addressed will go a long way towards ensuring that people with disabilities have the necessary choices, rights and opportunities to enable them to participate as much as they wish to in every aspect of community, work, social and family life.

In all 76% of the participants who attended the regional meetings completed evaluation questionnaires and the evaluator reported that:

“A common thread across the completed questionnaires related to the fact that people felt comfortable and relaxed at the meetings and that they had the opportunities and the confidence to express their views about the mainstreaming of services for people with disabilities”.

As one participant explained: **‘there were no blame games or no vicious attacks on individual agencies’** In addition the evaluator reported:

“The feedback from the service providers consulted during the follow-up interviews (which took place six months after the regional meetings) also served to stress the importance of bringing together service providers and disabled people to discuss issues and concerns of common interest. Some providers interviewed did, however, also emphasize the need for this type of interaction to take place on an ongoing and regular basis within an area based or local setting.”<sup>1</sup>

## The Timing of the Project:

There were concurrent significant developments in relation to progressing the National Disability Strategy during the course of this project, and for that reason, this report will include not only the recommendations arising from the project, but will also give some context to the experiences and recommendations arising from the meetings in relation to the current political and social strategies contributing to the goal of achieving a completely inclusive ‘mainstreamed’ society.

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<sup>1</sup> The full Evaluation Report prepared by Stephen Rourke can be downloaded from the DFI website. This report includes more detailed information regarding the context, background, management and outcomes of this project.



## **'Mainstreaming for Me' in the Context of Current National Policy Developments**

### **The National Disability Strategy**

Whilst 'Mainstreaming for Me' participants were sharing their views on the barriers to equal participation there were significant developments happening as part of the National Disability Strategy such as the passing of the Disability Act in 2005 and the preparations for the launch of 'Sectoral Plans' by six Government Departments in July 2006. Discussion on the Comhairle Amendment Bill (2004)<sup>2</sup> which proposes to establish a dedicated Personal Advocacy Service (PAS) for people with disabilities also progressed this year, and the fourth aspect of the National Disability Strategy, the commitment to a multi-annual investment programme for disability support services has been reiterated and reinforced through the "NESC Strategy 2006: People, Productivity and Purpose" (2005) and the new Social Partnership agreement 'Towards 2016' which was published in June 2006. As these developments were taking place, the reports from the 'Mainstreaming for Me' meetings were shared with Government and Statutory Agencies to contribute to their understanding of the importance of getting the National Disability Strategy implemented within the context of

the 'NESC Strategy 2006: People Productivity and Purpose' (2005) with its 'life cycle' and 'person-centred' approaches. The following is a brief update on the status of current national policy developments in relation to Mainstreaming:

### **NESC Strategy 2006: People Productivity and Purpose (2005)**

The National Economic and Social Council (NESC) published its strategy in December 2005 in the run up to the social partnership negotiations. This strategy, and within it, the model of the Developmental Welfare State provide an opportune framework within which to implement the National Disability Strategy. It also outlines the major issues which must be addressed in order to follow through on the National Disability Strategy.

It states that Ireland has a major deficit in this area and that we are commencing in the context of continuing data insufficiencies, institutional restructuring, and untried and untested governance structures. NESC recognises that the institutional arrangements to deliver on the National Disability Strategy are still not fully established:

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<sup>2</sup> The Comhairle Amendment Bill has been represented to the Oireachtas as the Citizens Information Bill 2006.

“success of the National Disability Strategy will hinge on the quality of the working relationships between government, line departments, public agencies, the NGO’s, the social partners, the NDA and persons with disabilities and line officers” (NESC Strategy 2006: 168)

### **Developmental Welfare State (2005) NESC.**

The movement from a contingency based system to a developmental and participatory approach is outlined in the ‘Developmental Welfare State’ report (2005). This approach is about developing ‘person centred’ public services. This is a prime example of how mainstreaming of services for people with disabilities can be actioned. The NESC has acknowledged that movement towards this Developmental Welfare State model poses institutional and governance challenges and that the National Disability Strategy requires interdepartmental and agency co-operation and co-ordination. The successful implementation of the National Disability Strategy will be a vindication of the Developmental Welfare State approach and a prototype for its wider application.

### **Social Partnership and the National Disability Strategy<sup>3</sup>**

Through the Social Partnership process, the government and social partners (unions, employers, farmers and the community and voluntary sector) determine the national economic and social policy in Ireland. In April 2003, Disability Federation Ireland (DFI) was invited to represent the disability strand, and has done so since then, on the Community and Voluntary Pillar. Over the last year, DFI has been working with member organisations and the other members of the Community and Voluntary Pillar in preparation for the negotiations for the new national agreement. The new agreement ‘Towards 2016’ was published in June 2006. It acknowledges that implementation of the National Disability Strategy is central to the ‘programme of work’ for the ten year framework of the Agreement, and the Government and Social Partners have committed to delivering an Ireland in which people with disabilities have the opportunity to live a full life with their families as part of their local communities, free of discrimination. (‘Towards 2016, p 66-69).

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<sup>3</sup>

More information about the National Disability Strategy and Social Partnership is available from the DFI website.

The agreement set out five high level goals relating to people with disabilities:

- Income
- Care, health, education, employment and training and social services
- Accessibility and housing
- Supports for personal autonomy
- Care and caring

Inherent in these goals are opportunities and challenges for both the disability sector and the government to address on behalf of the people they serve. The reports from the MFM meetings indicate that in some areas there are enormous challenges involved and giant steps to be taken before life and lifestyle choices and opportunities become equal for people with disabilities.

MFM participants suggested that Mainstreaming happens at a number of levels, in particular through access, resources, awareness and attitudes: One participant stressed that: "Attitudes are the most significant challenge, people still experience stigma and people with disabilities are often viewed as different, in a negative way"

The 'Towards 2016' disability commitments are to be delivered as part of the National Disability Strategy. The agreement adopts

a 'life cycle approach'. The key lifecycle phases include children, people of working age, older people and people with disabilities. 'Towards 2016' acknowledges that disability is present throughout the life cycle and will mean that, where relevant, commitments relating to children, people of working age and older people, will be made in accordance with the policy of mainstreaming. In other words, services will be planned with the understanding that whatever the service, there will be people with disabilities also wishing to access it and who can benefit, at all stages of the life cycle.

"The Government and the social partners agree that the National Disability Strategy represents a comprehensive Strategy for this aspect of the life cycle framework and that implementation of the Strategy should be the focus of policy over the lifetime of the agreement." ('Towards 2016', p66)

Throughout the negotiations, DFI stressed the importance of cross departmental working and the need for a whole of government approach, which reflects the learning from the project. The Agreement contains a commitment to the departmental sectoral plans addressing cross-departmental issues in a coherent manner. This commitment and the enormous

challenges it presents was discussed by participants from Government Departments and Statutory Agencies at a 'Mainstreaming for Me' meeting on 31st May 2006. They cautioned that making it happen depended equally on a comprehensive understanding of 'mainstreaming' as well as on an appropriate implementation strategy. They advised that it is vital to plan for ongoing consultation with service users. In addition to the need for cross-agency cooperation and development, they also emphasised each department's responsibility to rigorously examine their own issues and integrate these into their plans. They acknowledged that although the National Disability Strategy is rightly based on a Social Model, it may be logistically difficult and challenging to move away from the contingency or 'hardship' based model.

**The Launching of the 'Sectoral Plans' and the Code of Practice on Accessible Public Services,** which took place on 21st July 2006, is the most recent exciting development in relation to the implementation of the National Disability Strategy and a vital whole-of-Government approach to redressing the systematic exclusion of people with disabilities from the use of public services. This launch again signals in a public way the positive intent of Government, but intentions alone do not guarantee delivery. The lived experience

of people with disabilities is of obstacles and barriers, be they bureaucratic, physical and attitudinal. Their removal has to be planned and in their place must go supports to participation. Within 'Towards 2016' there is acknowledgement from the government that the

"Implementation of the National Disability Strategy will also take account of linkages with other relevant national strategies and policies."

To help with this the government committed to publishing a document which will pull together for ease of reference,

"the vision, mission and strategic objectives which have already been agreed and announced by Government under the strategy".

These commitments are crucial, especially in terms of mainstreaming for people with disabilities and streamlining policies with other elements of social policy. It should ensure coherence throughout all elements of policy and also will provide a challenge for all the departments and agencies involved, statutory and voluntary to ensure that this is followed through, for example in the National Development Plan and the National Spatial Strategy.

## Learning from 'Mainstreaming for Me'

Over the course of this project we learned that for many of the participants, people working for voluntary disability organisations and staff involved with managing service provision in statutory agencies and/or developing policies in government departments, the project represented their first opportunity to come to grips with the implications of mainstreaming, and to get a clearer understanding of what it would mean for their own work and role and for their organisations and departments. Threaded throughout the meetings, there were issues raised specific to both voluntary organisations and statutory service providers regarding the challenges they currently face. This section outlines some of the issues, challenges and recommendations identified.

### **Voluntary Organisations in the Disability Sector: -**

The question continuously rising, at the Regional Meetings and also at the meeting specifically for CEOs on 20th June was **'Is mainstreaming a Good Thing?'**

Despite the fact that most participants were adamant that mainstreaming is a positive development for all people with disabilities without exception, it is important to note here that

a minority had specific reasons for thinking otherwise. Fears were expressed that services will 'be diluted' and these fears were expressed most strongly in relation to children and adults with intellectual disabilities and for the deaf community. Participants who had reservations about mainstreaming said that they are trying to support the process, but fear that they will fail their members if they do not manage to hold onto the provision of specialist supports where needed. This brings forth a reminder that disability organisations are the 'specialists' in relation to awareness and expertise regarding the needs of people with differing and specific disabilities, and their role as specialists must be acknowledged and supported to ensure that they play a key role in implementing the National Disability Strategy. However to share their expertise and to ensure that they are in a position to monitor the implementation of the National Disability Strategy, watching carefully to ensure that services are not 'diluted', will require strong strategic planning on the part of the voluntary organisations concerned. Many voluntary organisations have managed to develop themselves without any consistent supports relating to the development of their staff and organisational structures. There is a

real danger that now at a time when disability organisations are being listened to, they may not be ready to take their place and be effective in sharing their expertise. It is not surprising that very high on the agenda at 'Mainstreaming for Me' meetings was the need for supports for disability organisations to meet these challenges. Participants acknowledged that processes such as strategic planning, governance etc will be essential, for each organisation and collectively.

"Disability Organisations need to work together. We need to address how we are going to respond to the enormous sea change. It is an opportunity which could be wasted. There are lots of disability organisations; how we use our resources collectively to influence policy becomes vital.....there is a lot of backroom work to do!" (MFM)

### **Government Departments and Statutory Agencies:**

At the meeting for Government Departments and Statutory agencies on 31st May 2006, the feedback from the Regional meetings was presented and discussed. The following points were made:

**"There needs to be seamless work between local and government levels"** (MFM). Mainstreaming will involve a more holistic approach and this will

require the development of close working relationships between different departments and agencies. We must ensure that we plan to support and maintain efficient, co-operative and robust inter-departmental working relationships. When standards of good practice are achieved, the learning needs to be shared between agencies.

**"There needs to be flexibility at local level, with cross sectoral work there's a danger of multiplicity"** (MFM).

Mainstreaming will require clear leadership. Each government department must document, instigate and monitor their role in relation to the public service agencies accountable to them. Moving away from a 'system focus' may require devolving authority at local level to agencies who provide public services. Service providers at local level will require clear direction and supports to ensure they deliver high quality consistent accredited 'person centred services'.

A 'Mainstreaming for Me' participant experienced a 'system focused' service, when the plans drawn up by an occupational therapist for her shower room were ignored by the council, and a standard 'disability' shower room was installed. This did not suit her needs and resulted in her having to shower in the garden with a hose!

**“Another corner that needs to be turned is yes there is money being invested in disability, but we need to ask what are the actual outcomes that we can expect?”** (MFM). If the plans don’t focus on outcomes they are most likely not thought through sufficiently. Outcomes should be distinct from commitments to ongoing investment!

**“In the government/voluntary sector we need to ask ourselves how can we learn on the job? We all have to work in ways we’ve never worked before and deliver serious goods, we need to make sure People with Disabilities are designed into structures”**(MFM). Throughout the project it was clear that the community and voluntary sector and the government share the responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the National Disability Strategy. This project presented opportunities for this responsibility to be explored

together, and for most participants this was a unique experience. The recommendations therefore reinforce the need for ongoing consultation between service users and service providers at every stage of the planning process, and also for consultation mechanisms to be built into service audit and evaluation structures. In addition the project highlighted the need for this consultation to be designed to ensure that the process allows all stakeholders an opportunity to share their views in comfortable, safe non threatening environments, with the overall aim of identifying and meeting any challenges to the development of ‘best practice’.

**“At senior level we need to ask ourselves all of the time ‘how does that work for People with Disabilities?’”** (MFM).

## Conclusion – Looking to the future:

We are now truly on the road to mainstreaming and the journey has begun well. Ensuring services are planned from the outset with a clear understanding that people with disabilities are part of the community to be served, is now central to the future strategic planning of Government Departments and public bodies. In discussing the importance of the role of State leadership in developing services, the 'Developmental Welfare State' (NESC 2005,p160) considers that the challenges for the state in maintaining standards and ensuring equity will be subject to accountability based on outputs and to being challenged by research on how outputs relate to outcomes. The multiple stakeholders who took part in the 'Mainstreaming for Me' Project agreed. In terms of outputs and outcomes, they stressed that the best measure of success will be when we can truly say that people with disabilities are no longer suffering the degrading and frustrating consequences of 'system focused' services.

Participants stressed the importance of ongoing consultation between service users and service providers as part of the review and monitoring process and this need is acknowledged in the new social

partnership agreement, 'Towards 2016', (p 69: 33.4). The Disability Act (2005) also makes provision for the sectoral plans to be revised after three years. Regular and constructive consultation will be key to the success of the National Disability Strategy; consultation which designs in audit and evaluation mechanisms from the outset, focused on outcomes, and clearly measurable in terms of achieving 'person centred' services. It is clear that creating opportunities for ongoing dialogue must be a vital component in the implementation of the National Disability Strategy.

There are many more giant steps to be taken but there is also a new and exciting openness to co-operative progression. As many participants so willingly gave their time to sharing their own experiences it became obvious that too many people in our society still have to fight for the most basic and fundamental rights, and for them 'mainstreaming' and all that it promises is still a distant dream. However, with so much strong commitment now, from Government and from the Disability Sector to work together, we have it in our power to fulfil the dream.

This is a period of enormous change and there will need to be a time, perhaps in four or five years when



we stop and take stock once more of how far we have come, recording once again the experiences of people with disabilities along the journey and analysing the successes or barriers to effective implementation of mainstreaming strategies as identified by people with disabilities and by government departments and statutory agencies.

Hopefully when we do take stock we will be able to say that many more giant steps have been taken and that the openness to co-operative progression that we are seeing today has brought the journey's end within reach.

Till then - we wish all the stakeholders good luck with the journey.

### **The 'Mainstreaming for Me' Advisory Team.**



“ There is a lack of publicity when organisations do make positive changes – therefore services are not taken up ”



## **'MAINSTREAMING FOR ME' MAP**

### **DISABILITY FEDERATION IRELAND**

#### **ADVISORY TEAM MEMBERS**

<b>Allen Dunne</b>	DFI Management Team
<b>Helen Lahert</b>	Manager of Advocacy and Accessibility, Comhairle
<b>Kieran Loughran</b>	DFI Management Team (now CEO of Headway Ireland)
<b>Martin Naughton</b>	DFI Support Officer
<b>Nuala Crowe Taft</b>	MFM Project Manager (funded by the DAF)
<b>Stephen Rourke</b>	Independent Evaluator

#### **REGIONAL MEETINGS**

Participants Meeting 1:

People with Disabilities

Participants Meeting 2:

PwD & Regional Statutory Service Providers

<b>Region</b>	<b>Meeting 1</b>	<b>Meeting 2</b>	<b>Facilitator</b>
West (Galway)	21st Sept 05	18th Jan 06	Mary Seale
South (Cashel)	7th Nov 05	23rd Jan 06	Fergus Keane
Dublin/North East (Carrickmacross)	9th Nov 05	9th Feb 06	Susan Keogh
Dublin/Mid Leinster (Dublin)	30th Nov 05	22nd Feb 06	Winifred Jeffers

## NATIONAL MEETINGS (at DFI Dublin)

**Participants:** Senior Staff and Policy Managers of Government Departments, NDA, Comhairle, FÁS, NESC and NESF and Representatives (PwD) from MFM Regional Meetings.

Venue	Date	Facilitator	Speakers
DFI Dublin	31st May 06	Winifred Jeffers	John Dolan (DFI CEO) Stephen Rourke (MFM Independent Evaluator)

**Participants:** CEOs of Disability Organisations (DFI Members) and Representatives from MFM Regional Meetings.

Venue	Date	Facilitator	Speakers
DFI Dublin	20th June 06	Winifred Jeffers	John Dolan (DFI CEO) Stephen Rourke (MFM Independent Evaluator)

## **Bibliography**

### **Comhairle (Amendment) Bill 2004**

<http://www.oireachtas.ie>

### **Disability Act 2005**

<http://www.oireachtas.ie>

### **NESC Strategy 2006: People Productivity & Purpose (2005)**

<http://www.nesc.ie>

### **Sectoral Plans under the Disability Act 2005 (launched July 2006)**

Department of Communications,  
Marine and Natural Resources

<http://www.demnri.ie>

Department of Transport

<http://www.transport.ie>

Department of Social &  
Family affairs

<http://welfare.ie>

Department of Health & Children

<http://health.irlgov.ie>

Department of the Environment,  
Heritage & Local Government

<http://www.environ.ie>

Department of Enterprise,  
Trade & Employment

<http://www.entemp.ie>

### **The Developmental Welfare State (NESC 2005)**

<http://www.nesc.ie>

### **'Towards 2016' Ten-Year Framework Social Partnership Agreement 2006-2015'**

<http://www.taoiseach.gov.ie>

## **'MAINSTREAMING FOR ME' REPORTS**

1. West 'Day 1' Report 2005 - Mary Seale
2. West 'Day 2' Report 2006 - Mary Seale
3. South/South East 'Day 1' Report 2005 - Fergus Keane
4. South/South East 'Day 2' Report 2006 - Fergus Keane
5. Dublin/North East 'Day 1' Report 2005 - Susan Keogh
6. Dublin/North East 'Day 2' Report 2006 - Susan Keogh
7. Dublin/Mid Leinster 'Day 1' Report 2005 - Winifred Jeffers
8. Dublin/Mid Leinster 'Day 2' Report 2006 - Winifred Jeffers
9. Mainstreaming for Me – All Regional Reports 2005-2006 (composite)
10. Mainstreaming for Me Project Final Evaluation Report August 2006 - Stephen Rourke.

**All the above 'Mainstreaming for Me' reports are available from [www.disability-federation.ie](http://www.disability-federation.ie).**

“ It is crucial that we all come together to discuss how we might collectively respond to the needs of disabled people within our areas. ”



## All Participants of Regional Meetings 2005-2006

Aidan Larkin	Fergus Keane
Alan Chapman	(Facilitator - South)
Alison Ryan	Fiona Hoey
Andrea Smith (Signlink Interpreter)	Frances Talbot
Andrew McMahon	Gerard Martin
Ann Kelly	Gillian Murray
Ann Marie Flanagan	Grainne Ryan
Ann McEvoy	Greg Barry
Ann Ryan	Helaine Gallagher
Anne Leahy	Helen Broughan
Anne McFarland	Helen O'Dwyer
Anne McGovern	Hugh Kane
Anne Reilly	Ian Brennan
Anthony Browghan	Ita Conroy
Anthony Carrick	Ita Kilgarriff
Arlette Howell	James Doorley
Barry Dunne	Jean Plummer
Bee Malone	Jenny Healy
Bernadette Ferguson	Joanne McCarthy
(Signlink Interpreter)	John McDonald
Bob Murphy	Josephine O'Connor
Caroline Mitchell	Josephine O'Meara
(Notetaker)	Jude Spellman
Catherine Blake	Karan Bohan
Cathy McGrath	Kathleen Quinn
Claire Kinneavy	Kathleen Reynolds
Colleen Mullaney	Kay Scanlon
Connie McKenna	Ken Kelly
David Lynch	Kevin Flynn
Dermot Crosby	Kevin Murphy
Dermot Hayes	Liam Ryan
Des Maquire	Lisa Doyle
Donal Kerr	Mairead McKeniny
Donal O'Halloran	Marcus Hufsky
Emma Whelan	Margaret Phelan



Maria Fox  
Maria O'Brien  
Marian Finegan  
Marie Boylan  
Marie Leahy  
Marie O'Brien  
Martin Brennan  
Martin Kelly  
Martina Baxter  
Mary Collins  
Mary Cooney  
Mary Ganly  
Mary Kelly  
Mary McVeigh  
Mary Mulrooney  
Mary O'Keeffe  
Mary O'Connor  
Mary Seale  
    (Facilitator – West)  
Maura O'Keeffe  
Melanie Plesker  
Michael Quinn  
Michael Ryan  
Michele Gaynor  
Mike Corbett  
Natalie Mooney  
Niamh O'Connor  
Nicola Mernagh  
Noel McGuinness  
Nora Malone  
Nuala Crowe Taft  
    (Project Manager)  
Owen Collumb  
P.J. Cleere  
Pat Lillis

Pat McInerney  
Patricia McLarty  
Patrick Martin  
Patrick McKenna  
Paul Sinclair  
Peter Kearns  
Philip O'Reilly  
Rebecca Leavy  
Renate Emrich  
Rita Power  
Rosaleen Kielty  
Rosie Carey  
Seamus Campbell  
Sean Roche  
Shane Keogh  
Shirley Leahy  
Shonach Hanaphy  
Sisah Ncube  
Stephen Rourke  
    (Evaluator)  
Susan Keogh  
    (Facilitator Dub/N.E.)  
Susan O'Neill  
Tess Collins  
Tommy Corcoran  
Toni Gleeson  
Tony Barrett  
Torrie Schellhorn  
Tracy Daly  
    (Signlink Interpreter)  
Una Conlon  
Vanessa O'Connell  
    (Signlink Interpreter)  
Winifred Jeffers  
    (Facilitator Dub/M.L.)

“ Today the Mainstreaming for Me meeting has reaffirmed my belief in learning directly from the experiences of disabled people. ”



**REGIONAL MEETINGS:** Participants who attended the Regional Meetings were invited to participate as individuals involved in accessing or providing services, with the understanding that they may share information from, or with, the organisations or associations of which they were members and/or employees. Some groups and organisations listed had attendees at each of the regional meetings, sometimes several participants were from different departments within the same organisation.

### **VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS**

Brainwave  
Blanchardstown Centre for Independent Living.  
C.A.S.A. (Caring and Sharing Association)  
Castlecomer Disability Interest Group  
Center for Independent Living, Dublin  
Clonmel Centre for Independent Living  
D.A.F.T. – Disability Action Forum Theatre  
D.I.G. (Disability Interest Group –Southside Partnership)  
Disability Federation Ireland  
Dublin 7 CIL  
Dundalk Community Development Project  
FADE CIL  
GROW (Supporting Positive Mental Health)  
I.A.S.B.A.H. (The Irish Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus)  
I.W.A. (Irish Wheelchair Association)

Jack & Jill Children’s Foundation  
Kildare Network of PwD  
Leitrim Association for PwD  
Mayo CIL  
MS Ireland (Multiple Sclerosis)  
Monaghan Access & CIL (MACIL)  
N.A.D. (National Association for the Deaf)  
National Council for the Blind Ireland  
National Learning Network  
Newbridge Access Group  
PwDi (People with Disabilities Ireland)  
Roscommon Support Group and CIL  
S.I. (Schizophrenia Ireland)  
Special Olympics  
Sligo CIL  
Walkinstown Association  
West Limerick CIL  
Work Web West (Supported Employment Project)

### **STATUTORY AGENCIES AND SERVICE PROVIDERS**

Castlecomer & District Community Development Network  
Cavan County Council  
Comhairle (Area Executives & Regional Managers)  
Citizens Information Service, Co. Tipperary  
Clondalkin Partnership  
Department of Social and Family Affairs  
FÁS (Regional Directors and Managers)  
Health Services Executive (Regional Disability Managers/ Co-ordinators, Community Welfare, Public Health Liaison Staff and Assistive Technology Unit)

MABS (Money Advice and Budgeting Services)  
Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council  
South Tipperary County Council  
St. Munchin's Community Development Project  
Tipperary (South Riding) County Development Board

**Participants on 31st May 2006 Meeting for Government Departments and Statutory Agency Staff who work at National Policy Level and MFM Regional Representatives (PwD).**

Allen Dunne, DFI  
Anne Gale, Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment  
Caroline Mitchell (Notetaker)  
Catherine Blake, MFM Participant Southern Region  
Eithne Fitzgerald, NDA  
James O'Grady, HSE  
John Dolan, DFI  
Leonie Lunney, Comhairle  
Lisa Hennessy, Department of an Taoiseach  
Mary Tully, Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government  
Nuala Crowe Taft (MFM Project Manager)  
Rita Keyes, Dormant Accounts Department, Pobal  
Shira Mehlman, FAS  
Stephen Rourke (Evaluator)  
Steven Doran, Department of Health and Children

Susan O'Neill, MFM Participant Western Region  
Winifred Jeffers (Facilitator)

**Participants on 20th June 2006 Meeting for DFI Members: CEOs, Board Members or their representatives**

Allen Dunne, DFI  
Ava Battles, Brainware: The Irish Epilepsy Association  
Barbara Flynn, Frederichs Ataxia Society Ireland  
Bernie McGeer, Aware  
Breda Crehan Roche, The Galway Association  
Brian Crean, Irish Deaf Society  
Caroline Mitchell (Notetaker)  
Don Bailey, Vantastic  
Helen Lahert, Manager of Advocacy Services. Comhairle  
John Dolan, DFI  
Josephine Keaveny, Disabled People of Clare  
Kathleen McLoughlin, Irish Wheelchair Association  
Margaret Wolfe (Signlink Interpreter)  
Martin Naughton, DFI & Center for Independent Living  
Michael McCormack, Down Syndrome Ireland  
Michael Ryan, Blanchardstown Centre for Independent Living  
Mladen Tubic, IWA  
Nuala Crowe Taft (MFM Project Manager)  
Sarah-Jane Dillon, Rehab Care  
Stephen Rourke (Evaluator)  
Winifred Jeffers (Facilitator)

## **Acronyms and Terms used in the Reports**

CIL	Centre for Independent Living
Comhairle	The National Support Service for Information, Advice and Advocacy
DAF	Dormant Account Fund
DFI	Disability Federation Ireland
DWS	Developmental Welfare State
FÁS	Ireland's National Training and Employment Authority
HSE	Health Service Executive
MFM	Mainstreaming for Me (Project)
NDA	National Disability Authority
NDS	National Disability Strategy
NESC	National Economic & Social Council
NESF	National Economic & Social Forum
PAS	Personal Advocacy Service
PwD	Person with a Disability

Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI) is the national support organisation and advocate for voluntary disability organisations in Ireland who provide services to people with disabilities and disabling conditions.

- Hidden
- Intellectual
- Mental Health
- Physical
- Sensory
- Emotional

Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI) works to ensure that Irish society is fully inclusive of people with disabilities and disabling conditions so that they can exercise fully their civil, social and human rights. In pursuit of this vision:

- DFI acts as an advocate for the voluntary disability sector.
- Supports organisations to further enable people with disabilities

DFI represents and supports over 150 voluntary disability organisations and groups of which 72 comprise its National Council, and 31 of which are Associate Members. Allied to this, it works with and supports over 200 organisations and groups around

the country that have a significant and growing disability interest, mainly coming from the statutory and voluntary sectors. DFI provides:

- Information
- Training and Support
- Organisation and Management Development
- Research and Policy Development
- Advocacy and Representation
- Networking

DFI also supports the broader voluntary and disability sector through its representation of the disability strand with the Community and Voluntary pillar of the Social Partnership process, as a social partner at the National Economic and Social Forum, HSE Area Physical and Sensory Disability Co-Ordinating Committees and other fora at regional, national and European level.

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