



Roundtable
BUSINESS AND DISABILITY: BEST PRACTICE

29 October 2009
09:30 – 12:30

Delegation of the European Commission to the Russian Federation,
Moscow, Kadashevskaya Nab. 14/1

SITUATION:

Despite the fact that there is a high number of disabled people in Russia (12 % of the entire population of the Russian Federation), there are still limited numbers of people with disabilities in the labour market. Successful companies in Europe have already embraced the business case for disability: being inclusive is good for business. By focusing on ability and not accepting physical boundaries or the barriers of disability, companies have enhanced their pool of talent in the workforce, diversified and widened their customer base while contributing to the community in which their businesses operate.

There are already some good examples of business engaging with disability, particularly in Moscow. An important role has been played in encouraging this engagement by a number of key Russian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) dedicated to facilitating the demands of business with the special needs of disabled employees and customers.

In Moscow, for example, the transport system has started to become accessible for disabled people. This advance was pushed through an EU-funded initiative with the NGO "Contacts -1" partnering with the Moscow City Government. Inroads have been made in the area of vocational training for people with disabilities by the "Centre for Curative Pedagogics" and Vocational College No. 21 in North East Moscow. The introduction of European standards for disability in business is being undertaken by the NGO "Perspectiva", which focuses on the adaptation of business products and services, support in employment search and placement as well as lobbying for inclusive education.

MISSION:

- Initiate dialogue between European companies and Russian organizations representing the interests of people with disabilities with regard to including disability in their business model
- Present and discuss the existing options for cooperation between business and such organisations

ROUNDTABLE GOALS:

- Show best practice of employment of people with disabilities
- Discuss how products, goods and services of companies can be adapted to clients with disabilities
- Discuss how cooperation between business and specialised workshops for young people with disabilities can be established

The roundtable will also host:

- a fair of goods made by specialised workshops for people with disabilities
- a photo show "Life in Full Colour" dedicated to people with disabilities who managed to build careers, have families and are willing to share their personal stories with you
- a presentation of brochures by a representative of Regional Society of Disabled People "Perspektiva" for business entities on employment, adaptation of employees with disabilities in workplaces, provision of services to clients with disabilities.