



NEWSLETTER 01/2010

Dear members and friends of Caravan 2000,
enclosed you find the first newsletter of this year, which informs you about

- **The opening-conference of our project-series „Wake up Europe!“ which took place in Hadamar from March 17th to 21st 2010 on the topic:**
“What is the place of people with disabilities and disadvantages today in the house of Europe?”
- **The general assembly of Caravan 2000-International**
- **The project „Network Caravan 2000“**
- **The planning for 2010 and 2011**



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Magda Skiba'.

Magda Skiba
President of Caravan 2000

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Irmela von Toerne'.

Irmela von Toerne
Project-Coordinator

1. „Wake up Europe“ conference from March 17th to 21st 2010

What is the place of People with Disabilities and Disadvantages Today in the House of Europe?

The opening-conference of our project-series „10 Years Caravan 2000“ could be accomplished with great success for all the participants.

More than 30 people with and without disabilities from Greece, Turkey, Poland, Malta, Serbia, Latvia, Portugal, Ukraine, France, Israel and Germany participated actively and proficiently in the conference proceedings.



The methods „Open Space“ and „World Café“ which were used for the first time, worked out with extraordinary success and greatly facilitated the inclusion of all participants in all parts of the conference. The 10 year anniversary conference started with impressive reports of caravan´s president Magda Skiba and Arndt Kunau, representative of the organisation „People First“.



Magda Skiba made it very clear that

- ° „Each person is a human being with individuality, identity and dignity which enters him/her to receive the same respect than anybody else“
- ° „Every person has abilities and can do something together with others“
- ° „Every person in each country is eligible to draw upon the same basic rights than any other citizen of the particular country“



Arnd Kunau described his personal daily routines in his appartement where he hires an assistant to help him. Arnd´s story fascinated everyone and particularly the participants with disabilities from countries in which that kind of individualized living seems like a far-off dream. In the questions and answers section of his presentation, Arnd encouraged everyone and made suggestions for setting up very ambitious goals. He also declared very clearly, that in spite existing UN-Conventions people with disabilities in Germany are still disadvantaged concerning residential solutions , schooling, employment, medical care, communication and in other fields.

Also in the conference program was a renewed confrontation with the history of EUTHANASIA in times of national socialism and has been on the focus. Dr. Uta George speaking on behalf of the „Friends of Hadamar-Memorial“ in simple language about compulsory treatments of people with disabilities and disadvantages: Thousands of people with special needs were sterilized, poorly fed and murdered during those times in the former mental institution – which has now been turned into a memorial at Hadamar, which was been only one among more similar places in Germany.

Michael Thiele, founding father of Caravan 2000 and former long term president, described the historical development of institutions and services for people with disabilities from „total institutions“ to the individualized, community oriented services currently provided in Germany. The next days were filled with activities and the establishment of personal contacts between the conference participants - meeting of minds and exchange of ideas. In the frame of a „World Café“ the participants presented the situation of people with disabilities and disadvantages in each of their countries, serving special delicatessen, which they have brought along from home. The participants also visited the residential home of IB in Nieder-Erlenbach where the guests were informed about how people with disabilities live in residential settings in Germany. The final, international evening with the integrative rockband „Satisfactory“ got everybody on the move, because you don´t need language to dance!





The last activity of the conference was dedicated to the commemoration of the people who were murdered during the Nazi era as persons „unworthy of life“. As part of the ceremony a tree was planted as an expression of the hope that the life conditions of people with disabilities and disadvantages in all countries shall improve continuously.



Finally the participants declared in the „Note from Hadamar“:
“In agreement with the values underlying the UN-Convention and its Amendment from 1997, we believe that: **Disability is a natural part of the human experience and in no way diminishes the right of individuals** to live independently”.

The conference was funded by the European programme **“YOUTH in ACTION”**

2. General Assembly of Caravan 2000/International

The general assembly of the international Caravan 2000 federation took place in Hadamar on March 18th 2010. After president Magda Skiba´s opening welcoming address, the assembly mainly focussed on the planned, common activities on the occasion of the Caravan´s 10th anniversary: The Greek partner PAASCA and the French partner EPDEF unfortunately had to cancel their announced projects because of lack of personnel resources. It was further decided to postpone



the final conference on the topic „We Help to Build the House of Europe!“ until spring 2011, because many activities were covered already in the last year.

Irmela von Toerne reported about the current work on applying for network funding (which is mentioned in detail below). Further on Magda Skiba presented the concept of the Caravan Internationals new website, which, if the network application is approved will be set up in Gdansk/Poland. For this purpose, Magda asked the members to send her the pictures and texts that they want to include on the federation´s website.

A presentation of the history of Caravan 2000 will also be presented on the website. Ms Skiba, assisted by Ms Löytved-Hardegg, is working on this assignment already.

Michael Thiele, president of Caravan 2000 for the last 10 years summarized his presidency and was followed by Ms Skiba´s report on the activities that took place last year. After presenting the financial report and the accordant audit, the board was released on its responsibilities.

Finally we received the good message, that Joseph Borg, member of the Caravan´s board from Malta was elected to the board of the European Disability Forum (EDF).

3. The project „Network Caravan 2000“

Since May 1st the Caravan federation is getting funds from the „YOUTH in ACTION“ program for the duration of 15 months. The particular activities funded under this program include: a workshop of the international board in Gdansk/Poland and a workshop for the members in Bernau/Germany. In addition the design and maintenance of the international and the German websites will be supported as well as some promotion-material.

The aims and contents of both websites should be clarified and „Quality-Standards“ for the common project activities must be developed. A description of how the platform will be updated and a description of which agreements apply regarding network-activities for the coming years.

IB-Brandenburg, member of German Caravan is responsible for the management of the project.

The international Website of Caravan 2000

was set up in Gdansk/Poland and it can be accessed at: www.caravan2000.eu

4. Planning 2010/2011

IB-Brandenburg, member of German Caravan successfully realized an international **youth-exchange project „Youth, Future and Environment“** on the topic „Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development“. The exchange took place on IB´s premises in Neuenhagen near Berlin: Young people with disabilities and disadvantages from Poland, Lithuania, Turkey, Greece and Germany came together to explore if hunger, poverty and social exclusion could be reduced by saving and using natural resources, such as, earth, water, wind and sun and by cultivating the environment to improve people´s nutritional situation and to provide for other essential, human needs.



After undertaking some common activities on the naturally grown high-wire forest adventure course and an excursion to Berlin, the participants divided into small teams and carried out joint tasks with the help of horses: composting of different kinds of garbage, looking for food in the fields and forests and preparing healthy food from natural resources.

Additionally they made an excursion to the Botanical Public Park in Blankenfelde/Berlin and explored the forest next to Neuenhagen assisted by forest rangers, who explained the importance of the forests for a biocompatible climate. They also described sustainable forest cultivation and energy-generation from humus, wind, water and the sun.

The young participants spent their leisure time together, swimming in nearby lakes or in the Lido of Neuenhagen and sitting around the campfire, talking and singing.



The participants documented their activities in writing, painting and by taking pictures. A common environment-declaration was prepared with demands from decision makers in the fields of economics and politics. The declaration was finally given to the patroness of Caravan 2000/Brandenburg, Ms Dr. Dagmar Enkelmann, member of the German Parliament.



Maria Greb, gardening- trainee of IB Vocational Training Centre in Neuenhagen presents the environment-declaration and other outcomes of the project to Dr. Enkelmann

The project was funded by the European program „YOUTH in ACTION“

Future activities:

As announced previously the Turkish federation member TOSSFED will carry out an **international soccer-tournament** in Alanya in October 2010.

Federation member PSOUU/Poland prepared an application in the frame of the European program „LifeLongLearning(LL)/Grundtvig“, which was approved. The project „Wake up Europe! -Drumming for Social Standards in Europe“ will start in September 2010.

PSOUU/Poland and IB-Brandenburg/Germany have received a funding commitment by the **foundation „Remembrance, Responsibility and Future“**, which operates in the framework of the **„Europeans for Peace“** program. The topic of their joint project is: **„Human Rights for People with Disabilities in the Time of National Socialism and Today“**.

Supplementary funding for the project will be provided by the „German-Polish-Youth-Federation“ . The project will be administered in the time period: October 2010 - April 2011 in Bernau/Germany and in Gdansk/Poland. A preparatory-meeting already took place in May 2010.

From **October 07th to 10th 2010** the board of Caravan 2000/international will carry out a **workshop in Gdansk/Poland**. Besides the requirements pertaining to the website-presentations and promotion-material, the workshop agenda will include: updating the platform, and agreements will be worked out about mandatory quality-standards for the Caravan 2000 Federation´s upcoming actions and projects.

The final conference of the project series „**Wake up Europe!**“ - **We Help to Build the House of Europe!**“ is foreseen for February 2011 in Bernau/Germany.

Best-practice models for how people with disabilities and disadvantages can exert maximal influence on their life situation will be exchanged and feasible solutions will be presented.

People with disabilities and disadvantages as well as experts from more than 20 countries will be invited.

A three-day-**member-workshop of Caravan 2000/international** will be held in May or June 2011 in Germany: Among others, the outcomes of the board-workshop concerning platform and quality-standards will be discussed and new agreements will be reached.

Furthermore the particular network activities and projects for the coming years will be discussed and planned.

