

EESC study group – 23<sup>rd</sup> October  
Pat Rath Report to Wexford PPN

The European Economic Social Committee, EESC, sent 4 people from their Study Group on Disability Rights to Ireland on Wednesday 23 to Friday 25 October. The study group were on a fact-finding mission about the real-life challenges faced by people with disabilities living in rural Ireland. Focusing on the areas of education, employment, healthcare, housing, transport and social protection. DFI were asked to accommodate the group by setting up meetings.

Vicky Mathews from Co Donegal gave a presentation on transport and the many difficulties she faced on a daily basis. She organised a campaign to increase the number of accessible busses. This was a very successful campaign. Donal O'Shea from Laois PPN submitted a report on a consultative event they organised in May. This event was similar to the event organised by Wexford PPN, which clearly identified the barriers faced by people with disabilities face.

The general consensus among those in attendance was that we need to implement existing policy and a coordinated effort needs to take place.