



PRESS RELEASE

EHMA FOR THE VALUEABLE NETWORK

Valueable is a European network that promotes the labour-market inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in the hospitality sector



Always receptive to corporate social responsibility, EHMA (European Hotel Managers Association) has become partner of the Valueable network, a European project co-funded by the European Commission and promoted by Associazione Italiana Persone Down onlus (Italian Association of Persons with Down Syndrome) that involves a multiplicity of business and non-business actors located in six different countries (Italy, Germany, Portugal, Spain, Hungary and Turkey). The network promotes labour-market inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities through the spread of targeted placements (internships and/or employments) in the hospitality industry.

EHMA member Palmiro Noschese, Managing Director Italy Meliá Hotels International, was the first to support this initiative in Italy and [his video](#) was shown at UN in New York on March 21st, World Down Syndrome Day, on the occasion of the presentation of the project. The AIPD Italian Coordinator, Anna Contardi, presented the Valueable network at the recent EHMA General Meeting in Marbella to verify the availability and the willingness of hotels managed by EHMA members to host internships and/or to hire people with intellectual disabilities.

The Valueable Network is managed by a group of different but complementary organizations: hotels and hotel chains, industry associations, associations of people with intellectual disabilities, universities, and counts already on **more than 60 committed hotels, restaurants, and cafés** which are working with people with intellectual disabilities either through internship or employment provision. There are three different kinds of label which correspond to **different degrees of commitment** of the company: bronze, silver and gold.

In addition to the support of the training agencies which take care of the selection and preparation of the would-be workers, **the project provides various different tools: the app called “On my own...at work”** helps intellectually disabled workers to be more independent; **14 videos** constitute an effective personnel training tool and show how the relationship between trainees/employees with

intellectual disabilities and their co-workers should be managed; the “**Quality kit**” includes a handbook providing tips for supporting a non-discriminating recruitment process and a code of conduct to be followed in order to join the network and receive the certification and registered logo.

There are numerous benefits for those hospitality businesses that join the Valueable network, from reputation enhancement to compliance with the quota system (where it applies); furthermore, it is common belief that the atmosphere in the workplace becomes more pleasant, productivity/commitment increases and fluctuation decreases.

EHMA realized long time ago the **increasing importance of corporate social responsibility within the hospitality industry**. It is not a coincidence that the Association assigns every year the “**EHMA Sustainability Award by Diversey**” to the General Manager who successfully implemented or run an innovative sustainability project related to resource management and environmental issues.

EHMA in brief

EHMA was **founded in Rome in 1974** by a small group of top quality hotel properties general managers of the Italian capital. The European Hotel Managers Association aims **to improve qualification of professionals** through training in view of increasing the standards of services to be provided to guests. At present the Association gathers more than **400 members**, many of whom are **general managers** of the most prestigious hotels in **29 countries** that make a total of **300 represented hotels, 80,000 rooms, and 62,000 employees**. EHMA admission requires a **minimum of ten-year experience in the hotel sector**. Members meet once a year to discuss about shared themes such as: new technologies, trends, issues, relations, European hotel data and market research.

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