

## HUPT's Work Weekend

Despite heavy recession, Croatian Paraplegic and Tetraplegic managed to organise its annual work weekend for record number of participants. Exactly 55 participants and 32 their accompanying persons were attending a row of lecturing, workshops and presentations.

Introduction to the seminar was a lecture given by the President of the HUPT Ms. Manda Knezevic on the Movement of Independent Living and Personal Assistance.

President of the Spinal Injuries Zagreb, Mr. Janko Ehrlich-Zdvorak presented the latest conclusions about acute care and first rehabilitation from ESCIF's congress in Lobbach last May. Delegates of Croatian Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, representative of the Centre for Social Welfare in Pula, Mr. Marin Folo, Ms. Mirjana Jelaca and Ms. Vlatka Jenkac presented the current state welfare system and answered many questions.

The biggest interest during the seminar got the lecture of Dr Fin Biering-Sorensen on clinical view of the regeneration of spinal injury. People with spinal cord injury are always following with interest new researches, including experiments on stem cells and even transplantation of cells or the smell of white blood cells to the site of spinal injury. As professor Biering-Sorensen explained, so far, there are no sufficient quality and effective results; although on these studies millions of Euros were spent. Also, he warned those present, despite progresses of researches nothing yet has been successful in humans. Unfortunately, there is still only a partial spinal cord injuries can be expected some progress. Dr. Biering-Sorensen also warned that researches on supportive technology must raise quality of living to persons with spinal cord injury who are actually living their life of people with disability and not just to wait the cure which shall come one day.

Ms. Martina Staznik's workshop – Elements of leading of non-governmental organizations, has aroused interest because it is always good to repeat the basic knowledge, while the workshop How to apply to international and European projects, conducted by Ms. Milijana Kastratovic indicated that we need to learn a lot if we want to be equal citizens of the EU. Specific health problems of women with paraplegia and quadriplegia were processed at the gynaecological workshop by Dr. Alenka Sirovec who succeeds to explain in easy-to-understand language about problems that affects many women with spinal cord injury.

About their rights, as persons with disability, participants could learn during lecture Rights on orthopaedic and other aids. And at the end, workshop Persons with disabilities and media – which was very popular among the participants – was held and it included various role playing situations, games and tasks so everyone could feel how to manage to organise successful media conference and what is important for media people to hear on such event.