



2nd Meeting of the Presidents of the political Groups of the European Parliament with the European Disability Forum

Brussels, 1 December 2016

FINAL DECLARATION

We, Presidents of the political Groups of the European Parliament, meeting today with the President of the European Disability Forum, have adopted this declaration expressing the joint commitment of the political forces of the European Parliament to support the human rights of persons with disabilities in Europe, as enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and in fundamental EU principles, in the framework of our endeavour to combat discrimination, inequalities and exclusion of all kinds, be it direct or indirect.

1. The EU must adopt a comprehensive antidiscrimination legislation

The EU must adopt legislation banning discrimination, whether based on religion, belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, in all aspects of life. We stress how important it is to reach an agreement on the "Equal Treatment Directive" (COM(2008)426) as soon as possible and call upon the Council to give up on its 8-year long blocking and to adopt its position on the proposal as soon as possible.

2. The EU needs a specific, overarching and comprehensive strategy for the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

We are committed to the realization of the human rights of persons with disabilities enshrined in the UN CRPD and referred to in the recommendation addressed by the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to the EU (Concluding Observation). We firmly stand by Parliament's resolution on the implementation of the UN CRPD (2015/2258), which asked the EU to fully implement the recommendations and to ensure that all future legislation, policies and programmes comply with it. We will ensure that the European Parliament leads by example in the implementation of the specific obligations. We will ask the EPRS to carry out a comprehensive study on the current state of implementation of measures to integrate people with disabilities into society, the reduction of disadvantages of people with disabilities and where there is still room for improvement, and the place of the UN CRPD in the EU legal system.

Furthermore, we call on the Commission to:

- Initiate the process, in consultation with the European Parliament and DPOs, to propose a comprehensive Disability Rights strategy 2020-2030 for the implementation the CRPD across

all EU institutions and Member States with budget, timeframe and a monitoring mechanism, and to mainstream this strategy into the EU 2030 agenda.

- Issue a proposal for a structured dialogue' with persons with disabilities and their representative organisations, so as to ensure their meaningful participation in all EU policy and decision making processes related to the Convention, in application of CRPD article 4.3.
- Declare 2021 as the 2nd European Year of Persons with Disabilities

3. protecting persons with disabilities from the impact of the crisis is a priority

The economic crisis has had a negative impact on persons with disabilities and on their enjoyment of human rights in many EU Member States. The inclusion of persons with disabilities, their participation in society, their professional and personal development must be in the focus of legislative work and their implementation, even in times of budgetary restrictions. We call on all Member States to do everything to take account of the rights of persons with disabilities and their families in their subsidiary competences as well. Among these there are social equality, professional integration, a full access to the labour market, the reduction of disadvantages in the daily life and to reinforce specific supporting measures.

We call on the Member States to guarantee the rights of the CRPD and we call on the Commission to support their implementation within the limits of the EU treaties, and using EU cohesion funds and other European programmes and instruments.

4. The European Accessibility Act

We pledge to maintain Parliament's strong commitment to accessibility, as we did by adopting the Directive on accessibility of websites and mobile applications of public sector bodies. As we expressed in the resolution of 7 July on the CRPD, and in response to the recommendation of the CRPD Committee, we will continue to support a strong and ambitious European Accessibility Act, We call on the Council to show the same ambition for this legislation in order to make a real difference in the daily life of the 80 million Europeans with disabilities.

5. The 4th European Parliament of Persons with Disabilities in 2017

We reiterate our support to the 4th European Parliament of Persons with Disabilities (EPPD), to be co-organised by the European Parliament and EDF in 2017 and to the decision to hold an EPPD every term of office of the European Parliament. We will ensure the highest possible level of participation of the Members of our respective Groups in this key event which will bring together the diversity of the European Disability Movement and their MEPs.

On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the European Disability Form, this will stimulate the Parliament to live up to its obligation to actively and meaningfully involve persons with disabilities through their representative organisations in matters which concern them.

6. The 2019 European elections must be fully accessible to persons with disabilities

We stress that it is imperative that all citizens with disabilities are able to enjoy their right to take part in the European elections and to make an informed choice on an equal basis with others. Legal, administrative and practical barriers preventing persons with disabilities from enjoying their right to vote and to stand for election must be removed. All information and events related to the elections, whether it is issued by governments, public authorities, political forces or others, must be accessible to all persons with disabilities.

In order to show our commitment to engage with citizens with disabilities, we pledge:

- To make every effort to ensure the accessibility of our documents and information, with particular emphasis on our websites, to include easy-to-read, subtitles and sign language interpretation.
- That our Groups will organize debates on the participation of citizen with disabilities in the EU elections, and to ask our European political parties to do the same.
- To ask the European Parliament to launch an awareness-raising campaign on the right to vote of persons with disabilities and to stand for election.

7. Refugees with Disabilities


The EU should mainstream the rights of persons with disabilities systematically in its refugee and migration legal framework and policy work, in line with its commitments under the CRPD article 11. EU funding to its Member States and neighbouring countries, including Turkey, should provide support to minors and persons with disabilities, in particular women and children with disabilities.


8. Women and girls with disabilities

The EU should ensure that the rights of women and girls with disabilities are taken into account in all its legislative and policy work on gender equality, women's rights and the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, including its upcoming initiatives to address the challenges of work-life balance.

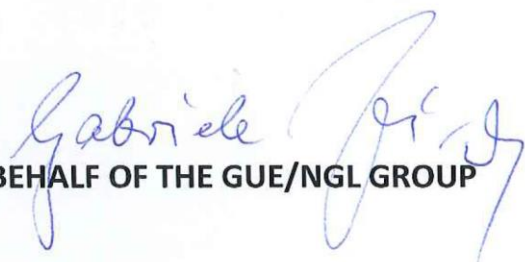
The EU should swiftly ratify the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combatting violence against women and domestic violence, including the banning of forced sterilization in European Member States.

SIGNATURES:


ON BEHALF THE EPP GROUP


ON BEHALF OF THE S&D GROUP


ON BEHALF OF THE ECR GROUP


ON BEHALF OF THE GUE/NGL GROUP


ON BEHALF OF THE GREENS/EFA GROUP

ON BEHALF OF THE EDF

