# European Disability Forum Resolution on the European Pillar of Social Rights

**October 2017**

The [European Disability Forum](http://www.edf-feph.org/)

Welcoming the European Pillar of Social Rights (Social Pillar) and the related policy and legislative initiatives as a positive step to reaffirm social rights in the EU;

Acknowledging the Social Pillar’s focus on equal opportunities and access to labor market, fair working conditions, and social protection and inclusion;

Welcoming the principles of inclusion of persons with disabilities, children and long-term care patients in order to fight against social exclusion and to promote the right to independent living;

Stressing the importance of the proposal for a directive on “Work-Life Balance for Parents and Carers” which recognizes both the perspective of carers of persons with disabilities and of parents with disabilities;

Looking forward to the initiative on access to social protection for people in self-employment and non-standard employment to include the perspective of persons with disabilities;

Regretting that the Social Pillar is conceived only for countries of the euro zone;

Recalling the EU’s obligations as a State Party to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the [Recommendations](https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G15/226/55/PDF/G1522655.pdf?OpenElement)[[1]](#footnote-2) received by the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2015;

Highlighting the need to define social security and social protection for persons with disabilities based on the human rights approach to disability in the light of the CRPD;

Considering the numerous challenges to social inclusion and access to employment faced in the EU due to migration crisis, security crisis, demographic changes;

Considering that per the EPSCO  [Joint Employment Report 2017](http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=17224&langId=en)[[2]](#footnote-3) following current demographic trends the number of persons with disabilities will increase from 80 million to 120 million by 2020 in the EU;

Recalling the high activity and employment gaps for people with disabilities in the EU according to EU-SILC 2014.

In 2014, in the age group 20-64 the activity gap between people with and without disabilities in the EU amounted to 21.1 percentage points (60.6% versus 81.7%), and the employment gap to 23.8 percentage points (48.7% versus 72.5%). In particular, in Lithuania, Ireland and Malta the employment gap was close to 40 percentage points and in 12 countries higher than 30 percentage points. The employment rate of persons with disabilities based on the EU-SILC 2014 data is below 30% in Greece, Ireland, Malta and Croatia. Persons with disabilities usually exit the labour market earlier, having a very low employment rate at the age of 55-64 years, 34.5%.[[3]](#footnote-4)

Considering the in 2013, about 30 % of the population aged 16 or more in the [EU-28](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary%3AEU-28) and having an activity limitation was at risk of poverty or social exclusion, compared with 22% of those with no limitation. Similar results were obtained for the [at-risk-of-poverty rate](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary%3AAt-risk-of-poverty_rate) (19 % vs. 15 %), [severe material deprivation rate](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Glossary%3ASevere_material_deprivation_rate)(13% vs. 8%) and the share of individuals aged less than 60 and living in households with very low work intensity (24% vs. 8%). The latter result reflects a more difficult access to the labour market for people with activity limitation.[[4]](#footnote-5)

Highlighting the need to include the European Pillar of Social Rights in the broader debate on the [social dimension of the](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/publications/reflection-paper-social-dimension-europe_en) EU[[5]](#footnote-6) and [on the future of EU finances](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/publications/reflection-paper-future-eu-finances_en)[[6]](#footnote-7);

Recalling the [response[[7]](#footnote-8)](https://deinstitutionalisation.com/2017/09/07/eeg-response-to-the-reflection-paper-on-the-future-of-eu-finances/) of the European Expert Group on transition from institutions to community based care to debate on the future of EU Finances asking for investment in innovative, person-centered family- and community-based support, health and housing services;

Acknowledging the relevance of the European Pillar of Social Rights in the global effort to fulfil the [EU commitments](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/sustainable-development-goals/eu-approach-sustainable-development_en)[[8]](#footnote-9) to be a frontrunner in implementing the [Sustainable Development Goals](http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/)[[9]](#footnote-10);

## Calls upon EU Heads of State and Governments to:

Proclaim the Social Pillar at the social summit in Gothenburg on 17 November committing to implement it at national level by means of concrete political, financial and legislative initiatives;

Support the implementation of the Social Pillar allocating adequate financial resources including the European Social and Investment Funds and the future EU budget;

Define the added value of EU actions based on the CRPD, the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and the EU Treaties prioritizing the EU values of solidarity and integration;

Ensure structured involvement of persons with disabilities and their representative organisations in the planning, implementation and monitoring of the Social Pillar and its related initiatives;

Take legislative and political measures to implement the principle of social inclusion of people with disabilities providing adequate income support that ensures living in dignity, support services that enable them to participate in the labor market and in society, and a work environment adapted to their needs.

Include the Social Pillar in the overarching EU and national strategies to implement the CRPD;

Implement all the principles of the Social Pillar including the specific perspective of persons with disabilities;

Take initiatives to reduce the employment gap between persons with and without disabilities with a focus to women and young persons with disabilities, including specific allocation of EU Structural and Investment Funds;

Increase social investment in education and training, employment services as well as social protection for persons with disabilities to protect those who cannot work from the risk of poverty and the to guarantee adequate standards of living.

Include disability specific indicators in the Social Scoreboard and other statistical tools used to monitor the implementation of the Social Pillar and other EU employment and social policies.

Adopt the directive on “Work-Life Balance for Parents and Carers” broadening the scope of the directive to all families, all types of workers, including home workers and introducing a specific provision on women and children with disabilities in accordance with Art. 6 and 7 of the CRPD;

Ensure access for persons with disabilities to adequate wages and income on an equal basis with others;

Establish a social protection floor that fully respects the right of persons with disabilities to an adequate standard of living and to social protection;

Take specific initiatives under the Social Pillar to work towards the fulfilment of the commitment to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development by 2030.

1. https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G15/226/55/PDF/G1522655.pdf?OpenElement [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=17224&langId=en [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=17224&langId=en [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. EU SILC http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Disability\_statistics\_-\_poverty\_and\_income\_inequalities [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. https://ec.europa.eu/commission/publications/reflection-paper-social-dimension-europe\_en [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. https://ec.europa.eu/commission/publications/reflection-paper-future-eu-finances\_en [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. https://deinstitutionalisation.com/2017/09/07/eeg-response-to-the-reflection-paper-on-the-future-of-eu-finances/ [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/sustainable-development-goals/eu-approach-sustainable-development\_en [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/ [↑](#footnote-ref-10)