

## Resolution on Employment of Persons with Disabilities

**Adopted by the EDF board on 19 February 2017 in Malta**

Recalling that there are 80 million persons with disabilities in the European Union (EU) and persons with disabilities have higher unemployment rates compared to persons without disabilities. Women with disabilities, persons with disabilities requiring more intensive support, deaf people, people with intellectual disabilities, psychosocial and multiple disabilities face even higher level of discrimination and exclusion;

Recalling that the EU and all EU Member States except Ireland have ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD), and that the remaining EU Member State, Ireland, is working on the process of ratification;

Highlighting that Article 27 of the CRPD recognizes the right of persons with disabilities to work on an equal basis with others, and acknowledging the strong interconnection between this article and other articles of the CRPD, including the rights to independent living, the right to education, the right to adequate standard of living and social protection;

Recalling that all EU Member States are parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and in accordance with established international standards;

Considering the findings and recommendations of the thematic study on the work and employment of persons with disabilities, a report issued by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in December 2012 (A/HRC/22/25) urging to move away from sheltered employment schemes and to promote equal access for persons with disabilities in the open labour market;

Underlining that freedom of movement is one of the four basic freedoms under the EU Treaties and that persons with disabilities can currently not exercise this right fully and freely due to several reasons, including the limited scope of the EU Regulation 492/2011 of 5 April 2011 on freedom of movement for workers;

Recalling that the EU and all EU Member States have the obligation to implement and monitor the Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation (Equal Employment Directive);



Taking into account that the EU and all its Members States made the commitment to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);

Considering that unemployment, poverty, exclusion, discrimination based on disability and inequalities remain at unacceptable levels and have grown across Europe and the EU;

Considering that women with disabilities face a significantly high unemployment and labour market inactivity rates;

Underlining that most of the products and services in the EU internal market are not accessible to persons with disabilities;

Highlighting that persons with disabilities and their representative organisations are not fully involved in decision making on matters that concern them;

Therefore, the European Disability Forum (EDF):

- Calls on the European Commission to take effective action to collect adequate data on the employment of persons with disabilities and to increase their employment rate in an open, inclusive and accessible labour market, including by providing training for Member States on reasonable accommodation and accessibility in the context of employment;
- Calls for the EU and all its Member States to take effective action to implement and monitor the SDGs, including the goal to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for persons with disabilities;
- Calls for the EU and all its Member States to develop both mainstream and positive actions targeting women with disabilities to promote training, job placements, access to employment, job retention, equal pay for equal work, adaptations in the work place and work-life balance;
- Calls for the EU and its Member States to take affective action to phase out sheltered workshops and comparable employment settings through immediate enforceable exit



strategies and timelines and to promote equal access for persons with disabilities, particularly for persons with intellectual, psychosocial and multiple disabilities, in an open, inclusive and accessible labour market as described in Article 27 of the CRPD;

- Calls on the European Parliament and the Council to adopt a strong and ambitious European Accessibility Act with a broad scope, including Audiovisual Media Services, Information and Communications Technology (ICT), e-books, transport, and the built environment where products and services are provided, in order to ensure that persons with disabilities are not discriminate in work and employment;
- Calls on the European Commission to revise the Regulation 492/2011 on freedom of movement for workers to fully include and reflect the variety of employment opportunities and the specificities of workers with disabilities including access to and portability of services;
- Calls on the European Commission to ensure the European Structural and Investment Funds are adequately used and monitored to promote the employment of persons with disabilities and that the post-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework will adequately and meaningfully include and reflect the rights of persons with disabilities;
- Calls on the EU and its Members States to create a minimum protection scheme for persons with disabilities and promote social security schemes that, together with activation measures, will lift persons with disabilities out of poverty and the risk of it;
- Calls on the EU and its Member States to ensure that activation measures to the employment of persons with disabilities do not contain dispositions reducing or nullifying legislation related to the employment of persons with disabilities;
- Calls on the EU and its Member States to adopt dispositions that would allow family members of children with disabilities to assume all together their role as parents and their professional investment;
- Calls on the European Commission to support its Members States in developing inclusive education systems and promote participation of persons with disabilities in EU exchange programme;



- Calls on the European Commission to ensure a meaningful structured dialogue and consultation with organisations of persons with disabilities in all legislative and policy initiatives to fight against poverty and social exclusion including raising awareness about the highest risk of poverty of persons in need of high level support and their family;
- Asks its secretariat to forward this resolution to the Council of the EU, the European Commission, and the European Parliament.