

NGO-State dialogue

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Thank you for

- visiting Belgium
- paying attention to the representation of PwD's in Belgium
- your curiosity about BDF experience in implementing UN CRPD

Plan

- What do you have to know about Belgian federalism?
- Who's who: Belgian Disability Forum asbl (BDF) ?
- Implementing UNCPRPD: one federative project
- Focus on 5 topics

Institutional structure of Belgium



Institutional structure of Belgium

- One constitutional monarchy
- Based on :
 - 1 federal state
 - 3 regions
 - 3 communities
 - 10 provinces
 - 589 municipalities
- Key elements:
 - No hierarchy between the levels
 - Spread competencies

Federal structure

	Level	Executive	Legislative	Name	Population
1	Federal state	Government	Senate + Chamber of representatives	Belgium	11.000.000
3	Regions	Government	Regional Parliaments	Flemish Region	6.000.000
				Walloon Region	3.500.000
				Region Bxl-Capital	1.200.000
3	Communities	Government	Parliaments of communities	Flemish Community	-
				French Community	-
				German Community	-

Spreading of competencies

- **Federal:**

- General matters:

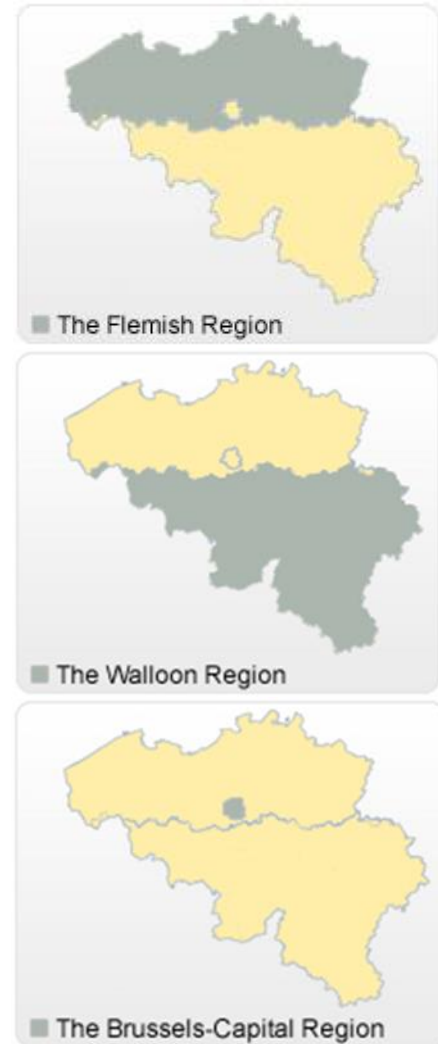
- Justice
 - Social security (employment, pensions, health care, family benefits, benefits for PwD ...)
 - Finances
 - Foreign Affairs
 - Federal police
 - Defence
 - Public enterprises (Rail company, Post...)

- Government

- Prime Minister + Ministers et State secretaries
 - Vote = proportional → Several parties → Negotiations → Compromise

Spreading the competencies

- Regions :
 - Territory based competencies
 - economy
 - employment
 - agriculture
 - water policy
 - public works
 - energy
 - transportation (except rail)
 - environment, nature preservation
 - housing, town and country planning
 - international relations related to these competencies
 - Government :
 - Minister-President + Ministers
 - Specific administration to support PwD
 - www.aviq.be
 - www.vaph.be
 - www.phare-irisnet.be



Spreading of competencies

- Communities

- Competencies based on the concept of individual
 - Language
 - Culture (theatres, libraries, audio-visual, media...)
 - Education
 - Matters related to the individual:
 - health policy (prevention)
 - assistance to individuals : protection of youth, social welfare, aid to families, immigrant assistance services, etc.
 - Scientific research
 - International relations related to these powers
- Specific German speaking administration to support PwD
 - www.dpb.be



Representation of PwD's in Federal Belgium

Advisory councils of PwD

- Federal
 - Conseil Supérieur National des Personnes Handicapées (CSNPH)
Nationale Hoge Raad voor Personen met een Handicap (NHRPH)
- Regions
 - Advisory councils (non mandatory)
 - Commission Wallonne des Personnes Handicapées (CWPH)
 - Conseil Bruxellois Francophone de la Personne Handicapée (CBFPH) + Section handicap du conseil de la Cocom
- Communities
 - Advisory councils (non mandatory)
 - To be created
- EU matters
 - Belgian Disability Forum (BDF)

Belgian Disability Forum asbl/vzw (BDF)

General context

EU construction

- Most important project during 20th century
 - Could become the most important project in 21st century ... if « social »
 - Growing influence on
 - Belgian political life
 - The situation PwD's
- = General context of creation of the BDF



Representation of PwD's (EU level)

- EU: wants one interlocutor
 - One & only
 - Federative
 - ➔ European Disability Forum (EDF)
- EDF : wants one interlocutor in each Member State
 - Independent
 - Representative
 - ➔ Belgian Disability Forum asbl (BDF): 2001



Belgian Disability Forum (BDF)

- Forum of associations of PwD's
 - Members = 17 organisations
 - ≠ individuals
 - ≠ "Front line"
 - = meeting point, dialogue, decision making
- Role = Follow-up
 - EU legislation
 - Supra national policies
- NGO : Association Sans But Lucratif (asbl)
 - General Assembly = all powers
 - Board = implementation

BDF : 3 characteristics

- Independent
 - asbl
 - Member's fee
- Representative
 - Number of member organisations:
 - 10 in 2001
 - 17 in 2017
 - Total = 250.000 persons
 - Covers ≠ situations of disability
- Open
 - Other organisations could join
 - Recognised organisation representing PwD
 - Activities covering one regional level or 2 provinces
 - Pay their fee...



BDF = the voice of Belgium in the EDF

BDF represents Belgium in European Disability Forum

- EDF is based on 2 main groups of organisations:
 - National councils: one for each Member State
 - NGO's (Blind Union, Inclusion Europe...)
- BDF is active as Belgian National Council:
 - In General assembly
 - Pierre Gyselinck, president of BDF
 - 1 member of the board of the BDF: roll turn
 - Preparation of the positions of the BDF within BDF board
 - In EDF board:
 - Gisèle Marlière, General secretary of the BDF
 - Preparation of the positions of the BDF within BDF board



BDF = EDF's voice in Belgium

- Full implementation of UNCRPD
 - At each level of the Federal Belgium
 - Paying due attention to
 - the interests of PwD's
 - UN CRPD principles
- ➔ Platform of the advice councils PwD's :
 - = coordination
 - = transfer of information / expertise

Main objectives of the BDF

- Information & sensitisation
 - Member organisations of the BDF
 - Public: PwD & general public
- Mainstreaming of disability
 - Any matters: legal capacity, accessibility, mobility, employment, health...
 - Any Belgian level and supra national levels
- UN CRPD implementation
- Participation of PwD's in all decision process



BDF – Member Organisations

ALTéO asbl (Mouvement social de personnes malades, valides et handicapés)

Association de parents et de professionnels autour de la personne polyhandicapée, asbl (AP3)

Association socialiste de la personne handicapée, asbl (ASPH)

Brailleliga vzw – Ligue Braille asbl

Les Briques du GAMP

Federatie van Vlaamse Doven en Slechthorende, vzw (FEVLADO)

Fédération francophone des sourds de Belgique, asbl (FFSB)

Groupe d'Action pour une Meilleure Accessibilité pour les Personnes Handicapées (GAMAH)

Katholieke Vereniging Gehandicaptten, vzw (KVG)

Landsbond der Christelijke Mutualiteiten (LCM)

Le Silex asbl

Nationaal Verbond van Socialistische mutualiteiten (NVSM)

Nationale Belgische Multiple Sclerose Liga vzw

Nationale Vereniging voor Hulp aan Verstandelijk gehandicaptten, vzw (NVHVG)

Vereniging Personen met een Handicap vzw (VFG)

Vereniging van Hemofilielijders en von Willebrand-Zieken, vzw (AHVH)

"Kleines Forum" - Dienststelle für Personen mit Behinderung

Implementing the UN CRPD: One federative project

Belgium & UNCRPD

- Ratification : 01/08/2009
- First periodic report: 01/08/2011
 - what is done at legal level
 - in order to implement
- Civil society : alternative report
- 07/04/2011 : BDF started a redaction proces
 - Reality of life of PwD's

Extended partnership

- 18 member organisations
 - 250 000 PH
 - Various disability situations
- 4 advisory councils
 - Federal : CSNPH
 - Regional : CWPH, CBFPH, Section handicap-CoCom + Kleines Forum
- Objectives:
 - Increase representativity & capacity
 - Federate

Process

- Participative
- Fact-finding oriented
- Step by step validation
 - by the Follow-up Committee
 - 30 meetings / 27 months

Result

- Alternative report = 271 pages
- Detailed presentation
- 21 general recommendations
- Presented to the UNCRPD Committee in April 2014
 - Training by EDF & IDA!
- Elements for the list of issues from the Committee on the rights of PwD



Ensemble déposons nos recommandations pour que la Belgique respecte la Convention des Nations Unies concernant les personnes handicapées.



A lobbying tool

- With governments
- With political parties
- With Parliaments
- With Ombudsmen
- With future member organisations

Constructive Dialog

- October 2014, Geneva
- The Committee met the Belgian delegation
- BDF was present
 - Meeting with the Rapporteur
 - Short introduction by Belgian NGO's : 3 min
 - Put the pressure

Committee's Concluding observations (1)

- A set of useful recommendations
- “With a taste of BDF”
 - Harmonizing the national legislation
 - Advise councils + funding
 - Effective antidiscrimination measures
 - Children wD : consultation on decisions
 - Women with disability
 - Sensitization to CRPD
 - Planning the accessibility policies

Committee's Concluding observations (2)

- Recommendations "With a taste of BDF"
 - Access to justice
 - Deinstitutionalization planning
 - Support to families with disability
 - Inclusive education
 - Right to work + protection > < discriminations
 - Ratification of Marrakech treaty
 - Data collection
 - International cooperation : SDGs !!!
 - Human rights body

Mid-term evaluation

- 2017 = half way to the 2nd report
- Time to put pressure on governments
 - July 2016
 - Letter to 54 ministers & state secretaries
 - Reminding the recommendation applying to their competencies
 - Asking about their actions
 - October 2016
 - 9 answers !

Mid-term evaluation

- January 2017 : second call
 - 3 more answers ☹️
 - 1 meeting
- Work in process
 - On content of the answers
 - Work on the gaps
 - ➔ 29/06/2017 : BDF Working Party
 - Make-up conclusions
 - Prepare public expression (interviews, Press release)
- Yes, we did !

Side effect : Platform of Advice councils

Working together

- Is the key to success in drawing an alternative report
- 2011 informal platform of the advice councils every 3 months
 - Exchange information's / good practices
 - Identify priorities of action
 - Define common positions
 - Coordination

5 focus

Focus 1 : Social security, standard of living, fight >< poverty (1)

- Social security in Belgium
 - Based on the working status :
 - Employee / Self-employee / State worker
 - Branches
 - Pension
 - Unemployment
 - Invalidity benefits
 - Family benefits
 - Sickness benefits
 - Accidents at work
 - Paid holiday

Focus 1 : Social security, standard of living, fight >< poverty (2)

- Persons with disabilities (PwD) who don't work
 - Benefits :
 - Replacement of revenue
 - Integration
 - Large number of PwD have low incomes
 - At risk of poverty
- National Reform Program
 - 2020 : 360 000 persons out of poverty ...

Focus 2 : Independent living

- Institutions > independent living
- Institutions
 - Quality standards = generally OK
 - But privacy, emotional life, love...
- Independent living
 - Flanders : waiting list
 - Walloon Region : pilot project
 - Brussels Region : pilot project
- Rec.33+35

Focus 3 : Health

- Access to medical offer
 - Territorial distribution to be improved
 - Universal access
 - Need for specific “welcome”
- Disability announcement
 - Still medical mainly (only)
 - Not enough multidisciplinary teams
 - Lack of information / support to the parents
- Health in prison = big problem
 - Rec.26-28-29

Focus 4 : Employment & education

- Employment : Rec.39
 - General work market
 - Adapted work (+/- sheltered) : minimum gross salary
- Education : Rec.37
 - General education becoming more inclusive
 - Special education
- The right to choose = choice !
 - Inclusive >< special = wrong approach
 - General >< sheltered = wrong approach
- Need of coaching, support, accompaniment

Focus 5 : Accessibility

- Did you enjoy correct accessibility ?
 - Some things are done...
 - Not enough...
 - Not systematical
 - Lack continuity
 - **Lack of planning**
- Rec. 22

Do you have...

- Some more question ???