

From: Andre Felix

Sent: Friday, 25 August 2023 15:35

To: 'Olivier.Magritte@minsoc.fed.be' <Olivier.Magritte@minsoc.fed.be>

Cc: Bart.Verdict@braille.be; Catherine Naughton <catherine.naughton@edf-feph.org>; 'Gisele.Marliere@solidaris.be' <Gisele.Marliere@solidaris.be>

Subject: Invitation to EU Disability Cardholder - New European Disability Card: European Disability Forum's Press event and museum visit

Dear Olivier, I hope you are well. As you may know, the European Commission is presenting the proposal for the European Disability Card on 6 September. On the same day, at 14h30, we are organising a media event with the Musical Instruments Museum in Brussels. It will include a press conference (with the museum and Commissioner Dalli) and a photographed visit to the museum by European Disability Card holders.

Unfortunately, space is extremely limited – we only have room for 30 people, and most of them will be journalists and museum representatives.

This is why we would like to invite a **representative of the Belgian Disability Forum that uses the European Disability Card** to attend the event, the cocktail, and also be part of the museum visit.

I hope someone can attend – I would just need their name and contact number until the end of next week.

I am attaching the invitation – also below. Please note that due to space constraints, we can only provide English/French interpretation (not Flemish).

New European Disability Card: European Disability Forum's Press event and museum visit

Joint event – European Disability Forum and Royal Museums of Art and History

Time: 6 September 2023, 14:30 to 17h:00

Place: Foyer of the Concert Hall of the [Musical Instruments Museum](#), Rue Montagne de la Cour 2 - 1000 Bruxelles

Interpretation into International Sign and English/French will be provided

The European Disability Forum is pleased to invite you to its press event on the new European Disability Card. The proposal will be announced by the Commission on 6 September. Our event aims to provide timely feedback with expectations of persons with disabilities and cultural settings that will use the Card. Our event will start with a short press conference including reactions by the President of the European Disability Forum, the European Commissioner for Equality Helena Dalli and a representative of the Museum. This cultural institution already accepts the Card and grants free tickets to the Cardholder and accompanying person. The press conference will be followed by a cocktail and by a short visit to the museum with holders of the Disability Card to highlight its advantages.

Agenda

1. **14:30:** Arrival
2. **14:40 to 15:55:** Press conference
 1. **Helena Dalli**, European Commissioner for Equality – Presentation of the proposal
 2. **Yannis Vardakastanis**, President of the European Disability Forum – reaction to the proposal and expectations of the Disability community;
 3. **Anne-Sophie Van Haeperen**, Royal Museums of Art and History – current efforts and accessibility of culture
 4. Questions
3. **14:55 to 15:00:** photo opportunity
4. **15:00 to 15:30:** cocktail reception
5. **15:30 to 16:30:** Visit of Cardholders and disability activists to the museum to showcase accessibility efforts and use of the Card

RSVP

If you wish to attend, please reply to andre.felix@edf-feeph.org with your name and organization until **1 September 2023, 14:00**

Background

The European Commission will announce a proposal for legislation to expand the EU Disability Card, currently a pilot project in 8 countries that allows for recognition of disability for access to culture, sports, leisure activities, and transport.

The Card is a longstanding demand of the European Disability movement, which wants to see it expanded to all EU countries. We also want the Card to support freedom of movement and equal access beyond the current areas.

The European Disability Forum outlined the “ideal card” in [a position paper from 2022](#):

1. Based on binding legislation, specifically a Regulation.
2. Mandatory inclusion of transport services and support (free or reduced fare, possibility to request assistance, free or reduced fare for accompanying persons).
3. EU-level website available in all EU languages that reunites all practical details for every country (where to get the Card, format, database of benefits and places that accept it).
4. Fully accessible Card with a “Credit Card” format.
5. Separate from the EU Parking Card.
6. Include all areas of services and support already provided for national citizens beyond culture, leisure and sport – such as commercial benefits, education, or employment:
 1. **Commercial benefits:** non-nationals should have the same access as nationals to discounts on assistive devices or affordable communications plans, for example.
 2. **Education:** Equal recognition of benefits for persons using EU Mobility programmes (such as ERASMUS+). This means universities should

provide the same level of support to exchange students with disabilities, for example.

3. **Employment:** facilitate the transition when moving to another EU Member State for work. This means that persons with disabilities should have temporary access to disability allowances in the Member State while undergoing a “re-assessment” process.

The same paper outlines 4 essential considerations to make the Card a success:

7. **Funding:** The EU should set up dedicated funding to set up the Card, the website and to guarantee continuing operational needs (printing, staff, administration)
8. A wide, accessible **awareness-raising campaign** in all EU countries to inform about the Card. The campaign must reach users (so they can get the Card), service providers (so they can know about it and accept it), and the general public.
9. Close collaboration with persons with disabilities, and especially their representative organisations – at all levels. in all their diversity.

[Read more on our dedicated campaign page](#)

Kind Regards,

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André Félix (he/him)

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Part time - Working hours (CEST)

09:00-16:00

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