



## **EDF feedback on the roadmap on Modernising judicial cooperation – use of digitalisation**

The European Disability Forum, umbrella organisation defending the rights of over 100 million persons with disabilities in the EU, welcomes the initiatives of the European Commission to improve access and efficiency of the justice system. Modernising judicial cooperation between EU countries to improve access to justice in cross-border cases, through the use of digital technology, can be very beneficial to persons with disabilities.

Persons with disabilities currently face multiple barriers in the justice system (including digital barriers) that hinders their access to justice in cross-border cases. They are also affected by the digital gap.

The [United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(UN CRPD\)](#) ratified by the EU and all its Member States, requires all States Parties to ensure full accessibility of the justice system of persons with disabilities (articles 9 and 13 CRPD).

### **EDF's recommendations**

EDF recommends that the European Commission includes the following points in its initiative:

- Recognise **accessibility as a core principle** of the modernisation of the judicial cooperation between EU countries and ensure **accessibility is a requirement** in all related EU initiatives
  - Ensure that proposed EU legal or policy measures are consistent with existing Union policies on accessibility, in particular with [Directive \(EU\) 2016/2102 on the Accessibility of the Websites and Mobile Applications of Public Sector bodies](#)
  - Ensure that public courts and other public judicial bodies demonstrate at least a level of accessibility equivalent to that set by [European standard EN 301 549 V3.1.1](#) in the procurement of the different ICT products and services.
  - Ensure that public courts and other public judicial bodies provide and regularly update a detailed, comprehensive and clear accessibility statement on the compliance of their websites and mobile applications with Directive (EU) 2016/2012
  - Ensure the application of the above three requirements to judicial bodies at local, regional, national and European-level, as well as extend them to institutions dealing with alternative dispute resolution, including in relation to all cross-border cases
- Provide **accessible alternatives to digital services and formats**, and reasonable **accommodations** based on the individual preferences and needs of the person with

disabilities when necessary (whether participants or workers in the justice system, in all cross-borders cases). For a blind person for instance, that would mean that they could receive information in Braille, even if an accessible PDF is available- in case they do not have access to a computer or a smart phone.

- Invest in **increasing the digital skills of persons with disabilities in the EU**, including employees of the justice system with disabilities, and of older persons with disabilities, with specific actions related to increasing their knowledge of digital accessibility features and how to make use of them
- **Increase the competences of ICT professionals in accessibility** for persons with disabilities and invest in training future professionals to become specialised technical support and accessibility for persons with disabilities
- Ensure that persons with disabilities and their representative organisations at European, national and local levels, are **involved in meaningful consultation** when guiding the implementation of the points listed above