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# EDF Strategic Framework 2017-2021

Adopted by EDF Annual General Assembly 2017

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## **Description of EDF and the consultation process**

The European Disability Forum (EDF) is an independent Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) that defends the rights of 80 million persons with disabilities in Europe. EDF is a unique platform which brings together organisations of persons with disabilities from across Europe. EDF is run by persons with disabilities and their families. It is a strong voice of and for persons with disabilities in Europe.

The purpose of this strategic framework is to define the EDF agenda for the period of 2017 to 2021.

The two main objectives which the strategy should achieve are, together with our members:

- To define our priorities and how we will work as a network to create political, social and economic changes which have a positive impact on the lives and the enjoyment of human rights of persons with disabilities
- To communicate to the general public, partners and potential supporters about the reasons we exist, and what we do

This strategy has been developed with the full involvement of EDF membership, led by the EDF Executive Committee and Board of Directors. Initially, priorities and challenges were derived from an EDF membership survey conducted by an external evaluator in September and October 2016. Key informant interviews were conducted throughout the consultation period to draw on the expertise of our partners, including external evaluators and EDF donors. A preliminary document was presented to the EDF Board in November 2016, following which; a full draft was circulated for input to the entire EDF membership, key committees and expert groups. The membership feedback was analysed by the EDF Executive Committee in January 2017, and a revised draft was discussed at the February 2017 Board meeting. Following discussion with the Board and a range of partners and stakeholders, this Strategic Framework is presented to the AGA for adoption. After the AGA in May 2017 the newly elected Board of EDF will take forward this strategic framework, adapting and updating it as a basis for our work in the coming four years.



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## **The Context of this Strategy**

The world is in a period of rapid and unpredictable change. EDF was established 20 years ago, at a time of very positive movement towards a stronger and more integrated Europe. The European Union (EU) experienced expansion and ambitious integration projects during this time. Ever since 2008, with the onset of the economic crisis, the European project has been under increasing pressure. The crisis stimulated a pattern of continuously escalating austerity, driven by both the EU and national governments. As a result, Europe has been shaken in terms of its economic and social integration.

A series of shocking terrorist attacks in Europe in 2015 and 2016 changed the security context and put this issue on the top of the political agenda. The huge influx of refugees, mainly fleeing from an escalating war in Syria, but also including refugees from Asia and Africa, has challenged freedom of movement and led to the closing of some EU internal borders. Finally the UK referendum on leaving the EU in 2016 demonstrated that ordinary people in the UK, no longer believed it was worthwhile to be part of the EU. Now, protracted discussions on Brexit are set to distract European decision makers from building a strong social Europe and realizing human rights for all people in the EU.

During the last 10 years however, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) has been almost universally ratified in the EU and the European region. This has created an impetus for improving the legal framework of protecting, promoting and monitoring the rights of persons with disabilities. Regardless of the increasing negative effects of austerity, every government, and the EU itself have been forced to address the rights of persons with disabilities.

Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) in Europe have mobilised around the CRPD review by the UN expert committee process when their country comes up for review. The CRPD is a strong tool with which the Disability Movement continues to be used to promote change for persons with disabilities.

However, unless it is translated into comprehensive inclusive disability laws, policies, programmes and financing, with CRPD compliant structures in place to implement and monitor application, the CRPD will not reach its full potential. The CRPD has only been in existence for ten years, and while the level of ratifications in Europe and globally is high, serious human rights violations continue to affect the everyday lives of men, women and children with disabilities. Governments continue to adopt policies and sustain systems which are in conflict with the CRPD and there has been no increase in structural financial support to the disability movement in Europe - EDF members in many cases are under pressure just to survive. Similarly, the Council of Europe does not provide structural financial support to DPOs, nor does it give a specific role to DPOs in its work on disability. High rates of poverty and unemployment of persons with disabilities persist, with women with disabilities more affected than men.

At the policy level, a human rights-based approach to disability is still missing. The EU itself took a backward step in 2014 when it moved the CRPD focal point from Directorate General Justice (DG



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Justice) to Directorate General Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion (DG Employment), and most governments in Europe also continue consigning the focal point for the CRPD to their ministries of social affairs or employment. This shows a lack of understanding of the CRPD as a human rights instrument, and as a result of this side-lining, actions required to implement the CRPD across all sectors are therefore rare or even impossible.

Even within spheres of society which specifically focus on social justice issues, the rights of persons with disabilities tend to be marginalised. Persons with disabilities are not sufficiently included in other human rights fields such as women's rights, children's or youth rights, and adequate attention to persons with disabilities is not given in some of the most pressing human rights issues, such as the refugee crisis. Inclusive, diverse, accessible environments, in politics, schools, workplaces and in culture are still the exception rather than the norm. Increasingly, persons with disabilities are simply thrust into the larger category of "vulnerable groups" with no specific actions identified to remove barriers, provide support or give attention to their rights.

In addition to living in a time of austerity and instability which threatens to slow or reverse the progress that has been made promoting the rights of persons with disabilities, we are also living in a time of unprecedented acceleration of technological developments. These developments are likely to have a huge impact on persons with disabilities, and yet the Universal Design/Design for all approach is not fully mainstreamed in these technological breakthroughs. Smart cities, e-government, the internet of things, e-health, e-payments, virtual and augmented reality, self-driving vehicles, wearables, biometrics and artificial intelligence are all examples of technology which present both major opportunities, as well as threats, to increasing the independent living of persons with disabilities, since they will affect all aspects of life including employment, education, transport and home life.

Furthermore, the social and human rights situation in Europe is under threat. In a time when societal inequalities are growing, it is imperative to recognise that the rights of persons with disabilities (which tend to be overlooked even during periods of social progress) are especially at risk. Although progress has been made, the reality remains that at the present moment, institutionalisation, social exclusion and discrimination of persons with disabilities persist across Europe. In spite of the fact that EDF is operating in what will no doubt be an extremely challenging political, economic and social context, we nevertheless remain optimistic that the millions of people and hundreds of groups and institutions who believe in the power of the EU, and in building a Europe which protects the rights and equality of all, will prevail over those who would wish to see a return to isolationism and a decline in social protection. The European Union is a precious source of European collaboration, which gives us an opportunity to join forces as a European movement. Through this strategy, EDF hopes to reenergise our work, and contribute strongly to a social Europe.



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## **Vision and mission of EDF**

EDF's vision is that persons with disabilities in Europe are fully included in society on an equal basis with others and that our human rights, as outlined in the CRPD, are fully respected, protected and fulfilled. The principles of the CRPD are central to this vision, and they inform our advocacy objectives and our way of working.

The mission of EDF is to ensure persons with disabilities' full **inclusion in society** and **access to our human rights** through our active involvement in policy development, implementation and monitoring of the CRPD in Europe.

EDF is committed to a strong and inclusive European Union, where the right to live, travel, work, study, vote or be elected is guaranteed to all citizens in the Union, and where women, men and children with disabilities enjoy these rights on an equal basis with others. EDF believes that the EU is a means to promote the rights and well being of all people in every Member State, as well as refugees and migrants arriving on our shores. A diverse, equality-driven European Union which enables the full social and political participation of its entire population, actively removing the barriers faced by marginalised and discriminated people of all ages, will be a thriving and stable society.

EDF is convinced that the EU can also play a key role in promoting human rights in the European region and globally.

EDF is also convinced that acting collectively, EDF, and its members and partners can fight together for a strong social and human rights-based Europe, where democratic, active civil participation is continuously practiced and improved. The European Union institutions themselves, and the European Disability Forum, should embody the human rights principles of participation, non-discrimination and ownership in the way that they work.

EDF is committed to practising diversity and ensuring within its own work that no one is left behind. All persons with disabilities should be free to make their own choices and to have the same possibilities and chances in their life as other people.

In particular, EDF is committed to ensuring that the voices of the most marginalised persons with disabilities are heard and are central to our work; women and children with disabilities, persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities, persons with disabilities requiring more intensive support and refugees with disabilities. The role of youth with disabilities in EDF will be promoted to ensure we influence EU youth policy, but also to nurture the future of the disability movement, and to do so, EDF will implement strategies and activities to empower, build capacity and strengthen leadership skills at all levels.



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Last but not least, EDF is also committed to strengthening its collaboration with all relevant industry players, in order to promote Universal Design. This collaboration seeks to promote accessibility, and avoid the creation of new barriers for persons with disabilities. The result will be more products and services that are accessible and which support independent living of persons with disabilities.

### **Outlook 2017-2021**

Before outlining the strategic objectives of EDF's work during the four year period, it is important to look at the European and international context and events which will take place during this time.

There will be some important landmarks during this period:

- The European Parliament elections will take place in 2019, and this will also be followed by the establishment of a new European Commission
- The final stages of implementation of the current European Disability Strategy (2010-2020) take place and make way for a new Disability Strategy to be launched in 2021
- The next report of the EU to the CRPD committee in 2021 (and many European country reviews in the meantime), and the implementation of the 2015 recommendations from the CRPD Committee to the EU
- The next EU programming period (long term budget) will be launched: 2021-2027
- The EU will mark 10 years of the CRPD coming into force in 2021 (and EDF is proposing a 2<sup>nd</sup> European Year of Persons with Disabilities)

### **Important European and International frameworks should be implemented:**

- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the European Disability Strategy
- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development- an agenda which promises to 'leave no-one behind'. The agenda is binding in the EU and Member States domestic and international cooperation policies.
- The Council of Europe will implement its disability strategy 2017-2023.
- The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

### **Legislation/initiatives already presented which need to be discussed and adopted**

- The European Pillar of Social Rights launched in April 2017 which sets the EU's vision for social rights in Europe



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- The European Accessibility Act , Standardisation Mandate 420 (accessibility to the built environment), Audiovisual Media Services Directive and Telecoms package revisions, revision of the Rail Passengers' Rights Regulation

### **Legislation/initiatives adopted that need to be monitored and well implemented.**

- European standards relevant for persons with disabilities, such as the Commission's Mandate 376 (accessibility to ICT), and Mandate 473 (Design for All), as well as any standard linked to key legislation for EDF and its members such as the Web Directive and the Lifts Directive or the European Accessibility Act.
- Implementation of important existing EU legislation: the Web Accessibility Directive, Passengers' Rights legislation, the Regulation on rail accessibility (TSI-PRM), the European Structural and Investment Funds regulations, the Public Procurement Directive, and the Employment Equality Directive

### **Legislation/initiatives that will be launched –not released yet**

- A new EU Consensus on Development (2017)
- A new framework for research and innovation in the EU after Horizon 2020

This gives us an indication of issues we must incorporate in all our work. However, with the changing European landscape, EDF will be alert to new developments and opportunities within this period.

### **Policy goals and priorities**

Our overarching goal during this four-year period is **to create a new framework for the rights of persons with disabilities in the EU**. Specifically, we aim for a comprehensive disability rights strategy 2021-2030, which will be implemented via an inter-institutional agreement at the EU level. The new comprehensive disability rights strategy 2020 -2030 should be aligned to the implementation of the CRPD, and its time period should coincide with the endpoint of the Global Sustainable Development Agenda. The objectives of this comprehensive strategy should be mainstreamed in the EU budget 2021-2027. In order to raise awareness about this strategy, 2021 should be named as the Second European Year for the rights of persons with disabilities.

EDF policy work will focus on the following key topics in this period:

- ❖ **Human rights:** with particular attention to the CRPD, ensuring its full implementation at the EU level and that the EU monitors its application in all its laws, policies, programmes and funding. This includes but is not limited to the following issues and areas of work: gender equality and women's rights; rights of children and youth; rights of older people; intersectional discrimination



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and refugees with disabilities; persons denied their legal capacity and those living in institutions, and the adoption of a horizontal equal treatment legislation at the EU level

- ❖ **Social and employment policy:** European social policies, European Structural and Investment Funds, de-institutionalisation/ independent living
- ❖ **Accessibility and freedom of movement:** adoption and implementation of the European Accessibility Act and the revised Audio Visual Media Services Directive and Telecommunication regulations; implementation and monitoring of the Web Directive; adoption, revision, and implementation of relevant pieces of transport and passengers' rights legislation; adoption and implementation of other relevant transport initiatives; adoption and implementation of relevant pieces of ICT legislation under the Digital Single Market strategy; the European Disability Card projects; implementation of the mandatory accessibility criterion in the Public Procurement Directive; the European Structural and Investment Funds regulations; and, the adoption of the horizontal Equal Treatment Directive
- ❖ **Emerging technology:** monitor the accessibility of emerging technologies and monitor and influence upcoming policy and standards developments in this field, promoting accessibility following a Universal Design approach
- ❖ **International cooperation:** ensuring inclusive follow-up on international commitments- the Sustainable Development Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Charter for Inclusive Humanitarian Action
- ❖ **Political participation:** promoting the rights of persons with disabilities in the European Parliament elections and new European Commission
- ❖ **EU Budgets and frameworks:** The EU budget 2021-2027, and the post-Horizon 2020 Research and Development framework

Access to inclusive education and to accessible, affordable and quality healthcare continues to be denied to persons with disabilities in Europe. The EU does not have strong competencies to act in these fields. EDF will collaborate with expert networks in these fields to enhance their work, in partnership with the disability movement.

Due to the European Commission refit process, which involves revising existing legislation, it is important that this is monitored, so reviews do not reduce the strength of already existing legislation and human rights protection. There will be an increased focus on joint actions with EDF's partners and members, and specific capacity building for and between members on all key topics.

There are a range of regular events and dialogues at the EU level, which EDF participates in. These will continue to be central to our engagement and include the Access City Awards, the CRPD Work Forum, the Disability High Level Group, and the Annual Conference for the European Day of Persons with Disabilities. EDF's long standing commitment to provide a Secretariat to the Disability Intergroup of the European Parliament, EDF's membership in the EU Monitoring Framework for the



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CRPD, and its participation in the European Parliament's structures where we have observer status, (such as the CRPD Network) will also remain as a core engagement for EDF during this period. These opportunities need to be maximised by ensuring concrete outcomes from each of them. Together with organisers and in dialogue with EDF members we will work on improving the effectiveness of implementation and monitoring of the CRPD, and reducing poverty and social exclusion of persons with disabilities in Europe.

## Objectives

There are 4 core objectives in this strategy:

1. **Influencing the EU: The European Union, including its key institutions, establishes a comprehensive process for ensuring the CRPD is fully promoted, implemented and monitored. Accessibility and social inclusion are promoted through all relevant existing and upcoming EU legislation and the EU takes all measures possible to reduce poverty and social exclusion of persons with disabilities in Europe**
  - Annual progress has been demonstrated on the recommendations from the CRPD Committee to the EU in all EU institutions
  - A structured meaningful dialogue with the Disability Movement and all key European Institutions (and at all levels of policy making) has taken place
  - EU institutions have maintained or developed dynamic structures for the implementation of the CRPD (including internally) and actively involved EDF and its members in these structures in respect of Article 4.3 of the CRPD
  - Existing and future EU policies and legislation are being effectively monitored and enforced at national level, with meaningful involvement of DPOs
  - New or revised EU legislation is being screened during development to ensure the rights of persons with disabilities is being mainstreamed and the CRPD is being referenced in all key policy areas
  - New legislative and policy initiatives, as well as mechanisms and standards in support of these, are undertaken to fully implement the CRPD and to address the most pressing concerns of persons with disabilities in the EU.
  - All EU institutions have well resourced CRPD focal points and an inter-institutional coordination mechanism supports their mutual efforts to implement the CRPD, with the meaningful involvement of the disability movement



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- EDF members are fully supported in their promotion and monitoring of the CRPD and other human rights treaties and other matters related to improve the quality of life of persons with disabilities
  - EDF has published a series of European Human Rights reports focusing on priorities for persons with disabilities in Europe (topics to include poverty, social protection, equality and non-discrimination, women with disabilities, structured dialogue)
  - EDF has raised awareness on accessibility following a Universal Design approach among public authorities, policy makers, standards developers and industry players in relevant sectors
2. Strengthening the Disability Movement in Europe: There is a strong, sustainable and diverse disability movement with the capacity to effectively influence the EU and EU Member States.

During this period, EDF will energetically engage with its members and partners in all work at the EU level, and improve our efforts to build capacity of EDF and its members. This will be done in part by revising our committees and working group structures to maximise the involvement of a diverse range of members, and by investing more time and resources in capacity building activities, to create a sense of shared vision, belonging, cooperation, mutual learning and ownership within the network. Each annual work-plan will include actions to:

- Build capacity of governing body members, committees, expert groups and EDF members on selected priority topics, as well as on key skills (campaigning, influencing, negotiating, leading, fundraising, etc.). The topics are to be chosen with members and should focus on priorities expressed in this strategy development: engaging with youth and women, contributing to monitoring the implementation of EU policies and legislation at the national level, developing and maintaining diverse, inclusive, sustainable, accountable, democratic DPOs in a changing world
- Connect members with each other using existing and new accessible communication channels. Explore new and emerging means of communication to enable members from across Europe, with different language backgrounds to connect. Ensure all members have a chance to learn to use news information and communication tools.
- Build the capacity and effectiveness of EDFs Youth Committee and Women's Committee
- Create committees on Social Policy and Inclusion, and on Human Rights and Non-Discrimination within the EDF Board



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- Find mechanisms to promote greater diversity within EDF and build capacity of members to address intersectional and multiple discrimination; EDF membership expertise is a key resource in this work and joint actions with members will be undertaken on specific issues
  - Enhance transnational cooperation and capacity building amongst DPOs, and between DPOs and other key partners, with a particular focus on strengthening the voice of organisations of the most marginalised persons with disabilities
  - Identify weaknesses and gaps in the disability movement in Europe and address these together with members- considering especially the capacity of organisations representing the most marginalised persons with disabilities
3. **External communication and awareness raising:** Ensure that policy makers and influencers, the public, including persons with disabilities across Europe, are aware of the situation of persons with disabilities in Europe, and the work the Disability Movement

During the strategy period, EDF will strengthen its external communication in a number of dimensions. EDF will:

- Provide information to persons with disabilities about their rights (derived from the CRPD and from European laws and policies) in easy to read, accessible and understandable language
  - Use innovative external communication to influence policy makers and partners with regards to our policy and political priorities
  - Increase the awareness of the general public about disability and human rights
  - Convince the public of the obligations and the benefits of an inclusive, diverse and accessible society through use of the best available evidence and use of appealing communication methods
  - Provide communication tools to its members to enable their engagement in key strategies
  - Present a clear vision for an inclusive, diverse social Europe in its external communication
  - Develop a strategy which includes new approaches to reach the media and the general public
  - Increase use external communication orientated measures, such as award schemes, to stimulate implementation of the CRPD through promotion of best practice, learning and exchange
4. **International cooperation:** Ensure that EDF uses its leverage to promote inclusive rights based international cooperation, influencing the EU's external



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policies and programmes as well as finding opportunities to collaborate with and support the Disability Movement globally

Historically, EDF has played a strong role in successfully promoting the adoption of the CRPD. Through our engagement with the International Disability Alliance (IDA), we have also been actively engaged in the adoption of the disability inclusive aspects of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In our globally connected world, where new international frameworks are disability-inclusive on paper but not yet in practice, there are more opportunities for EDF to promote both the CRPD and the 2030 Agenda through international cooperation, strengthening the implementation of the CRPD and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Europe and around the world. There are also opportunities to share the learning of the disability movement in Europe with sister regional DPO.

In this four year period, EDF will focus on:

- Ensuring that the EU and its Member States incorporate the rights of persons with disabilities in their approach to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and International Cooperation including the engagement of organisations of persons with disabilities at all levels
- Engaging in the Economic Commission for Europe (UN ECE) regional mechanism on Sustainable Development to ensure persons with disabilities are systematically included for strong SDGs in Europe, in the UN ECE region<sup>1</sup> and worldwide
- Cooperating with the regional DPO networks of Africa, ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), Pacific, Latin American and Arab regions to strengthen their work and promote the CRPD and the SDGs both at the regional and international levels
- Contributing to the work of IDA to promote the CRPD within the UN system and supporting IDA in its efforts to ensure that the rights of persons with disabilities are effectively promoted through the entire UN treaty body system
- Taking advantage of opportunities to promote disability inclusive disaster risk reduction through the Sendai Framework for action and the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disability in Humanitarian Action.
- Cooperating with DPOs in the wider European region and seeking opportunities to build our capacity to engage in promoting the CRPD together with DPOs in this region as well as the SDGs
- Promoting the recognition by the Council of Europe<sup>2</sup> of the role of DPOs in policy dialogue and the active involvement of EDF and its members in Council of Europe policies and decisions



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related to disability, in respect of article 4.3 of the CRPD. The implementation of the Council of Europe Disability Strategy should promote the human rights of persons with disabilities as enshrined in the CRPD

- Mainstreaming the CRPD in the human rights work of the Council of Europe, in particular that of the Committee of Experts on the rights of persons with disabilities, the European Court of Human Rights, and the Human Rights Commissioner
- Advocating for a change to the stigmatising language in the Council of Europe's European Convention on Human Rights and the Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine (Oviedo Convention) to align it with the current human rights standards of the CRPD

## **Measuring results**

In our changing environment it is critical there is a continuous review of our priorities and working methods to ensure that our work is as targeted and as effective as possible. EDF will incorporate monitoring and evaluation as a continuous part of our work.

- Each governing body meeting, and each conference will contain an element of evaluation which will then be turned into actions for improvements for next time
- An external evaluator will be recruited to evaluate the effectiveness of EDF strategy and work plan on a biannual basis. Results will be shared with EDF Board and membership
- EDF will engage in new methods of feedback and evaluation aiming to continuously improve our work and increase our public accountability, as well as our accountability towards and members and persons with disabilities



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## **Resources**

The EDF mission, its objectives and implementation require specific resources: human resources, financial resources, and the engagement of our members including their technical expertise and their political influence.

### **1. Human Resources**

The Secretariat of the EDF currently operates with 10 full time staff members (one Director, five policy officers sharing the various policy areas, two officers dealing respectively with Internal and external communication, one office and administration officer and one finance and human resources officer). The Secretariat also includes staff recruited for the duration of a project; in these cases, their work is totally dedicated to the implementation of the project.

There are some shortcomings in the present human resources structure and a lack of resources which should be addressed during this period. We will streamline the line management in the Secretariat, and build the skills of the Secretariat in tasks related to building capacity of members and strategic communication. It will also be necessary to ensure stronger policy coordination, more skills in resource mobilisation and capacity building, closer liaison with the institutions we engage with, and more close cooperation with EDF's members. This new strategy and new framework agreement planning allows us the flexibility of reconsidering the structure of the secretariat and making changes needed to deliver on the present strategy.

### **2. Financial resources for core operations**

Since its creation, EDF has benefitted from on-going support to its core activities from the European Commission- with 20% co-financing from other sources. This has provided a strong financial basis for our work for 20 years. It also involves strict institutional rules and procedures, regular competitive calls for proposals and 20% co-financing. The 20% co-financing has been achieved through our membership- both in the diligent payment of membership fees, and also in the co-organisation of events including EDF governing body meetings. EDF also benefits from support from ONCE Foundation annually and from other donors on a project basis.

Given the unpredictable environment, EDF needs to be prepared to be able to seek other sources of funding. During this period, EDF will seek cooperation with a range of funding partners to expand our income in the priorities outlined in this strategy. EDF will ensure that in all cases where new donors are being approached this is done with the full approval of the EDF executive committee. EDF will also develop a Charter outlining our guiding principles when engaging in fundraising.



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### **3. Project-based funding**

Due to the difficulties in co-financing European Commission's projects, additional European Commission-funded projects have been avoided in 2015 and 2016. However, in the coming four years EDF will target involvement in projects which allow us to expand our work in line with the direction of this strategy. Priority will be given to projects which enable us to work on women and youth with disabilities, with partners in the European region (countries which are not in the EU but in Europe), and other regional DPOs, as well as specific projects which allow us to work on capacity building and transnational exchange in Europe.

## **Partnership**

Partnership and outreach are critical for EDF. Issues related to partnership are referred to throughout the document, and some key issues are highlighted here.

EDF will strengthen our engagement with key networks to achieve our objectives and reinforce our joint work:

- The European Women's Lobby- to promote women's rights and the rights of women with disabilities in the EU
- The Social Platform- to campaign for an inclusive and social Europe
- Sustainable Development Goals Watch Europe – to ensure that the approach taken in Europe to Sustainable Development is fully inclusive of persons with disabilities
- Civil Society Europe – to campaign for a real involvement of civil society in EU policy and decision-making, together with the major European Civil Society Organisations and alliances.
- Age Platform Europe- to collaborate on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with disabilities and common priorities such as accessibility
- ANEC, the consumers organisation in standardisation, to ensure that the views of persons with disabilities are taken into consideration in relevant European standards

To increase our focus on youth engagement, we will explore how to deepen our cooperation with the European Youth Forum. EDF will always work directly with other anti-discrimination networks in our work on human rights and non-discrimination. As an active member of the International Disability Alliance Board, EDF will continue to campaign for human rights and the CRPD globally, and at the UN level.

EDF will continue its cooperation with established partners in the ICT and transport sectors, both from industry, NGOs, and public authorities.



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To promote the CRPD at the EU level, EDF will systematically cooperate with the European Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and other UN Agencies in Brussels. The CRPD has to be implemented and brought to life across the whole of government, and business; EDF will forge alliances with allies in business to promote the CRPD in their work.



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## **Conclusion**

During the last 20 years EDF has campaigned very successfully for EU laws, policies and regulations inclusive of persons with disabilities. Successes of the past are not guaranteed for the future. It is clear that the political will within the EU for truly joint EU initiatives is presently low, and not due to increase in this period. Furthermore, forces challenging the values on which the EU was built are increasing their leverage and influence over the EU.

EDF needs to therefore work, not only to promote the CRPD at the EU level, but to work with all like minded partners to promote a diverse, inclusive and human rights-based, Europe. EDF needs to be a strong partner on human rights and social rights in Europe and needs to build bridges with actors at the EU level to achieve this. It will also be important to work simultaneously at the EU and with our members at the national level on European issues.

The voice of the disability movement will be strong if it is truly diverse, and interconnected, and if our main partners and strong EU stakeholders are also promoting the rights of persons with disabilities.

This strategy is a basis for our work in the future. The implementation will be overseen by the EDF Executive Committee and Board who will ensure that where needed EDF can engage in new or emerging issues and continuously work to improve our ways of working.