**European Disability Forum**

Candidate for the Board of Directors



**Rui Coimbras**

Cerebral Palsy in the European Union Association (CP-ECA)

Rui is the President of the Federation of Portuguese Cerebral Palsy Associations (FAPPC). Having been born with cerebral palsy, he studied Information Technology in Lisbon before working in both the public and private sectors, where he gained wide experience as a team leader and project manager in software development and data analysis. He is now an IT Solutions Architect for Softinsa/IBM and, as well as being co-author of a globally used computer tool, he has been closely involved in the creation of an **Accessible Vote System** to allow any citizen, with any type of disability, to exercise their right to vote autonomously and secretly.

Despite all his professional activity, Rui has always managed to dedicate himself to social activities, and has been engaged in organisations dedicated to cerebral palsy both nationally and at European level since 1994. As President of the Federation of Portuguese Cerebral Palsy Associations, he is active in defending the rights of citizens with cerebral palsy and working with various government entities. At the European level, he has represented CP-ECA at the EDF, was involved in the articulation of EDF's activities during the Portuguese Presidency of EU and lobbied in Strasbourg for approval of the Accessibility Act. He is member of the EDF Expert Group on Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and participates in its Human Rights and Non-Discrimination Committee (representing also the Portuguese National Disability Council).

On the accessible voting system, Rui believes that we should continue to work intensively as support is growing at European level and we have a proven solution ready to go. He believes that we should set ourselves the goal of having as many accessible election points as possible in time for the next European elections in 2024.

Rui combines personal knowledge of a disability that (despite being the most common form of childhood-onset disability) is poorly understand by policymakers and the public at large, with long experience as a person with disabilities navigating the labor market, as well as a professional background in IT, which offers so many opportunities for people with disabilities. He would also bring to the Board of Directors creativity, a strong sense of responsibility and a great capacity to work.

He is married and the father of Pedro, aged 18.