# **DOC-BOARD-23-03-06 Annex 2**

# EDF Manifesto on the European Elections 2024

# adopted by the 5th European Parliament of Persons with Disabilities Brussels, 23 May 2023

## Introduction

The European Disability Forum, an independent organisation with over 25 years of history representing the interests of 100 million persons with disabilities, organised on May 23rd, the 5th European Parliament of Persons with Disabilities in collaboration with its member organisations, and under the auspices of the European Parliament.

The 5th European Parliament of Persons with Disabilities brought together over 600 delegates with disabilities from across Europe, representing the diversity of the European disability movement.

In view of the upcoming European elections in 2024, the delegates of the 5th European Parliament of Persons with Disabilities adopted the following Manifesto with the aim of guiding the political programmes of candidates to the European Parliament, the future European Commission appointed after the elections, and all the relevant policies affecting the future of persons with disabilities in Europe and beyond.

This Manifesto outlines the key priorities for persons with disabilities to be fulfilled by the European Union institutions, in full respect of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and of the motto of the disability movement “nothing about us without us”.

## Building an inclusive future for persons with disabilities in the EU

We call on the European Union (EU) political leaders to:

## Guarantee the participation of persons with disabilities in the political and public life of the EU

* Ensure that persons with disabilities have the right to vote and the right to stand as candidates in elections, regardless of legal capacity status and EU country of residence.
* Adopt measures to maximise the accessibility of the whole electoral process (procedures, facilities and materials), and to facilitate the possibility of voting independently and in secret and choosing a person of trust to assist in voting.
* Involve persons with disabilities in the development of political programmes for the European elections, and increase the number of candidates with disabilities and to improve gender-equality in the European Parliament.
* Adopt measures to better prevent and protect candidates to the EU elections against cyber-violence and harassment, including hate speech based on disability, gender, ethnicity and sexual orientation.
* Support the replacement of substituted decision-making regimes depriving persons with disabilities of their legal capacity with supported-decision making schemes in line with article 12 of the CRPD.
* Make available resources and tools for the effective participation of the diversity of persons with disabilities and their representative organisations in EU public affairs, including on preparation and negotiation of EU laws and initiatives, and the next EU budget.
* Improve the overall level of accessibility of the EU institutions, as well as all its buildings, digital tools and documents, and communications by complying with EU harmonised accessibility legislation, as well as by using easy-to-read formats, Braille, and sign languages.

## Realising a Union of Equality for persons with disabilities with the CRPD as its compass

* Maintain the position of a European Commissioner for Equality with the specific mandate to implement the CRPD.
* Increase the human and financial resources within the European Commission dedicated to the rights of persons with disabilities. Disability rights should not fall only under the competence of Social Affairs as the CRPD must be taken into consideration in all actions across the Commission services.
* Establish an Equality configuration within the Council of the EU, and appoint a focal point concerning the CRPD in all EU institutions and bodies, including in the European Parliament and the European Council.
* Assess the progress achieved by the European Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030, and update actions, resources and deadlines for the second half of its implementation, including with further legislative proposals and flagship initiatives.
* Prohibit disability-based discrimination in and by the EU which covers intersectional and multiple forms of discrimination in all areas of life. Adopt a Horizontal Equal Treatment Directive.
* Take into consideration the specific situation of women and girls with disabilities in all EU gender equality policies.
* Adopt comprehensive legislation on combating violence against women, including women with disabilities that criminalises forced sterilisation. Ratify the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.
* Put forward specific measures to realise the rights enshrined in the CRPD for those persons with disabilities at higher risk of exclusion, such as persons with disabilities living in institutions, persons with disabilities with high support needs, deafblind people, people with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities, or persons with disabilities living in poverty.
* Recognise and address the intersectional issues faced by racialised persons with

disabilities, Roma with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ persons with disabilities, older persons with disabilities, young persons with disabilities, asylum seekers, refugees and migrants with disabilities, and women and girls with disabilities throughout EU’s equality and inclusion policies and initiatives.

## Becoming a more social Europe

* Safeguard an adequate budget for Cohesion Policy in the next EU budget (Multiannual Financial Framework) and earmark funds specifically for social inclusion of persons with disabilities.
* Act against the segregation of persons with disabilities in residential institutions. Additionally, ensure and guarantee appropriate measures to make the transition from institutions to independent living and community-based living services, allowing full and effective participation of persons with disabilities in the community.
* Adopt clearer instructions to the Member States on how to use EU funds, including funds beyond cohesion policy, for community living and to move away from institutional care.
* Maintain the general principles of equality between men and women and non-discrimination, including the principle of accessibility for persons with disabilities in the planning, implementation and monitoring process of all EU-funded programmes, so, for example, EU investments do not finance inaccessible infrastructures, transport or new technologies that create barriers for persons with disabilities.
* Present a European legislative proposal to guarantee a minimum income ensuring an adequate standard of living that takes into consideration the specific situation of persons with disabilities, including disability-related costs, which can reduce the impact of the cost-of-living crisis.
* Adopt further measures to increase the employment of persons with disabilities in line with article 27 of the CRPD, in inclusive workplaces in the open labour market, with a fair wage, labour rights, reasonable accommodation, and access to an effective social protection system. Focus measures on women and young people with disabilities, who are particularly prone to being excluded from the labour market.
* Support training programmes for young people with disabilities to facilitate their

transition to the open labour market and abolish unpaid traineeships.

* Take measures to guarantee comprehensive and flexible social security systems in which persons with disabilities can maintain disability-related support when accessing paid-work. Such systems will boost participation in the open labour

market and should offer sufficient levels of support to persons with disabilities, reduce the risk of poverty and social exclusion, and tackle the dangers faced by the cost-of-living crisis.

* Support Member States in efforts aiming at ensuring that all persons with disabilities can enjoy their right to an inclusive education, including life-long learning, with personalised support in the general education system. +SKILLS
* Adopt health-related initiatives that ensure access to the highest standards of health of persons with disabilities, as well as health policies taking a human rights approach towards persons with disabilities, including in the area of cancer prevention and treatment, mental health and sexual and reproductive health.

## Embracing accessibility – allowing free movement in Europe

* Adopt an EU-wide Disability Card which ensures the mutual recognition of disability status across Member States, covering not only leisure, culture and sport facilities, but all specific services to persons with disabilities, including in transport and other commercial services.
* Grant with the European Disability Card the necessary support for those persons with disabilities for the transition period when they move to another country to study or to work while their disability is certified by the new country of residence.
* Create a new European agency for accessibility, built upon the work of the AccessibleEU centre, to support the implementation of all EU harmonised accessibility legislation.
* Make sure the Digital and the Green Transition consider accessibility and non-discrimination for persons with disabilities as a core pre-condition. This is especially relevant in the context of legislation concerning new technologies, such as the Artificial Intelligence Act, and other legislation under the EU Green Deal, such as on renovation of buildings and infrastructure.
* Update Passengers’ Rights Regulations so persons with disabilities can move as

freely as any other person in the EU.

* Adopt legislative measures for air travel to avoid situations such as denial of boarding, obligation to travel with an assistant without the air carrier paying for the extra ticket, lack of quality assistance in airports, and insufficient compensation for loss or damage of mobility equipment.
* Step up the efforts to harmonise and expand accessibility requirements in transport infrastructure, including train stations and rolling stock so all transport becomes more accessible to passengers with disabilities.
* Strengthen enforcement mechanisms of EU legislation concerning accessibility and Passengers’ Rights.
* Ensure that the Marrakesh Treaty is fully implemented within the EU and in cooperation with partner countries around the world so that visually disabled and otherwise print disabled people have access to the same books, magazines and reading materials as all other people.
* Prepare a legislative proposal to facilitate access to affordable assistive technologies for persons with disabilities.
* Invest EU resources in increasing the knowledge and availability of sign language, easy-to-read, and Braille, and any other accessible means of information and communication for persons with disabilities.
* Ensure an ambitious transposition and proper implementation and monitoring of EU accessibility legislation of products and services, of the public sector, of audio-visual media services, and electronic communications.

## Protecting persons with disabilities in Europe and beyond

* Support Ukrainians with disabilities inside and outside Ukraine, and make sure the EU contribution to the reconstruction of Ukraine builds a more inclusive country for persons with disabilities, including accessible transport and infrastructure, and with community-based living instead of institutionalised care; developments towards rebuilding Ukraine, and EU accession for Ukraine should be done in cooperation with Ukrainian organisations of persons with disabilities.
* Prepare for future crisis by effectively implementing existing guidelines at UN and EU level, which already take into consideration the requirements of persons with

disabilities.

* Ensure that essential everyday services – such as health, education, building infrastructure, transport and communications – are developed in a way that they continue to function equally for persons with disabilities during situations of emergency (including conflict, pandemic, and other natural events such as flooding and earthquakes).
* Meaningfully consult organisations of persons with disabilities in all preparedness towards emergency situations, and in response to these when they arise.
* Play a leading role in the global move towards disability inclusion in climate action, ensuring that the 'just transition' benefits and does not negatively impact persons with disabilities.

### Nothing about us without us.