EU-Korea Civil Society Organisation – CSO - Network
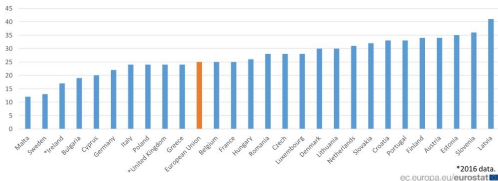## Information sheet on Disability

Main EU legislation[1] and policies

The EU promotes the active inclusion and full participation of people with disabilities in society, in line with the EU human rights approach to disability issues. Disability is a rights issue and not a matter of discretion. This approach is also at the core of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), to which the EU is a party.

- In 2000, the EU Employment Equality Directive was adopted.[2] It sets the framework to combat discrimination on the ground of disability with regard to employment and vocational training in the European Union. Several Member States also prohibit discrimination on the ground of disability to the access to and the provision of goods and services. Significant case law by the European Court of Justice (ECJ) has also contributed to the adoption of comprehensive policies.

- In December 2010, the EU became a party to **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)**, alongside EU Member States.

- The EU promotes the active inclusion and full participation of persons with disabilities in society, in line with the EU human rights approach to disability issues. The European Commission's **European Disability Strategy 2010-2020**, adopted in 2010, builds on the UNCRPD. A **Progress Report** presenting the achievements, up to 2016, on the implementation of the Strategy has been published in February 2017. It lists some tangible successes and describes the implementation of the UNCRPD by the EU, including within the EU institutions. The objectives of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 are pursued by actions in eight priority areas: accessibility, participation, equality, employment, education and training, social protection, health and external action.

A few facts and figures

Population reporting long-standing disabilities, 2017
(% of population aged 16 or over)

*2016 data.
ec.europa.eu/eurostat

In Europe:
- ✓ Today 80 million Europeans with disabilities live in the European Union.[3]
- ✓ In 2016, 7.5% of persons aged 16 and over declared a severe disability.
- ✓ In 2016, the unemployment rate of people with disabilities aged 20-64 was 19.6% compared to 10.1% of people without disabilities of the same age group.[4]

- As a party to the UNCRPD the EU has a **Framework** that promotes, protects and monitors the implementation of the Convention in matters of EU competence: EU legislation and policy (non-discrimination, passengers' rights, EU funding...) and EU public administration (personnel selection, access to documents...). It complements the **national monitoring mechanisms** that are the main bodies responsible for promoting, protecting and monitoring the UN Convention in EU Member States and enhances synergies. The Framework is composed of: **The European Parliament; the European Ombudsman; The EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA)** and the **European Disability Forum (EDF).** Members share information and take account of each other's activities. They agree on a **work programme** that can include the activities implemented by several members together or by the Framework as a whole.

- The European Commission also supports the Academic Network of European Disability experts (**ANED**), which provides analyses of national situations, policies and data. ANED also manages the **DOTCOM Online Tool** that provides an overview of the key instruments in the Member States and in the EU needed for the implementation of the UNCRPD.

- **Equinet, the European Network of Equality Bodies,** brings together more than 40 organisations from more than 30 countries empowered to combat discrimination across a range of grounds, including disability.

- The **Disability Intergroup of the European Parliament** is an informal grouping of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) of different nationalities and most political groups who are interested in promoting the disability policy in their work at the European Parliament as well as at the national level. The Disability Intergroup is one of the oldest Intergroup of the European Parliament: it was established in 1980 and was also one of the largest groups, with over 110 MEPs during the last period.

- The **European Disability Forum** is an independent Umbrella NGO which brings together representative organisations of persons with disabilities from across Europe to ensure that decisions at the European level concerning persons with disabilities are taken with and by persons with disabilities. The full members of EDF are **National Councils of Persons with Disabilities and European Organisations representing persons with disabilities.** A video in sign language explains what EDF is. For instance, EDF advocated for **fully accessible 2019 European elections** and for that it hold meetings with the political parties and did a strong communication campaign. It adopted a **manifesto** and initiated a "European Elections For All" petition. In addition it produced a **manual** to provide the staff of elections campaigns all across Europe with easy to implement tips to assure that their political message reach every European with disabilities. EDF also did a strong **advocacy campaign about the European Accessibility Act** with short videos with sign language, analysis, statements, press releases, factsheets and partnership with other European CSOs, such as **AGE Platform Europe.** [6]

- Another example is the **Country Fact Sheets on "Social Care & Support Services Sector for Persons with Disabilities"** produced by the **European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities** which represents over 15000 support services for persons with disabilities across Europe.

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