



Press release

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Calls for a European disability ombudsperson

The participation of persons with disabilities in all of the European Union's legal acts was one of the central demands of the *European Inclusion Summit*.

Yesterday, the first European Inclusion Summit (EIS) ended with the adoption of an official declaration by the EU member states' representatives of the interests of persons with disabilities. The declaration is addressed to the European Commission and the EU member states and contains recommendations and demands for the 2020-2030 European Disability Strategy. One of the key recommendations is the creation of the office of a European disability ombudsperson.

Jürgen Dusel: "For me Europe is a community of shared values which must also lead by example when it comes to inclusion. Best practices in the area of inclusion already exist across Europe, and we can learn from them. That is why I initiated the European Inclusion Summit. However, simply exchanging ideas is not enough. With our declaration, we are directing concrete recommendations and demands at the European Commission. For example, Europe urgently needs to strengthen its policies for persons with disabilities at the institutional level. In this regard, it is especially important for us to involve the representative organisations of persons with disabilities systematically in decision-making processes and to create the office of a European disability ombudsperson who should be involved in all EU

A strong “European Disability Strategy” is of crucial importance for the more than 87 million persons in the European Union who live with a disability. In addition, the strategy is the European Union’s most important instrument for the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. For this reason, the declaration aims to ensure a coherent and ambitious strategy for the decade ahead. The declaration focuses at the institutional strengthening of the involvement of persons with disabilities in policymaking at the EU level and especially on the following four topics:

- an ambitious implementation of the “European Accessibility Act” – equal access of all persons to public and private goods and services
- consistent accessibility of all digital products and services
- better protection of persons with disabilities against violence, especially of children and women
- greater involvement of persons with disabilities in international aid efforts and humanitarian assistance

Here you can read the entire declaration: www.european-inclusion-summit.eu/press

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