

**FREEDOM
OF MOVEMENT**

Observatory on the impact of the crisis on the rights of persons with disability

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www.edf-feph.org



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1. EDF Who are we?

- An independent NGO
- The umbrella organisation of persons with disabilities in Europe
- The front runners for disability rights



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2. How do we work ?

15.000 lobbyists

2.600 interest groups

EU bodies

We make **our voice heard** towards the EU Institutions

We **consult** NGOs, industry, consumers & social partners

We provide **real expertise** to decision-makers



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3. What do we want ?

The implementation

- of the UN Convention by the EU institutions and the Disability Strategy 2010-2020

The adoption of legislation

- to ensure removal of the current barriers to inclusion and participation for people with disabilities



4. Our achievements

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Disability Strategy 2010-2020

SIGN FOR MOBILITY RIGHTS

Structural Funds



5. In 2011 EDF focuses on Freedom of movement

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EDF 2011 TOP CAMPAIGN


2 Objectives

- The adoption of a strong, legally binding **European Accessibility Act**
- The adoption of a **European Mobility Card**

1 Lobbying Tool

The Freedom Guide





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6. EDF observatory on the impacts of the crisis

Why?

- Several complaints and requests for EDF support from its members
- Persons with disabilities and their Disabled Persons' Organisations mobilised themselves in their countries to monitor the crisis as it stroke their lives

How?

- 2011 – EDF collects national examples of austerity measures through an on-line questionnaire
- Focus is on direct effect on social inclusion and violation of the UN CRPD.



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6.1. Impacts of the austerity measures

The austerity measures have negative effects on:

- the economical participation
- the social participation
- the freedom of movement

The consequences are in total contradiction with the **strategy Europe 2020**



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6.1. Impacts of the austerity measures

Economic participation


Negative impact on Employment

- Unemployment rates increased, as for non-disabled persons
- **BUT** different starting positions, working conditions : more barriers in accessing alternative sources of income or in finding a new job after losing one

↓

EU 2020 ☹

**Increase in poverty
decrease in employment rate**



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6.1. Impacts of the austerity measures

Economic participation

Negative impact on Welfare system


- Pwd are listed indefinitely on a waiting list with over 5,500 people waiting for a PA Budget (B, Flanders)
- Personal budget scheme (PGB) decreased by 90%. with 130,000 people with support needs (home nursing and PA) By 2014, 117,000 persons will lose their budgets (NL)

↓

EU 2020 ☹

Increase in drop-outs and unemployment

Limitations to get to school and work
More family members stay at home & replace PA
Impoverishment of more families



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6.1. Impacts of the austerity measures


Social participation

Living in community

- Available support services decreased, transition from institutional to community-based form of care interrupted (GR, HU, PL)
- Access to public services decreased (education employment related services as well)

↓

Limitations to live independently in the community



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6.1. Impacts of the austerity measures


Freedom of movement

- UK 80.000 disabled care home residents will lose mobility support, making it difficult to visit family, friends and participate in other community activities

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Right to personal mobility is violated







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6.2. Trends identified

- **Reassessment of disability status**
- Cuts in disability allowances and benefits
- More taxes, less income, more poverty
- Reductions in local authorities' budgets
- Review of funding resources for activities of DPOs
- Austerity measures without consultation with DPOs



Reduced economic, social and political participation






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6.2. Trends identified


Too many disabled persons (B,GR,HU,I,UK)

- Accuse of disabled people to fraud the system
- Reassessment of disability status to shrank welfare system (reduction in disability pension for 2012 without increase in equal opportunity measures (HU)
- Changes in assessment criteria for needs of disabled persons resulted in decrease PA hours granted (S)
- Reassessment of students' disability status - delay in new certificates thus in request for support (I)




**Negative stereotypes of disabled persons
Increase in social exclusion**





7. Conclusions

- Austerity measures applied in the crisis in the field of disability will endanger national targets in EU 2020
- Poverty and economic inactivity of disabled persons **IS NOT NATURAL**, it is the result of unjust structures in our societies.
- Budget cuts affecting the rights of persons with disability might seem to be economic on the short run but will have more severe consequences on the long run
- Austerity measures must respect rights of disabled persons laid down in the UN Convention and should not hinder implementation measures




7. Conclusions

- Economic, social and political measures during the crisis must protect people with disabilities
- Austerity measures affecting exercise of fundamental, economic, social and political rights of persons with disabilities
 - >will not lead to long term solution for the society
 - >BUT will postpone development of equal opportunities for disabled persons and transfer the task to future governments

**THE RIGHT WAY OUT OF THE CRISIS IS THE INVESTMENT IN
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND TO RESPECT HUMAN RIGHTS!**



