

European Day of Persons with Disabilities

December 4-5, 2017 – Brussels, Charlemagne Building

"We are EU citizens"

As every year, the European Commission celebrates the Day of Persons with Disabilities together with the European Disability Forum. At this event, a wide range of politicians and high-level experts will be present in order to debate the challenges faced by persons with disabilities and, with the audience, explore the best possible solutions.

This year's conference will be an occasion to celebrate citizenship: how can persons with disabilities be better informed of their rights? How can they make their voice heard? The event will also lead us to address the right to political participation and the possibility to make cities more inclusive for all. Finally, and more generally, how can persons with disabilities better live as fully-fledged citizens?

Two different panels will take place during the first day. The first will focus on the social aspect and will be an opportunity to receive an update on European initiatives for better inclusion of persons with disabilities. The Social Pillar, the Work Life Balance, health insurance, disability pensions and the Sustainable Development Goals will be among the subjects to be discussed.

The second panel will bring forth the question of political participation. The right to vote and to be elected will be discussed and we will also hear personal testimonies. The purpose of this panel will be to identify challenges faced by persons with disabilities regarding the rights to political participation, and to find solutions for a concrete equality concerning this fundamental citizen's right.

The second day will focus on how EU cities could become more accessible on a sustainable basis and what is needed in order to allow better inclusion for all at local level. In this context, there will be an interactive panel with cities from across Europe together with politicians from national and EU level.

Finally, the Access City Award, which rewards cities across Europe for their efforts and commitments to be accessible to all, will close the conference. Ms Marianne THYSSEN, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, will announce the winners of this 2018 Award.

December 4, 2017

- 08.30 – 09.30 **Registration and welcome coffee**
- 09.30 – 10.00 **Opening**
- 10.00 – 12.30 **Panel 1 – What does the EU do for its citizens with disabilities?**
This first panel is meant to give us a clear and accessible update on social protection. We will therefore exchange ideas on the Social Pillar, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) etc. Explanations of important figures and data will be provided in order to allow a comprehensive overview. *Coffee break at 10.45*
- 12.30 – 14.00 **Lunch break**
- 14.00 – 17.00 **Panel 2 – Political participation as a disabled person: dream or reality?**
This second panel will present a state of play on the right for political participation for people with disabilities within the European Union. Personal testimonies, experts and examples of good practices will lead us to open a debate and put forward the challenges faced in this context. *Coffee break at 15.30*
- 17.00 **End of Day 1**
- 19.30 **Dinner**

December 5, 2017

- 08.30 – 09.00 **Registration and welcome coffee**
- 09.00 – 10.30 **Panel 3 - I have a dream that one day... my city takes disabilities into account**
This panel is to address the challenges faced by European cities in becoming more accessible. This will allow the audience and experts to debate sustainable cities (SDG's) and to showcase exemplary cities. *Coffee break at 10.30*
- 11.00 – 12.00 **Access City Award 2018 ceremony**
Ms Marianne Thyssen, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility will chair the ceremony and hand over the trophies to winning cities.
- 12.00 – 12.30 **Conclusions EDPD 2017 and ACA2018**
- 12.30 – 14.00 **Lunch**
- 14.00 **End of Day 2**