

# EUROPEAN DAY OF **PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

**ACCESS CITY AWARD 2021**

1 - 2 DECEMBER 2020



**CONFERENCE PROGRAMME**

#EDPD2020  
#EUAccessCity

#EUDisability  
#WeAreEUCitizens

*Social Europe*

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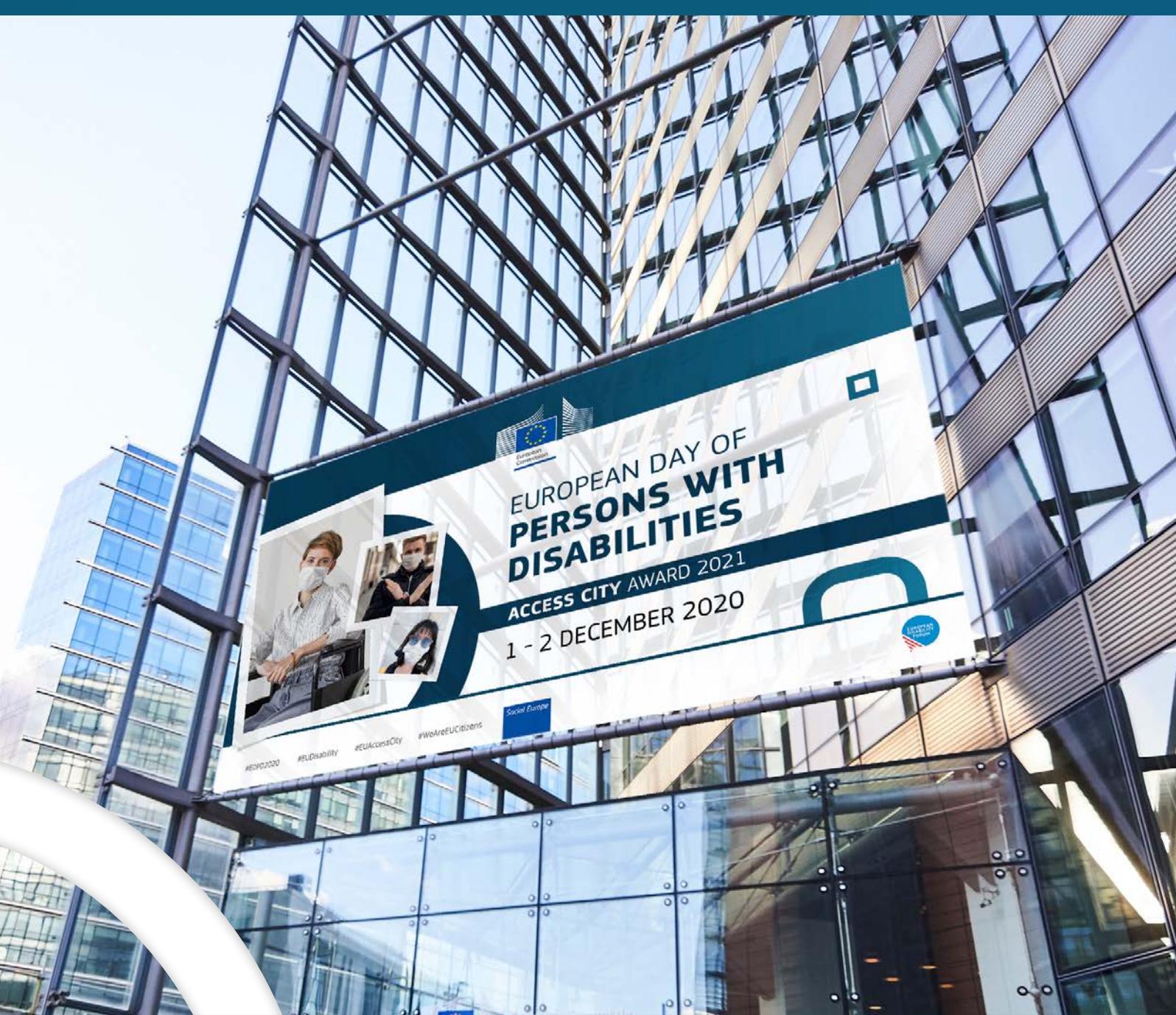
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# INTRODUCTION

The annual **European Day of Persons with Disabilities conference**, hosted by the European Commission in partnership with the European Disability Forum, takes place on 1-2 December. This event is part of the **EU's wider efforts to promote the mainstreaming of disability issues and to raise awareness of the everyday challenges faced by persons with disabilities.**

Politicians, high-level experts and self-advocates will discuss the challenges, solutions and projects that are being prepared and should be encouraged to improve policies for persons with disabilities.

The 2020 conference is adapted to the current pandemic and is therefore going to be held online. Despite this format

change, the conference will still give participants the opportunity to **discuss the upcoming Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030 and the impact of covid-19 on persons with disabilities.**

The 11<sup>th</sup> edition of the Access City Award will take place on 1 December in the afternoon. **Helena Dalli, European Commissioner for Equality** will announce the winners of the **Access city award 2021** together with representatives of the **European Commission, the President of the European Disability Forum and of the EU ACA jury.** This year's shortlisted cities are, in alphabetical order: Bremerhaven (Germany), Firenze (Italy), Gdynia (Poland), Komotini (Greece), Jönköping (Sweden) and Poznan (Poland).

# CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

1 December 2020

**10.30 – 10:55** Introduction by **Katarina Ivanković Knežević**, Director of the Social Affairs Directorate, DG EMPL, European Commission



## Opening statement by Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission

### Welcoming words

- **Dr. Rolf Schmachtenberg**, Permanent State Secretary at the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, German Presidency.
- **Ioannis Vardakastanis**, President of the European Disability Forum
- **Joost Korte**, Director General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, DG EMPL, European Commission

WEBINAR

1

**11:15 – 12:30**

## A LAST ROUND OF INSPIRATION FOR THE STRATEGY ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES 2021-2030

- **Chair: Inmaculada Placencia Porrero**, Senior expert, Disability and Inclusion unit, DG EMPL, European Commission
- **Pr. Gerard Quinn**, United Nations Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- **Jonas Ruškus**, expert member of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- **Gunta Anca**, European Disability Forum Secretary
- **Richard Smith**, managing Consultant with ICF's Employment, Skills, and Education research practice

### Questions & Answers

**15:00 – 16:15** **Access City Award Ceremony**



**ACCESS CITY  
AWARD 2021**

- **Helena Dalli**, Commissioner for Equality
- **Rafał Trzaskowski**, Mayor Of Warsaw
- **Ioannis Vardakastanis**, President of the European Disability Forum
- **Shadi Abu Zahra**, President of the Access City Award 2021 EU jury
- **Joost Korte**, Director General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, DG EMPL, European Commission
- **Katarina Ivanković Knežević**, Director of the Social Affairs Directorate, DG EMPL, European Commission
- .....
- **Moderators Niek van den Adel and Rogier Elshout**

# CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

2 December 2020

WEBINAR

2

**10:30 – 12:00**

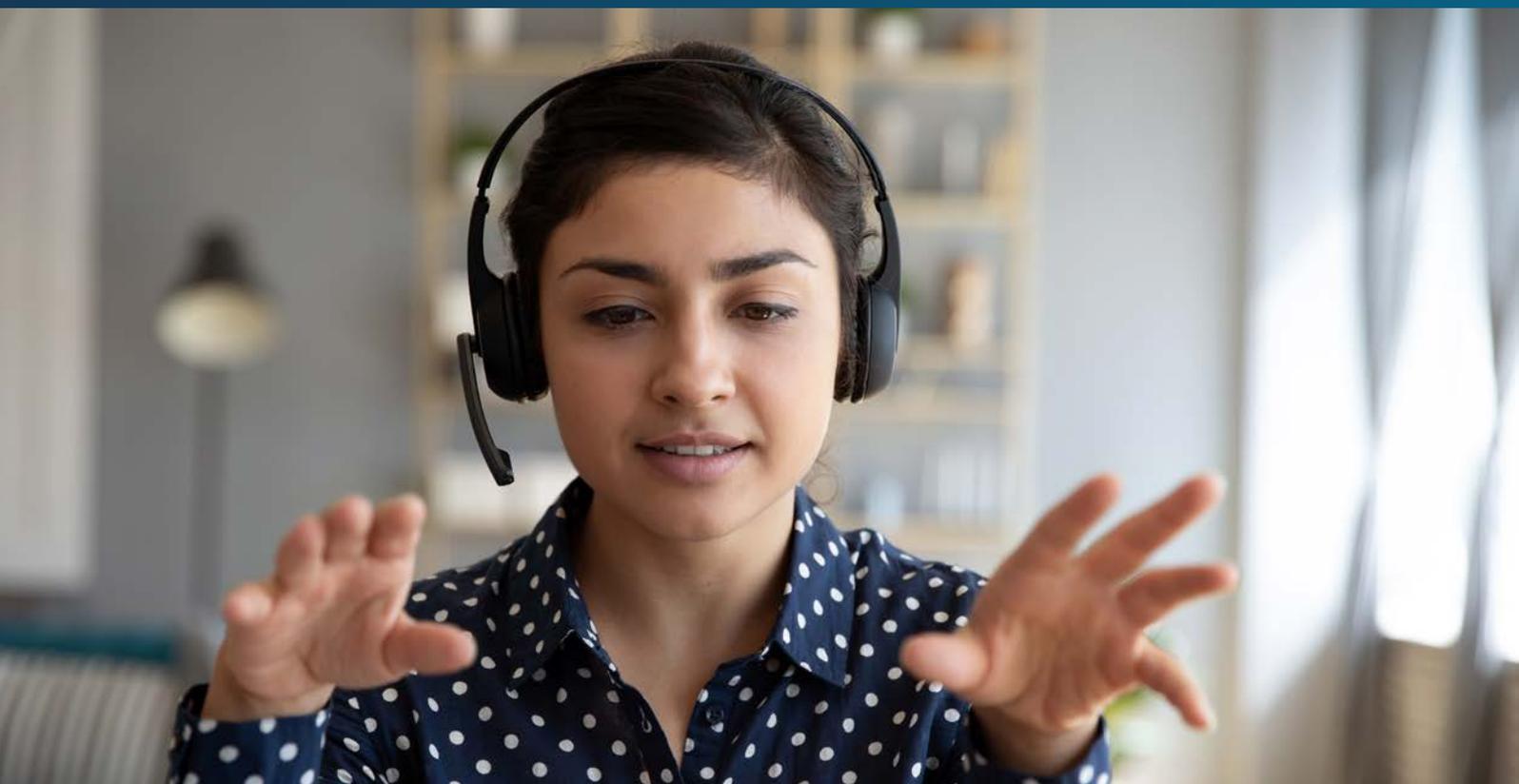
## **COVID-19 AND THE RECOVERY WHAT ABOUT PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES?**

- **Chair:** Catherine Naughton, Director of the European Disability Forum
- László Bercse, Vice President of Inclusion Europe and Chair of the European Platform of Self-Advocates
- Sophie Rattaire, Inter-ministerial coordinator for universal accessibility - French General Secretariat of the Inter-ministerial Committee on Disability
- Dr Anastasia Pharris, expert at the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
- Thomas Bignal, Policy manager, European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities

### **Questions & Answers**

**12:00 – 12:15**    **Conclusions**

- Ms Ana Sofia Antunes, Portuguese State Secretary for Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities
- Ana Peláez Narváez, Vice President of the European Disability Forum
- Katarina Ivanković Knežević, Director of the Social Affairs Directorate, DG EMPL, European Commission



# HOW TO USE

## the meeting platform with interpretation

### ACCESS

Please connect at least 5-10 minutes before the beginning of the meeting (accessible 20 min before)

#### On a computer (Recommended)

- ✓ For the best user experience, use **Google Chrome**. Alternatively, you can use the last versions of Edge or Firefox.
- ✓ Use a Good **Headset**
- ✓ If possible, use **wired internet connection** instead of Wi-Fi or 4G
- ✓ Do not use a VPN connection
- ✓ **Click on the link you received**, enter the name which will appear on the online attendee list and your e-mail address
- ✓ If you have technical issues, you can send a message to the Operator in the 'Messaging' icon on the top right

#### On a mobile phone

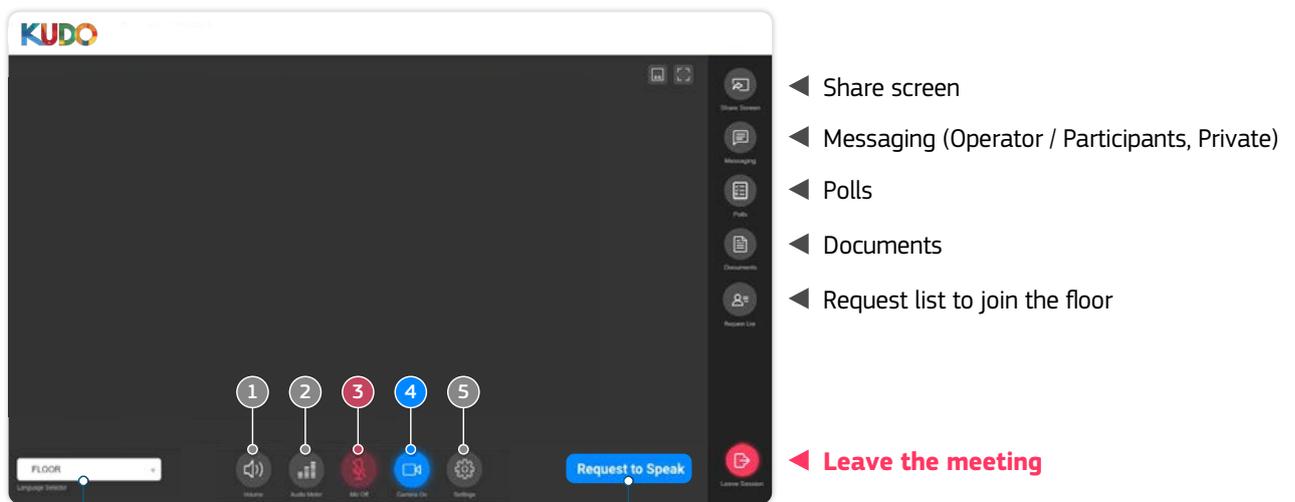
- ✓ To be used if you cannot install chrome on your computer
- ✓ Install KUDO app on **GOOGLE PLAY** or the **APP STORE**
- ✓ You will not have all functionalities, such as screen sharing or video
- ✓ Use a good headset
- ✓ Connect your phone to a charger



# Speakers / Presenters

- ✓ Click the blue 'Request to Speak' button on the right bottom corner, an operator will then grant you access and this will enable you to use your microphone, camera and share screen option
- ✓ Open your presentation / document before the start of the meeting, this will save time during the meeting
- ✓ Click on share screen on the right, select the document you want to share and click share screen again
- ✓ Documents can be uploaded by us if sent in advance or by the technical moderator during the meeting (Max. 20 documents of 10Mb each per session)
- ✓ Please ask persons on the floor who do not speak, to mute their microphones

**GET FAMILIAR**  
Explanations will also be given at the start of the meeting



- 1 Volume
- 2 Audio
- 3 Mute/Unmute
- 4 Camera on/off
- 5 Settings

### Language selection

If you select sign language interpretation, a window will open in the bottom right corner

**\* for audio-description, please chose "other"**

### IMPORTANT!!! FOR SPEAKERS AND Q&A

**!!! Request to speak** – click this button if you want to join the floor and be able to activate your microphone and camera once the moderator accepts you, you can activate your microphone and camera. You can still follow the meeting if you don't click on the button

**!!! Release Mic** – you will leave the floor and can follow the meeting as a viewer only, you can always push the 'request to speak' button again

**Only persons who request to speak and accepted by the moderator will be visible and audible. Others cannot activate their microphone and camera.**

## FAQ

### I have an echo

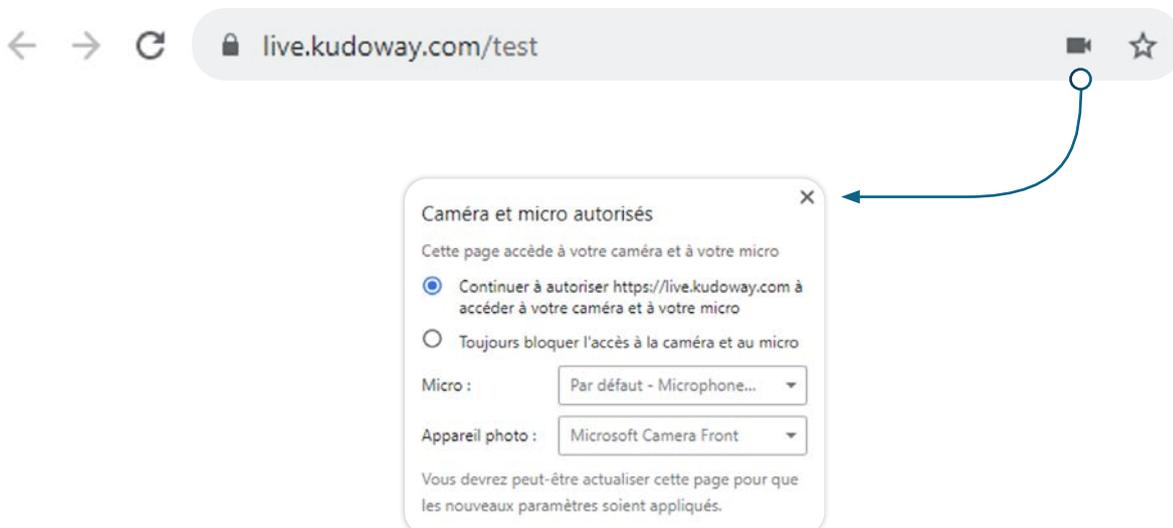
- ✓ Use a headphone
- ✓ Ask everybody who is not speaking to mute their microphones
- ✓ Refresh your page

### My microphone/camera does not work

- ✓ Check if you are using Google Chrome
- ✓ Check if your headset is connected
- ✓ Check if the right hardware is connected in 'Settings'
- ✓ Check the icon in the left corner of your browser address if you have authorized the microphone and camera



- ✓ Check the icon in the right corner of your browser address if you have authorized the microphone and camera



## I want to change the name I entered

- ✓ Leave the session and log in again

## I cannot activate my microphone/camera

- ✓ Click on the blue 'request to speak' button
- ✓ Once the moderator has accepted you, you will be able to activate it

## How do I know who is attending?

- ✓ Click on the Messaging button and choose the private tab

## I cannot hear the interpretation

- ✓ Refresh the page
- ✓ Sometimes, there is a short delay when the interpreters switch

## Is there live captioning?

Live captioning in English will be made available on a separate browser.

You can either:

- ✓ Open the URL we will send you in the final confirmation in an additional page in your google chrome browser. Once the page is open, click on the text on tap logo in the left top corner, which will open a menu. If you click on 'float' on the dropdown menu, it will create a banner on top of the meeting platform browser, which you can place wherever you want on the screen.

Or

- ✓ Install the TextOnTapOverlay software and to use the event ID we will communicate in the final confirmation TextOnTapOverlay download links:

For Windows: <https://www.text-on-top.com/downloads/tap/TextOnTapOverlay.exe>

For iOS: <https://www.text-on-top.com/downloads/tap/TextOnTapOverlay.zip>

# Speakers' Biographies: 1 December 2020

Opening



## President Ursula von der Leyen

President Ursula von der Leyen was Minister at the federal level in Germany for more than 14 years. She has been responsible for Family, then Labor and Social Affairs and later Defence. In 2019, she was elected as President of the European Commission.

In her political guidelines, she committed to building a Union of equality. Whether in business, politics or society as a whole, von der Leyen is convinced that Europe can only reach its full potential if we use all of our talent and diversity. She is a strong advocate of equal opportunities and the development of aspirations. To strengthen Europe's commitment to inclusion and equality in all its senses, von der Leyen ensured that her team will strive forward with its goals as the first-ever Commissioner for Equality.

## WELCOMING WORDS



## Dr. Rolf Schmachtenberg

Dr. Rolf Schmachtenberg is the Permanent State Secretary at the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. From 2014 to 2018 he was the Head of Directorate-General 'Participation-Matters concerning people with Disabilities, social compensation and social assistance' at the federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

His responsibilities included in particular the Federal Participation Act, the further development of the Act on Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities and the National Action Plan regarding the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.



## Ioannis Vardakastanis

Political scientist, Ioannis Vardakastanis, is President of the European Disability Forum (EDF), the umbrella organisation of the European disability movement, since 1999. Representing EDF at the International Disability Alliance (IDA) since 2007, he assumed Vice-Chair of IDA from 2010-2012, and Chair from 2012 to 2014. Following 2014, he has worked as the IDA Treasurer. Vardakastanis is also currently President of the Greek National Confederation of Disabled People (NCDP) and represents them at the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC). He is also a member of Greece's Economic and Social Council (OKE), Greece's National Commission for Human Rights (EEDA) as well as being a previous member of the Board of the European Blind Union (EBU) from 1996 to 2011.



## Joost Korte

Joost Korte is the European Commission's Director-General of Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion. He was previously Deputy Director-General in the Commission's Trade DG, and before that served as Deputy Director-General in the Agriculture and Rural Development DG, and in the Enlargement DG. Joost Korte spent several years in the Commission's Secretariat General as Director responsible for the relations with the Council of Ministers.

He also served in the cabinet offices of Commissioners Sir Leon Brittan, Chris Patten and Danuta Hübner. A lawyer by training, he joined the Commission in 1991, following eight years of academic work on European law at the Universities of Utrecht and Edinburgh.



## Katarina Ivanković Knežević

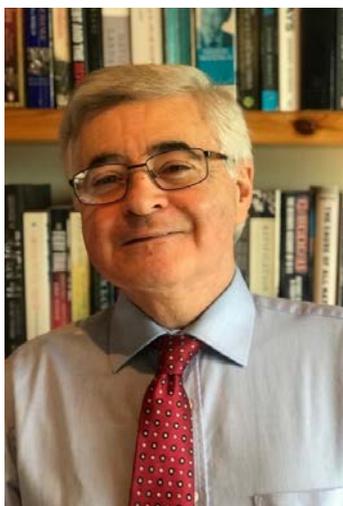
Katarina Ivanković-Knežević is Director for Social Affairs in the European Commission's Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion. She is responsible for the modernisation of social protection systems and wider social policies fostering social and labour market inclusion, through the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights and other relevant EU social policies.

Before joining the Commission, she was a State Secretary at Croatia's Ministry of Labour and Pension System, responsible for the management and implementation of the European Social Fund and other EU instruments aiming at human resources development. Her professional interests over the past 20 years have been human rights and gender equality, social policy and employment with a focus on labour market policies.

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## WEBINAR 1 – A last round of inspiration

for the Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030

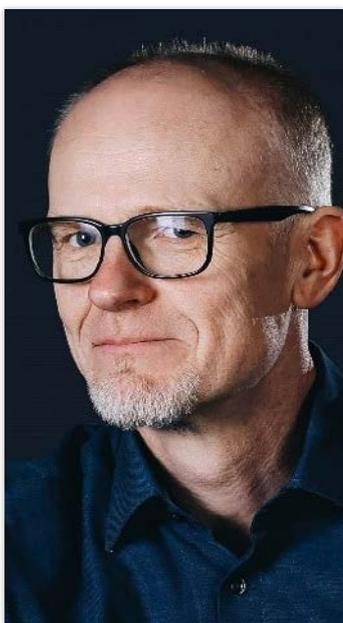


## Pr. Gerard Quinn

Mr. Gerard Quinn was appointed the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by the Human Rights Council in October 2020.

He holds two research chairs at the Raoul Wallenberg Institute on Human Rights in the University of Lund (Sweden) and Leeds University (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland). He previously held a chair at the National University of Ireland where he founded and directed the Centre on Disability Law & Policy. In Ireland, he served as a member of the Irish Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities, Ireland Human Rights Commission, and on the Council of State.

Mr. Quinn was the lead 'focal point' for the global network of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) during the negotiations leading to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and was head of delegation for Rehabilitation International during the UN Working Group (2004).



## Jonas Ruškus

Jonas Ruškus is an expert-member of the the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of the United Nations from 2014, and the vice-chair of the Committee from 2018. He was a country rapporteur for many European States Parties of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of the United Nations (CRPD), with responsibility for drafting the List of Issues and Concluding Observations for the States Parties. He was also a member and a chair of working groups of the Committee, including of an inquiry team under Optional Protocol of the CRPD.

Jonas Ruškus is a professor at the Department of Social Work, Vytautas Magnus University in Lithuania. He teaches human rights and participatory action research methods, also have experience of leading national research projects in the fields of disability, trafficking in women and sexual exploitation, juvenile resocialization, educational systems development, child and family welfare.

Jonas Ruškus has an international professional practice of living with persons with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities at l'Arche Community in France and Lithuania. He is a member of Lithuanian Association For Independent Living, Council member of Lithuanian Centre for Human Rights. Jonas Ruškus is also Chairperson of the Lithuanian National Commission for UNESCO



## Gunta Anca

Gunta Anca has been a proactive disability rights activist throughout her career. She is Chair of the Latvian Umbrella Body for Disability Organisations (Sustento), and since 2005, she has been a Board member within the European Disability Forum. In her capacity as member of the EDF Women's Committee, and her previous role as a Board member of the European Women's Lobby (the largest umbrella organisation of women's associations in the European Union (EU)), she is actively involved in promoting gender equality.

She is also a member of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), an EU consultative body allowing Europe's socio-occupational interest groups to express their points of views on EU issues. Since 2008, she has been Advisor in the Disability Rights Fund - a collaboration between donors and the disability community to advance the new UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

The members of the Panel come from five continents and reflect a broad cross-section of the disability community.



## Richard Smith

Richard Smith is a Managing Consultant with ICF's Employment, Skills, and Education research practice. He has worked for several international organisations, EU institutions, and national governments.

He has used qualitative, quantitative, and participatory methods to undertake evaluations, research and analyses, economic impact studies, and develop strategic action plans.

His work has also involved assessments and presentations of the economic and social impact of labour market policy interventions, including those designed to combat discrimination on the grounds of gender, ethnicity, religion or belief, age, sexual orientation, and disability.



## Inmaculada Placencia Porrero

Inmaculada Placencia Porrero is a Senior Expert in Disability and Inclusion at the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion at the European Commission. Her unit is responsible for the coordination of the European policies for persons with disabilities. Inmaculada Placencia Porrero holds a degree in Physics and Computer Science and worked in research and development before joining the European Commission in 1991.

She has worked on research programmes addressing accessibility and was Deputy Head of Unit for various disability-related units in the Commission. Her work in the "e-inclusion" unit of the Directorate-General for Information Society and Media addresses accessibility policy. While at the Directorate-general for Justice she contributed to disability-related antidiscrimination legislation. She was responsible for the Task Force for the preparation of the European Accessibility Act and remains responsible since its adoption in 2015.

## WEBINAR 2 – Covid-19 and the recovery

what about persons with disabilities?



### László Bercse

László is part of 'Inclusion Europe', the organisation of people of intellectual disabilities in Europe.

He is also part of 'the European Platform of Self-Advocates'. This is an organisation that speaks about the rights, abilities and needs of people with intellectual disabilities.



### Sophie Rattaire

Sophie Rattaire has been, since 2017, the French Interministerial Coordinator for Universal Accessibility and Inclusion at the General Secretariat of the Interministerial Committee for Disability. She drives and coordinates the actions carried out by all the French ministries in terms of improving and promoting universal accessibility and universal design in all its shapes (public buildings, housing, transport, roads, digital, goods and services, information and communication etc.). As part of her missions, she oversees the monitoring of the application of the international convention on the rights of people with disabilities at interministerial level. Before joining the General Secretariat of the Interministerial Committee for Disability, she participated in the parliamentary mission on the accessibility of buildings open to the public.



### Anastasia Pharris

Anastasia Pharris is an expert at the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) in Stockholm, Sweden. She is a nurse with Masters degrees in public health and community health nursing, and holds a PhD in public health. Since 1997, she has worked in clinical and public health sectors, with a focus on HIV and vulnerable populations, in the USA, Uganda, Zambia, Vietnam, Sweden and, now, at the European level. At ECDC she has been responsible for HIV surveillance and for scientific guidance projects focused on people who inject drugs and men who have sex with men. Since February 2020, she has been part of ECDC's Public Health Emergency team on COVID-19, contributing to a guidance on the provision of support for medically and socially vulnerable populations in EU/EEA countries and the United Kingdom during the pandemic.



## Thomas Bignal

Thomas Bignal is Policy Manager for the European Association of Service providers for Persons with Disabilities. In this position, he coordinates EASPD's Policy Team which deals with the political representation of the organisation towards the European Union, the Council of Europe, the United Nations and other international institutions. His specific expertise is on the social services eco-system, with a focus on its EU dimension. This includes knowledge on legal frameworks (public procurement, state aid, personal budgets, private investment, ...), EU funds (ESF+, Recovery and Resilience Facility, InvestEU...), social dialogue and workforce development, social innovation and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Thomas has authored reports and studies on all the aforementioned elements and is also actively involved with several other European platforms: Social Services Europe, Social Platform, Steering Board for Social Infrastructure, Coordinated Action on COVID-19 and Social Services, etc. Thomas has experience in project development, coordination, management and dissemination with a variety of EU programmes (EaSI, Erasmus+), totalling several million euro. In terms of his studies, Thomas has a BA in Politics and International Relations and a LLM in International Law with International Relations. He is also fluent in English and French.



## Catherine Naughton

Catherine Naughton is the Director of the European Disability Forum (EDF), a unique platform which brings together representative organisation of persons with disabilities from across Europe. She is also Vice-President of the Social Platform which is the largest network of European rights- and value-based civil society organisations working in the social sector. With an academic background in public health, Catherine has built 20 years of experience in the field of disability - with a particular focus on inclusive development: the rights of persons with disabilities in low and middle income countries. Her profession has also led her to work in many countries, and at the EU and International level in promoting the inclusion of person with disabilities in mainstream development and humanitarian programmes.

### CONCLUSIONS



## Ms Ana Sofia Antunes

Ana Sofia Antunes has been the State Secretary for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities at the Portuguese Ministry of Labour, Solidarity and Social Security since 2015 and is presently in her second mandate. She was elected for the Portuguese Parliament in 2015 and 2019. Previously, she was a member of the Association of the Blind and Amblyopic of Portugal (ACAPO), having held the position of President of the National Directorate of the Association between 2013 and 2015. Having graduated in Law from the Faculty of Law of the University of Lisbon and exercising law in the areas of administrative, urban and real estate law, Ana Sofia Antunes received an invitation to work in the City Council from Lisbon, as legal adviser for the Mobility Councillor, between 2007 and 2013. In 2010 she was also responsible for the work on the Pedestrian Accessibility Plan in Lisbon and coordinated the respective Monitoring Commission. Three years later, she moved to the Lisbon Municipal Mobility and Parking Company (EMEL), where she was the Customer Ombudsman.



## Ana Peláez Narváez

Ana Peláez Narváez is the Executive Councillor for International Relations and External Development at the Spanish National Organisation of the Blind (ONCE), executive Vice-President of the ONCE Foundation for Solidarity with Blind People in Latin America (FOAL), and Commissioner for Women's Affairs at the Spanish Committee of Representatives of People with Disabilities (CERMI). Currently Vice President of the EDF, she is also chair of the European Disability Forum (EDF) Women's Committee and a member of the EDF Executive Committee and Board overseeing gender issues. Ana Peláez Narváez was part of the official Spanish delegation to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). She has served two terms on the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. She was recently elected as an expert to the UN Committee of Elimination of Discrimination against Women and was the first woman with a disability to be elected.

Katarina Ivanković Knežević. See biography on page 11



## ACCESS CITY AWARD 2021

Accessibility is essential for the wellbeing of everyone, be they persons with disabilities, elderly people, or indeed anyone facing difficulties in their everyday lives. Investing in accessibility is one of the best ways to contribute to the prosperity of cities and their inhabitants.

The Access City Award is part of the EU's wider efforts to create a barrier-free Europe. Improved accessibility helps to remove the barriers that people with disabilities still face in their daily lives, such as using transport, accessing information or living independently.

On 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020, the first Access City Award (ACA) of the decade will take place.

Since its creation in 2010, 425 applicants have taken part in the competition. In 2020, 50 cities applied to ACA 2021, showing a clear interest for cities to be more inclusive and accessible for everyone. Among these 50 applications, the EU jurors shortlisted the cities below (in alphabetical order):

- **Bremerhaven** (Germany)
- **Firenze** (Italy)
- **Gdynia** (Poland)
- **Komotini** (Greece)
- **Jönköping** (Sweden)
- **Poznan** (Poland)



## Helena Dalli

Helena Dalli is the first EU Commissioner for Equality. Since 2019, her role is to deliver on the Union of Equality chapter within the Political Guidelines of President von der Leyen, by strengthening Europe's commitment to equality and inclusion in all of its senses.

Prior to taking her role as Commissioner, Dalli held various political roles in Malta including Member of Parliament (1996 to 2019), Minister for European Affairs and Equality (2017 to 2019), and Minister for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties (2013-2017). She was also opposition Shadow Minister for public administration, equality, public broadcasting and national investments (1998-2013) and Junior Minister for Women's Rights in the Office of Prime Minister (1996-1998).



## Rafał Trzaskowski

Rafał Trzaskowski was born in Warsaw, where he studied and graduated in International Relations and English Philology at the University of Warsaw. In 2004 he obtained his PhD degree in Political Science. After a career as a Minister for Administration and Digitalization in the Cabinet of PM Donald Tusk in 2013, Mr Trzaskowski served as an MP, MEP and Vice-Chair of the European People's Party in 2014 as the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland. Rafał Trzaskowski has been the Mayor of Warsaw since 2018. He is a member of the European Committee of Regions and the Board of Eurocities. In 2020, Rafał Trzaskowski was also the Civic Platform's candidate for the Presidency of Poland.

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Ioannis Vadarkastanis. See biography on page 10

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## Shadi Abou-Zahra

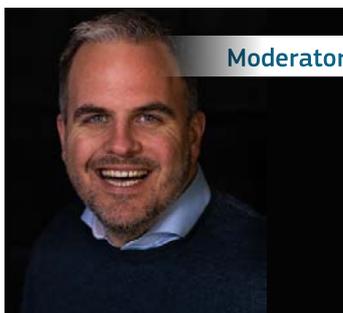
Shadi Abou-Zahra works with the W3C Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) as the Accessibility Strategy and Technology Specialist. He coordinates accessibility priorities in the W3C Strategy team, as well as international promotion, coordination, and harmonization of web accessibility standards. Shadi also maintains WAI liaisons with key stakeholders including disability, research, and standards organizations, as well as coordinates WAI outreach in Europe, accessibility evaluation techniques, and European-funded projects on accessibility. Prior to joining W3C in 2003, Shadi was a lead web developer and managed the design and implementation of web productions, online community platforms, and online games.

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Joost Korte. See biography on page 10

Katarina Ivanković Knežević. See biography on page 11

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## Niek van den Adel

Niek van den Adel is an entrepreneur, best selling author and international keynote speaker. Niek van den Adel had an accident while riding his motorcycle, leaving him paralysed from the chest down. He uses his experience to make the world a more accessible place. His focus is always on hospitable behaviour. As a social entrepreneur, he is a consultant on accessibility for guests, visitors and employees with a handicap. As a writer and speaker, he delivers speeches to thousands of people as a coach and motivator, teaches senior-level executives about inclusivity and writes an insanely popular blog.



## Rogier Elshout

Rogier's talent is to bring dry topics to life and complicated matters back to their essence. Based in Rotterdam, Rogier has 13 years of professional experience in public affairs and especially in EU affairs, having started as a Dutch EU youth representative at the age of 18.

He moderates many debates on European topics, events, and interviews Dutch MEPs regularly. He is also co-founder and moderator of the talk show Brussels Bubbles, the monthly talk show where EU insiders tell their stories from the Brussels Bubble, to make the EU policy-making more accessible to a wider public.

He was trained at the Dutch Debating Institute before registering as an independent. Rogier moderates around 100 events annually: large or small, in-depth discussion or a slick show, for business, NGOs or governments.

# EASY-TO-READ DESCRIPTION





# European Day of Persons with Disabilities 2020 and Access City Award 2021

You can find explanations of the words  
in **bold** at the end of the programme.

This information was written  
by **Inclusion Europe**.



Date:

1 - 2 December 2020

This is the programme of the  
**European Day of Persons with Disabilities 2020**  
and **Access City Award 2021**.

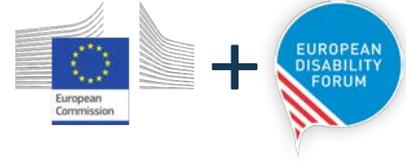
The days of these events are:  
Tuesday 1 December and  
Wednesday 2 December 2020.

If there are words you do not understand in the text,  
do not worry.

At the end of this programme,  
you will find an explanation of all the difficult words.



The European Day of Persons with Disabilities takes place every year.



This year, it will be online on 1 and 2 December 2020.

It is a day organised by the **European Commission** and the **European Disability Forum**.



Many people with disabilities take part in the event.

They talk with **politicians** and other important people.

They talk about different topics such as **accessibility** and the rights of people with disabilities.

## First day: Tuesday 1 December 2020

### 10:30 - 10:55 OPENING



#### **Ursula von der Leyen**

Ursula is the President of the **European Commission**.

Check explanation on page 27.



#### **Dr. Rolf Schmachtenberg**

Rolf works for the German government. Germany is now holding the Presidency of the **Council of the European Union**.

Check explanation on page 28.



## Dr. Rolf Schmachtenberg

Ioannis is the President of

‘the European Disability Forum’.

This is the organisation that protects the rights of all people with disabilities in Europe.



## Joost Korte

Joost is the **Director General of the office of Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion of the European Commission.**

Check explanation on page 27.



## Katarina Ivanković Knežević

Katarina works as a **Director at the office of Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion of the European Commission.**

Check explanation on page 27.



10:55 - 12:30

## DISCUSSION ABOUT THE EUROPEAN DISABILITY STRATEGY 2021-2030



### Inmaculada Placencia Porrero

Inmaculada is an expert on disability and inclusion at the office of **Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion of the European Commission.**

Check explanation on page 27.



### Richard Smith

Richard is working for 'ICF'.

This is a company that made a study for the **European Disability Strategy.**

Check explanation on page 28.



### Gunta Anca

Gunta is member of the 'European Disability Forum'.

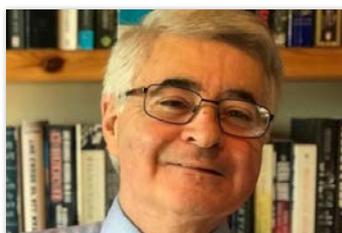
This is the organisation that protects the rights of all people with disabilities in Europe.



### Jonas Ruškus

Jonas is a member of '**the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**'.

Check explanation on page 28.



### Professor Gerard Quinn

Gerard is the '**UN Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**'.

Check explanation on page 29.

## Questions and Answers



15:00 - 16:15

## ACCESS CITY AWARD 2021

**The Access City Award** is a competition between most accessible cities in the **European Union**.



This year the cities that can win the award are:



- **Bremerhaven** (Germany)
- **Firenze** (Italy)
- **Gdynia** (Poland)
- **Komotini** (Greece)
- **Jönköping** (Sweden)
- **Poznan** (Poland)



### Helena Dalli

Helena is the **European Commissioner** for Equality. Check explanation on page 27.



### Rafał Trzaskowski

Rafał is Mayor of the city of Warsaw in Poland.



### Ioannis Vardakastanis

Ioannis is the President of **'the European Disability Forum'**.

This is the organisation that protects the rights of all people with disabilities in Europe.



## Shadi Abou Zahra

Shadi is part of the jury for the **Access City Award** 2021. Check explanation on page 29.



## Katarina Ivanković Knežević

Katarina works as a **Director at the office of Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion of the European Commission.**

Check explanation on page 27.



## Joost Korte

Joost is the **Director General of the office of Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion of the European Commission.**

Check explanation on page 27.

## MODERATORS



## Niek van den Adel

Niek is an author and speaker who promotes the rights of people with disabilities. He talks about how the world can become more accessible for people with disabilities.



## Rogier Elshout

Rogier leads public discussions like this one. He brings up the important points of the discussion and explains complex matters to people.

## End of first day



## Second day: Wednesday 2 December 2020

10:30 - 12:00

### DISCUSSION ON COVID-19, RECOVERY AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



#### **Catherine Naughton**

Catherine is the Director of

‘the European Disability Forum’.

This is the organisation that protects the rights of all people with disabilities in Europe.



#### **László Bercse**

László is part of ‘Inclusion Europe’,

the organisation of people of intellectual disabilities in Europe.

He is also part of

‘the European Platform of Self-Advocates’.

This is an organisation that speaks about the rights, abilities and needs of people with intellectual disabilities.



#### **Sophie Rattaire**

Sophie works for the French government and promotes accessibility and inclusion.



#### **Dr Anastasia Pharris**

Anastasia works at ‘the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control’.

This is the office of the European Union that helps countries in Europe fight dangerous diseases.



## Thomas Bignal

Thomas works for 'the European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities'. This is an organisation that works to make sure that people with disabilities get good support and services to take part in the community like everyone else.

## Questions and Answers

12:00 - 12:15

## CONCLUSIONS OF THE DISCUSSION



## Ana Sofia Antunes

Ana works for the Portuguese government to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities.



## Ana Peláez Narváez

Ana is member of the European Disability Forum. This is the organisation that protects the rights of all people with disabilities in Europe.



## Katarina Ivanković Knežević

Katarina works as a **Director at the office of Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion of the European Commission.**

Check explanation on page 27.



# EASY-TO-READ DICTIONARY

Below you can find some explanations for difficult words:

## ➤ Easy-to-read

Easy to read is information that is written in a simple way so that people with **intellectual disabilities** can understand. It is important to use simple words and sentences.

If there are words that are difficult to understand, an explanation is provided.

The text needs to be clear to see, for example, black writing on a white background is good. It needs to be well-spaced.

Easy-to-read often uses pictures to explain what the text talks about.

Someone with an intellectual disability needs to check the information is easy to understand.

Easy-to-read documents often have this logo, so it is easier to find them.



There are rules on how easy-to-read should be done. You can read the European standards of easy-to-read information here: [www.easy-to-read.eu](http://www.easy-to-read.eu)



## ➤ **European Union**

The European Union is a group of 27 countries in Europe that work together to make things better for their people.

## ➤ **European Commission**

The European Commission is the body of the European Union that suggests laws that can make a big difference in people's lives. It also does all the day-to-day work of the European Union.

## ➤ **European Commissioner**

The European Commissioner is a person who is responsible for a specific field of work at the European Commission and manages a lot of people.

For example, the European Commissioner for Equality works to make sure all people in Europe have the same chances in life.

## ➤ **Office of Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion**

This is the office inside the European Commission that works to improve employment and inclusion for all people in the European Union.

It also works to promote the rights of people with disabilities in the European Union.

Its full name is

'Directorate-General on Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion'.

In short, we also call it 'DG EMPL'.



## ➤ **European Parliament**

The European Parliament is the body of the European Union that makes laws and decisions in Europe.

## ➤ **Council of the European Union**

The governments of all the countries of the European Union come together and make 'the Council of the European Union'. Together with the European Parliament, they discuss and decide which laws will happen in Europe.

## ➤ **Presidency of the Council of the European Union**

Every six months, the Presidency of the Council passes to another country of the European Union.

Right now, Germany holds the Presidency.

That means that Germany is leading the discussions among the countries in the European Union about new laws and other important actions.

## ➤ **European Disability Strategy 2021 - 2030**

The European Disability Strategy is the plan of the European Union about its work for people with disabilities in the next 10 years.

## ➤ **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

This is an agreement that many countries in the world have signed.

It says what rights people with disabilities have and how countries can protect these rights.

In short, we call it 'the UN Convention' or 'the CRPD'.

The European Union and all its countries have signed the UN Convention.

That means that they have agreed to work to make it happen and to protect the rights of all people with disabilities.



## ➤ **UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

This Committee is a group of experts that look at how well countries make use of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

## ➤ **UN Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

It is an expert on the rights of people with disabilities that writes on problems that people with disabilities face all over the world.

## ➤ **Access City Award**

It is a prize the European Commission gives every year to cities that work hard to be more accessible. A city is accessible when all people can live in it and use all things and services without problems.

## ➤ **COVID-19**

'COVID-19' is a new disease that can pass easily from one person to another. We also call it 'Coronavirus'.

Sadly, too many people in the world are now ill from coronavirus. Most of the people recover but many people die from it.

To help countries fight COVID-19, the European Union will give them extra money. The countries have to make a plan to explain how they will use this money to help their people. We call this plan 'National Recovery Plan'.

# CONTACT INFORMATION

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# EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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