



The European Association of Service providers for Persons with Disabilities



www.easpd.eu

EASPD

IMPROVING SERVICES
IMPROVING LIVES

Who we are

The European Association of Service providers for Persons with Disabilities is a non-profit European umbrella organisation, established in 1996 and currently representing over 11.000 social and health services for persons with disabilities. EASPD advocates for effective and high-quality individualised services in the field of education, employment and community living. Providing these services in line with the principles enshrined in the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities would not only bring benefits to persons with disabilities but to society as a whole.

Our main driver is promoting equal opportunities for disabled people through the provision of user-centred services. EASPD's work is focused on diverse themes corresponding to important elements of support services that are essential for the correct implementation of the UN CRPD: right to work and employment, inclusive education, living independently and being included in the community, quality of services, co-production and Person Centred Technology. For all these aspects of the CRPD to be correctly implemented, it is also necessary the right legal and financial frameworks to be developed by public authorities at all relevant levels. As such, EASPD also works on topics such as the financing of quality services, job creation and decent working conditions in the support services sector and European Structural Funds (European Social Fund, European Regional Development Fund, etc.).

EASPD and its members want to be of support and strongly believe in structural cooperation with Disabled People Organisations and other actors in society as stated in its multiannual strategy "Reaching Out".

Our vision

Let's build a Europe for all!

We strive to deliver high quality services promoting full participation and inclusion in society for all disabled persons. We believe that support services play a key role in enabling people to enjoy their human rights on an equal basis with all others. This belief is what guides our work in Brussels, Strasbourg and across Europe.

Our principles

We are committed to operating on the principles of openness, participation, accountability, effectiveness and coherence. Our work is guided by:

- ★ User participation in the development and delivery of services
- ★ The implementation of good governance principles
- ★ Focus on accessibility, availability, affordability and adaptability of services

Our objectives

We believe in a Social Europe for all – including people with disabilities - that provides high quality services with guaranteed universal access. We would like to achieve:

- ★ The full implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- ★ The provision of high quality, user-centred services run in an accountable, efficient and effective way
- ★ Fair working conditions and lifelong learning opportunities for staff employed in services



Our strategy

We build our work around three main areas: achieving a positive impact in our policy and advocacy work, making up-to-date information available and fostering innovation at all levels of service provision. If you work with us, you can:

Have an impact

We are the voice of support services for disabled people in the EU: we work to bring about positive change – we monitor, influence and respond to European policy developments to ensure that services can thrive and work to support disabled people in the best possible way.

Stay Informed

We share information on significant developments at European and international levels and help our members understand how they impact on local legislation and service provision. We also actively seek information from our members on the issues they find relevant and important, so we can make sure they are reflected in our work with the European institutions.

Be part of innovation

We work for the promotion of innovation in our field, by developing and participating in research projects, and by offering our members opportunities to learn from each other and exchange best practices on developing new responses to social needs.

How we work

Located in Brussels, EASPD is run by a team of professional staff managed by a Secretary General and governed by an **Executive Committee**, a **Board** and a **General Assembly**.

Our **thematic work** is carried out within four **Standing Committees (SC)**, three of which **work on specific issues**: SC on Education, SC on Employment, and SC on Inclusive living. The fourth SC, the Policy Impact Group works on a broader range of issues varying such as how to improve legal and financial frameworks for support providers, job creation and improving working conditions in the sector and European structural funds (ESF, ERDF, etc). Each SC identifies and follows up on key areas of work each year, carries out research activities, contributes to policy development and provides advice and networking opportunities for members. The Policy Impact Group also works significantly on maximising our impact on the European Union's policy processes; by working for instance with the European institutions, as well as other European stakeholders.

EASPD also has four Special **Interest Groups (IG)** focusing on Early Intervention, Person-Centred Technology (PCT), Workforce Development & Human Resources (HR) and Arts.

In addition to our policy work, we develop, coordinate and participate in **European projects** implementing good practices in our core working areas. The objective is to promote good practice exchange as a basis for innovation and improvement of service provision. We have extensive expertise in the field, provide our members with information on funding opportunities and support them in applying for funding. We support the preparation of project ideas and facilitate the establishment of project partnerships.

Our members are our greatest asset. They are committed to working together, sharing best practices, innovating and challenging one another and the European institutions to bring about positive change in social service provision for the benefit of the people they support. One of the biggest added values of being part of EASPD family is the ability to find joint solutions to common problems and promote the achievement of sustainable results.

We have two types of members: Umbrella Member Organisations (regional or national networks of services for persons with disabilities) and Single Agency Member Organisations. Organisations can also join us as Observers. We also establish cooperation agreements for a certain period of time with relevant partners on specific disability-related subjects that are of concern or of particular interest.





Why work with us?

As a Member:

EASPD is **the representative organisation of service providers for persons with disabilities** – this is one of our main strategic advantages. We have an extensive membership base which allows us to truly represent the sector at European level. We provide a bridge between the European institutions and organisations working at grassroots level.

If you join EASPD as a member, you can:

- ★ Receive up-to-date, comprehensive information on what goes on in Europe and understand why these issues matter. Then you can let us know what you think about it - and so contribute to our lobby and advocacy work;
- ★ Find out about funding opportunities, and receive support to develop and submit your project idea;
- ★ Network with similar organisations in other regions and countries;
- ★ Exchange best practices and contribute to the development of innovation in service provision;
- ★ Build up partnerships with different stakeholders in the sector;
- ★ Strengthen your organisation by cooperating at European level - so ensuring your voice is heard;
- ★ Make friends and build relationships with people from across Europe!

As a Partner:

EASPD has established itself as **the voice of the sector in Europe**: we have created partnerships with key stakeholders at European level, with whom we work to advance our objective for a social Europe. This means that our voice cannot be ignored - and that we have the right connections to make it heard!

We are:

- ★ Member of the High Level Group on Disability set up by the European Commission;
- ★ Member of the Committee of Experts on the Rights of People with Disabilities of the Council of Europe;
- ★ Member of the NGO Liaison Group of the European Social and Economic Committee;
- ★ Member of the Disability and Public Services Intergroups at the European Parliament;
- ★ Member of the European Platform of Social NGOs (Social Platform);
- ★ Founding member of Social Services Europe;
- ★ Member of the European Expert Group on the Transition from Institutional to Community Based Care;
- ★ Member of the Fundamental Rights Platform of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights.

EASPD Events

Each year we organise EASPD events in different European locations where members and other stakeholders have the opportunity to share knowledge, experiences and practices. This also allows us to take stock of key issues and challenges for the sector.

Annual Conferences allow our members and other partners to discuss the sector's challenges and opportunities, on a specific topic.

Seminars & Policy events allow important policy developments and studies to be discussed and policy papers drafted.

Provider Fora enable the development of networks and partnerships in some of our member countries. The Provider Fora facilitate dialogue and the building of networks between different stakeholders at regional and national level. They aim to bring together representatives of the service provider's sector, regional and state authorities, users and families. The Provider Fora also give EASPD the opportunity to communicate directly with the relevant actors at national level and support the correct implementation and understanding of the UN CRPD's principles and European legislation in their respective countries.

Courses and Trainings allow member organisations to gain additional know-how on a variety of topics such as European policies and legislation, project development & management, inclusive education and quality of services as well as Person-Centred Technology (PCT) and Assistive Technology (AT)

Project Development Workshop. Every year EASPD organises a Project Development Workshop to exchange knowledge on how to design, disseminate and develop successful projects as well as explaining the step-by-step procedure of Project Cycle Management.

“EASPD's success is based on the professionalism and friendly attitude of its staff and members: we work together to reach our common objectives, and along the way, we learn from each other, discuss innovative solutions to the challenges we face, present our point of view to the European institutions and lobby for their implementation.

Do join us – let's make a difference, together!”

Franz Wolfmayr, EASPD President



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