



The European Association of Service providers for Persons with Disabilities



www.easpd.eu

EASPD

IMPROVING SERVICES
IMPROVING LIVES

Who we are

EASPD is the voice of services for persons with disabilities in Europe. We were established in 1996 and we represent over 10,000 specialised services for disabled people across the continent, in the fields of social care and support, health, education and employment. We cover the full spectrum of age and disability.

Our main driver is promoting equal opportunities for disabled people through the provision of user-centred services, based on the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Our key themes include social services of general interest, quality of services and inclusion.

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

EASPD is located in Brussels and is run by a team of professional staff managed by a Secretary General.

We are an independent, democratic and participatory organisation governed by an **Executive Committee**, a **Board** and a **General Assembly**. These bodies are elected every 4 years. They define the strategic direction, steer the work of the organisation and ensure its smooth running.

Our thematic work is carried out within our four **Standing Committees**. Standing Committees are permanent working groups open to all members, set up to address core topics for EASPD: employment, education, social policy and enlargement – focussing on issues of relevance for members from Central and Eastern Europe. They identify and follow up on key areas of work, carry out research activities, contribute to policy development, provide advice and network. They also make sure that the policy papers they produce reflect members' positions.

EASPD also has four "**Special Interest Groups**" focussing on independent living and inclusion in the community, occupational services, person centred technology (PCT) and workforce development.

In addition to our policy work, we develop, coordinate and participate in EU-funded projects to implement good practices in our core working areas. We have extensive expertise in the field and also provide our members with information on funding opportunities and support in applying for funding. We facilitate the preparation of project ideas and the creation of project partnerships.

Our **members** are our greatest asset: they are committed to working together, to sharing best practices, to innovating and to challenging each other and the institutions to bring about positive change for social services and for the people they support. They like being part of the EASPD family because together we can find 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. Services can also join us as Observers for a period of 6 months.





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 this 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.

“ I joined EASPD 13 years ago. At that time, it was a small organisation trying to find its feet. Since then, I have seen EASPD grow and develop to become a well-known and respected partner to the European Institutions and the voice of the sector on the continent.

EASPD is a place for us members to discuss all important challenges we face as service providers, to talk about the needs of the sector and to find solutions to move our agenda forward. We receive up-to-date, well explained information on all the relevant issues, and EASPD provides us with a forum where we can discuss them so we can develop our common position.

My life's work as a service provider in Austria has been guided by the promotion of human rights for persons with disabilities. In EASPD I have found an organisation that reflects this ambition and a group of colleagues from across Europe with whom I can cooperate to reach this result.

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*



The EASPD team



EASPD

Oudergemselaan / Avenue d' Auderghem 63, B-1040 Brussels

Phone: +32 2 282 46 11 | Fax: +32 2 230 72 33

Email: info@easpd.eu | Website: www.easpd.eu



This publication is sponsored by the Progress programme of the European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. It reflects the view only of the author and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.