



2017/2127(INI)

30.6.2017

DRAFT OPINION

of the Committee on Petitions

for the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

on implementation of the European Disability Strategy
(2017/2127(INI))

Rapporteur: Cecilia Wikström

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Petitions calls on the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Recalls that the Committee on Petitions (PETI) receives a considerable number of petitions each year referring to the difficulties encountered by people with disabilities across the EU in relation to all areas identified in the European Disability Strategy, in particular access to work and employment, education and transport, and participation in political, public and cultural life;
2. Highlights the protection role played by the Committee on Petitions through the petition process in the context of the EU framework for the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), and stresses that the petitions received by the Committee illustrate the need to adopt a horizontal, human rights approach to disability policies;
3. Emphasises, in particular, that accessibility is a core principle of the UNCRPD, and a precondition for the exercise of other rights enshrined in the Convention; stresses that the right to accessibility, as defined in Article 9 of the UNCRPD, must be implemented in a comprehensive manner to ensure that persons with disabilities can access their environment, transportation, public facilities and services, as well as information and communications technologies;
4. Recalls that the Committee on Petitions has been advocating the adoption of a binding treaty related to access by blind and visually impaired persons to published works since 2011; welcomes the inter-institutional agreement reached to implement the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled in EU copyright law, and reiterates its call for a swift ratification of the Marrakesh Treaty by the EU and its Member States;
5. Notes that the Committee on Petitions is regularly approached with questions relating to the right of people with disabilities to live independently, as enshrined in Article 19 of the UNCRPD, and has maintained its strong scrutiny of the deinstitutionalisation process in Member States; recalls that PETI conducted a fact-finding mission to Slovakia in September 2016 to seek information on the use of European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIFs) in facilitating the transition from the institutional care of people with disabilities to community-based services;
6. Underlines the centrality of the right of all persons with disabilities to live independently, and calls on the Commission to enhance the use of ESIFs by Member States, with a view to developing high-quality social services for people with disabilities, and realising the deinstitutionalisation process.