



**RESOLUTION ON
THE OUTCOMES OF THE EUROPEAN YEAR
OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
adopted by the EDF Annual General Assembly on 24 May 2003 in Athens**

1. Introduction

Recalling that the Madrid Declaration adopted in March 2002 is the conceptual framework of the European Year of People with Disabilities, providing a vision of how society should consider disability and how to arrive at it;

Insisting on the promotion of a human rights-based approach to disability;

Underlining that the European model on disability should consist of a combination of comprehensive anti discrimination legislation that outlaws all forms of discrimination faced by disabled people and positive action that provides those disabled people that so require the support to ensure a real integration in society.

Stressing that the success of the European Year of People with Disabilities will be measured by the concrete outcomes it will produce, which will remain as a legacy of the Year;

Noting that the present resolution presents the concrete outcomes the European Disability Forum expects to see at EU level: new legal initiatives, new structures, new budgetary initiatives. These should contribute to a better protection against discrimination of disabled people, an increased and more structured mainstreaming of disability and a more structured exchange of information on national disability policies.

2. Proposals

The European Disability Forum meeting at its Annual General Assembly on May 24 2003 in Athens:

1. Urges Member States to increase the protection of disabled people against discrimination as disabled people do not only face discrimination in their access to employment, but also in many other areas like education, transport, culture, information society.

2. Calls on Member States and the European Commission to initiate in 2003 a process towards comprehensive anti discrimination legislation at EU level, on the



basis of the EDF proposal for a Disability Specific Directive. Calls therefore on the European Commission, as responsible for initiating legislation to recognize the need for such a directive and develop some first actions in this direction.

3. Invites Member States and the European Commission to develop a structured exchange of information on national disability policies in the framework of the Lisbon strategy. This objective could be achieved via the establishment of an annual report prepared jointly by the European Commission and the Member States in consultation with representative national organizations of people with disabilities for the European Spring Council that will monitor and allow benchmarking on how disability has been mainstreamed in all the relevant policies and activities.

4. Calls on the European Commission to contribute to the mainstreaming of disability. For this purpose, a disability action programme at EU level is needed which should be managed by the European Commission Disability Unit, in consultation with the EDF. A disability action programme would provide a. the financial means (statistics, annual reports) to contribute to the mainstreaming of disability, b. the financial means for the work of the High Level Group on Disability, including reports on concrete policy areas such as positive action, and c. the core funding for European disability NGOs, which would have a mainstreaming focus.

5. Invites the European Commission and the Member States to strengthen the involvement of disability organisations, in particular EDF, in the policy making process. EDF should take part as an observer to all the meetings of the High Level Group on Disability, in order to provide the views of the European disability movement. EDF should also take part as an observer to the meetings of the European Commission Interservice group on disability. To ensure and allow for such EDF activities, security of EU funding for EDF is required, whilst at the same time, preserving the independent nature of EDF in the defining of EDF work programme and priorities.

6. Urges the European Institutions to improve accessibility to the built environment through the adoption of a EU directive. Only compulsory legislation, complemented by adequate standards, can ensure that all new buildings will be accessible. EDF expects that this will be one of the recommendations of the expert group, which has been set up on this issue.

7. Decides to disseminate the present Resolution to all relevant stakeholders at national level as well as at European level.