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| **Meeting of the EU Framework**  **to promote, protect and monitor**  **the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**  **Thursday, 15 March 2018**  **14.00 – 16.00**  Rue Montoyer 30, room MTS02X34  FRA joins by videoconference |

**Draft minutes**

**Participants**

European Ombudsman (EO): Elpida Apostolidou

European Parliament (EP):Monika Makay, Eloy Rebollo Piriz, Katja Vatter, Orsolya Zara

European Disability Forum (EDF): An-Sofie Leenknecht, Catherine Naughton

Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA): Martha Stickings, Srna Ignjatović

1. **Welcome and opening**

Catherine Naughton opened the meeting and welcomed the participants.

1. **Approval of the agenda**

The agenda was approved with no amendments.

1. **Follow up of action points from the last meeting**

* EDF will prepare revised operational provisions and share with all Framework members for approval.
* Possible dates for the next meeting between the EU Framework and the EU Focal point for the CRPD are either 18 or 25 April (morning). FRA will contact the Focal Point to check their availability; the EO kindly offered to host the meeting.

1. **Meeting of the EU Framework with the national monitoring frameworks established under Article 33(2)**

Framework members discussed preparations for the annual meeting between the EU Framework and the national monitoring frameworks.

Logistical elements:

As in previous years, the meeting should take place around the High Level Group on Disability and Work Forum, scheduled for 28-29 May in Brussels.

Framework members tentatively agreed that the meeting could take place on the afternoon of Monday 28 May. The European Parliament kindly agreed to host the meeting.

Preparation of agenda:

Framework members discussed three possible themes for the meeting, suggested by FRA:

* Involvement of national monitoring frameworks in European Structural and Investment Funds, in particular ESIF monitoring committees.
* Political participation, with a view to the 2019 European Parliament elections.
* Involvement and participation of disabled persons organisations, in light of the forthcoming General Comment on Articles 4(3) and 33(3) of the CRPD.

National monitoring frameworks will be able to give their feedback on their preferred topic when the save the date messages are sent out.

Framework members agreed that the agenda for the meeting between the EU and national frameworks should be focused on thematic discussions rather than reporting on framework activities; this information can be sent in advance of the meeting and shared in written form.

Framework members agreed to schedule an additional Framework meeting to discuss preparations for the annual meeting with the national frameworks in greater depth.

*Action points:*

* *FRA to check the availability of the ENNHRI CPRD Working Group to participate in a EU Framework meeting with national monitoring frameworks on the afternoon of 28 May.*
* *EDF to check with the Focal Point that a meeting on the afternoon of 28 May fits their planning.*
* *EDF to check the availability of the rapporteur for the forthcoming General Comment on the afternoon of 28 May.*

1. **Implementation of the 2017-18 Work Programme and update from the Framework members**

Framework members discussed the implementation of the 2017-2018 work programme. There was a discussion about the possibility of coordinating input and positions on relevant issues, where appropriate. Major forthcoming files include: preparation for the next European Structural and Investment Funds period and the forthcoming Multiannual Financial Framework, and the post-2020 European Disability Strategy.

*Action points:*

* *The Framework could consider organising thematic meetings on particular files of interest and importance.*
* *A political meeting of the EU Framework could be foreseen for the end of 2018 to discuss modalities for possible Framework engagement in key files.*

Framework members provided updates on their respective activities:

European Ombudsman:

* The Ombudsman’s strategic inquiry on whether the treatment of persons with disabilities under the Joint Sickness Insurance Scheme (JSIS) complies with the CRPD (OI/4/2016/EA) is ongoing. Following her inquiry team’s meeting with Commission representatives, the Ombudsman identified a range of issues on which she expected to make suggestions to the Commission. In November 2017, she launched a targeted consultation asking for the addressees’ views on the relevant suggestions. The consultation was addressed to the European Parliament’s Disability Support Group (EP DSG), the European Commission’s Disability Support Group (EC DSG), the Association of Staff with a Disability in the European Commission (ASDEC), and EDF. The contributions were received by the beginning of February 2018.
* The Ombudsman’s strategic inquiry into the accessibility of websites and online tools that the Commission manages (OI/6/2017/EA) is also ongoing. In October 2017, the Ombudsman received the Commission’s reply. In its reply, the Commission committed to take actions to improve the accessibility of its websites. According to the reply, the Commission could initiate a pilot project on some pages of the inter-institutional portal europa.eu to have some general information pages about how the EU works available in easy-to-read format. It will consider making accessibility courses mandatory for staff working as web designers, web developers and web masters. It is also studying the concept of an accessible mobile application which should be developed within the next 2 years to replace the JSIS online.
* The Ombudsman has launched a joint inquiry into two complaints concerning the accessibility for visually impaired candidates of competitions organised by the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO). The complaints concern, in particular, the accessibility of the online application form and of the computer based tests.

European Parliament:

* A study on Discrimination and access to employment for disabled female workers, commissioned by the EMPL Committee, was presented at the meeting of the CRPD Network on 11 October.
* On 6 December, the European Parliament hosted the 4th European Parliament of Persons with Disabilities, co-organised with EDF.
* The trialogue negotiations on the Accessibility Act started on 5 March.
* The STOA study: "Assistive technologies for people with disabilities" was published and will be presented in EMPL on 21 March.
* PETI coordinators decided for an oral question for the Commission on Participation of persons with disabilities in European elections which will be endorsed by the Committee on 21 March 2018 and be put on one of the next plenary agendas.
* Several petitions on disability issues were discussed during the PETI committee meeting on 11/12 October, including difficulties faced by persons with reduced mobility in Romania. In the same meeting, a PETI workshop was held on Protection of the rights of persons with disabilities, where a study on Inclusive education for learners with disabilities was presented.
* In the PETI committee meeting in April, another petition concerning the mobility of persons with disabilities in the EU is on the agenda.

FRA:

* On 12-13 October, FRA published [three thematic reports on different aspects of the deinstitutionalisation process](http://fra.europa.eu/en/press-release/2017/independence-far-reality-many-people-disabilities) at Estonian Presidency conference on independent living. The reports cover:
  + commitments and structures for achieving deinstitutionalisation;
  + funding and budgeting for achieving deinstitutionalisation;
  + independent living outcomes for persons with disabilities.

[The three reports are now available in easy-read](http://fra.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications?title=&year%5bmin%5d%5byear%5d=&year%5bmax%5d%5byear%5d=&related_content=&field_fra_publication_type_tid_i18n%5b0%5d=86&language=All) for download on FRA’s website; printed copies will be available in the coming months.

Bulgarian, Finnish, Italian and Slovak language versions of the key findings and FRA opinions of the three reports will be available in the coming months.

* In December, FRA published easy-read versions of its reports on:
  + [Child-friendly justice](http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2018/child-friendly-justice-easy-read)
  + [Together in the EU](http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2018/together-european-union-easy-read)
  + [Violence against women](http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2017/violence-against-women-easy-read)
* In January and February, FRA organised national meetings in Bulgaria, Finland, Ireland, Italy and Slovakia in the context of its fieldwork on drivers and barriers of deinstitutionalisation. The national case study reports from these five countries, along with the ‘comparative’ report will be published in December 2018.
* In November, FRA organised a two-day training on disability inclusion and facilitation for relevant staff. This included an accessibility audit of the venue for the forthcoming Fundamental Rights Forum, which will take place in September 2018.

EDF:

* In October 2017, EDF co-organised with OHCHR Brussels office and Equinet a [training](http://www.edf-feph.org/newsroom/news/crpd-workshop-european-organisations-persons-disabilities) for its members in countries being reviewed by the CRPD Committee in 2018 and 2019.
* EDF co-organised the [4th European Parliament of Persons with Disabilities](http://www.edf-feph.org/newsroom/news/4th-european-parliament-persons-disabilities-disability-rights-heart-european-union) in 2017, offering a forum for dialogue between disabled persons organisations and MEPs.
* EDF continued to advocate very actively for a strong and ambitious [European Accessibility Act](http://www.edf-feph.org/newsroom/news/accessibility-act-council-eu-adopts-its-position)
* EDF and CERMI Women’s Foundation released a [comprehensive report](http://www.edf-feph.org/newsroom/news/report-ending-forced-sterilisation-women-and-girls-disabilities) which raises awareness on how to prevent and end forced sterilisation of women and girls with disabilities. The issue of forced sterilisation and the report was presented during a [hearing](http://www.edf-feph.org/newsroom/news/ending-forced-sterilisation-women-and-girls-disabilities) at the European Parliament on 5 December 2017.
* EDF published its [second human rights report](http://www.edf-feph.org/newsroom/news/inclusive-sustainable-development-europe-new-report-european-disability-forum) entitled “2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) report: A European perspective to respect, protect and fulfil the United Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities”. The report was presented during a SDGs [conference](http://www.edf-feph.org/newsroom/news/sustainable-development-must-be-inclusive-persons-disabilities) organised by EDF and the Belgian Disability Forum on 3rd March 2018.
* EDF contributed to the analysis of the European Commission’s mid-term review of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 and to the preparation of the follow up strategy.

1. **AOB**

Framework members also discussed their activities in relation to the 2019 European Parliament elections. Possible actions could include outreach through relevant networks e.g. European Parliament Information Offices, and compiling a ‘package’ or relevant information, based on information and material already developed by Framework members.

*Action points:*

* *The Framework could consider organising thematic meetings on this topic.*