

International Day of Persons with disabilities: Statement by Commissioner Thyssen

Enabling people with disabilities to participate fully in society is one of the major societal challenges we face – there is still a long way to go in fighting the social exclusion of people with disabilities.

Inclusive growth and social fairness are at the core of the European Commission's agenda, as confirmed by the recent proclamation of the European Pillar of Social Rights. The European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council have committed to the principle that people with disabilities have the right to income support that ensures living in dignity, services that enable them to participate in the labour market and in society, and a work environment adapted to their needs. The Commission's efforts therefore need to be flanked by actions from national, regional and local authorities to make sure that people with disabilities are not left behind. And the continued involvement of civil society and business organisations will be indispensable.

The European Union continues to stand by its obligations under the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#). As part of the [European Disability Strategy 2010-2020](#) this European Commission has notably taken important initiatives to help removing barriers to accessibility for people with disabilities. Two years ago I presented my proposal for a [European Accessibility Act](#), which aims at making key products and services accessible for people with disabilities. It is now high time for my proposal to be adopted by all EU institutions. The European Parliament has defined its position in September, and I am confident that Member States will reach an agreement at the upcoming Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO) meeting on 7 December. 2018 must be a year of delivery for the Accessibility Act, which will bring concrete improvements to so many people's lives.

The International Day of Persons with Disabilities offers an excellent opportunity for the voices of people with disabilities to be heard. Therefore, the European Commission organises the [European Day of Persons with Disabilities conference](#), on 4 and 5 December. I hope I can count on broad support and interest from all actors. Together we will look ahead and discuss ways to build a more inclusive, social and accessible society.

For More Information

[Press release: Commission proposes to make products and services more accessible to disabled persons](#)

[DG Employment webpage on persons with disabilities](#)

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