

## **General Remarks**

The Austrian Disability Council is the umbrella organization of the Austrian disability associations. It comprises 80 member-organisations and represents the interests of 400.000 persons with disabilities in Austria. The Austrian Disability Council furthermore operates as the Austrian National Council to the European Disability Forum (EDF).

### **Concerning the next EU Multi-Annual Finance Framework – MFF post 2020 – and the future of the European structural and investment funds:**

Since there will be financial cuts in the EU budget – due to the fact that UK is leaving the EU – it is crucial that there will be no financial cutbacks in the social sector and especially not for persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities are a relevant group for the EU and the European Single Market: 80 million persons with disabilities are living across the European Union. Structural and investment funds are making a positive difference for these 80 million people. They support their social inclusion through increasing education and employment opportunities, in fighting poverty, in improving accessibility and fostering independent living.

The EU also ratified the UN “Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities” in 2010, so it is bound to implement the UN-CRPD together with its member states in many areas of shared competences such as: non-discrimination, public health matters, justice, security, consumer protection and transport.

Furthermore, the MFF post 2020 should consider the following legal instruments, which have as a common purpose the non-discrimination and inclusion of persons with disabilities:

- the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020,
- the European Pillar of Social Rights,
- the European Accessibility Act,
- the Council of Europe Disability Strategy 2017-2023,
- the UN-Sustainable Development Goals -SDGs

According to the motto of the next MFF: “new boost for more jobs, growth and investments” it’s important to emphasize the need for investments in persons with disabilities, in DPO’s, in education and employment opportunities. These are all investments in the future, because they help to ensure a society with inclusive, sustainable, economic growth.