

**Together for inclusion – CEFEC & its partners
in Europe → EDF**

“Nothing about us without us”

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The radical epitome of inclusion.

This motto guided EDF all the years of existence and characterizes its determination on fighting on the human rights that persons with disability have, to freely speak and represent themselves within all the EU Institutions and in all fields of disability.

It is a continuous fight against prejudism, discrimination and stigma. The challenge we always win, is that EDF works proactively to promote equal opportunities and protect human rights, to shift from the medical model of disability to the recognition of the human rights of people with disabilities.

Its official status was gained in 1996, with 15 national platforms of people with disabilities and their families, and, 70 N.G.Os.

Today, EDF is defending the interests of 80 million Europeans with disabilities.

From the beginning, EDF gained the close cooperation of the European Parliament, in particular the Disability Intergroup.

In the new decade, EDF is invited, through the international cooperation, to cherish its influence globally, i.e.

- International Disability Alliance - IDA,
- African Disability Forum,
- Arab Organization of Persons with Disabilities - AODP,
- ASEAN Disability Forum,
- Pacific Disability Forum, and
- Latin American Network of Non-Governmental Organizations of Persons with Disabilities and their Families - RIADIS).

So, strategically, EDF, every year,

Works and plans with :

- A. The Parliament : letters to the leaders of the political groups, meetings with the parliament members, key rapporteurs, participants at hearings, lobbying, etc.
Mainly, one thing that I admire, is the efficiency of the outcomes. For example, in every board meeting, we finish of Sunday noon (approximately) and the resolutions and papers and decisions on a consultative ground, reach the parliament within, around, two days.

B. The European Commission : lobbying and playing the role of the “interlocutor” with the commissioners, i.e.

1. Sustainable development in the work of the European Green Deal
2. Assistive technologies
3. Accessibility to EU funds
4. Mainstream the “Social Europe”, by including the Youth Guarantee, the fair minimum wages, the unemployment insurance scheme, social protection....
5. Democracy, Gender Equality, Ageing, Inclusion of people with disabilities in the local, national and regional community

And other actions on the same line :

i.e. migration, protection of Health, security of Europe, Oviedo Protocol, community based services, independent living....

Always seen from the disability point of view.

C. Council of Europe is an international organization, separate from the EU (with the aim to uphold human rights, democracy and rule of Law in Europe) that makes cooperation difficult.

i.e. the draft additional protocol to the Oviedo Convention, finds EDF, opposite since 2014, because the protocol supports coercive treatment and placement of persons with disabilities, in other words, individuals with psychosocial problems. Allies of EDF though, is the Parliament Assembly, which unanimously adopted a resolution on ending coercion in mental health care. Despite the above fact, the DH – BIO Committee, will conduct a study on good practice in mental health care to end coercion.

EDF is good in implementing and monitoring.

How?

It has :

- An Executive Committee
- A Boarding Committee
- A General Assembly
- A Woman's Committee, Youth Committee, CRPD Committee, Social Policy Committee....
- And a very qualified and capable secretariat (10 in numbers) with a Director.

They work in an organizational culture that supports capacity building seminars, quality of operations of structures and processes, producing toolkits, position papers supporting the articles of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, representing EDF in key meetings with members of the Parliament, European Organisations and stakeholders....

That's why, at Social Firms Europe CEFEC,

In 2017-2018, as a leader of the working group n.6, "Collaboration with EDF", I proposed the following methodology :

Each SFE CEFEC executive committee member, to get in contact with their National Disability Organisation and the country NGO, member of EDF, in order to establish a communication channel and be part of the local, national disability movement, and, co-act accordingly, especially on employment issues with the model of Social Firms, Social Cooperatives, Social Enterprises.

Being the person of reference, representing SFE CEFEC at the EDF Board Committee, this methodology will facilitate the interchange of information, between the two organization (EDF – SFE CEFEC), the establishment of our cooperation and the share of our know-how on issues of social economy for EDF members which EDF is in much need as the percentage of unemployment in disability population is :

“An average, only 48,1% of persons with disabilities in the EU, are employed compared to 73,9% among the general population.

Women with disabilities and persons with heavy support needs, are shown to have an even lower employment rates”

(Eurostat figures.

EDF’s call for a European Disability Rights Agenda 2020-2030,
8-9-10/11/2019, p.9)

This is the real message, *Together for Inclusion*, from SFE CEFEC to EDF and its partners in Europe.