**EASPD’s position on the UN General Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in relation to the discussion on Article 27 to the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*.**

Oral contribution – March 2021

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRPD/Pages/GeneralDiscussions.aspx>

In its intervention, **EASPD’s Secretary General, Mr Luk Zelderloo** would like to underline the Importance of the following points.

**Introduction.**

**EASPD** is the **European Association of Service providers for Persons with Disabilities**. Our Association aims at promoting equal opportunities for persons with disabilities through effective and high-quality service systems across Europe.

EASPD is committed to increasing the participation in the labour market of individuals with impairments through the involvement of the main stakeholders, such as Disabled People’s Organisations (DPOs), the civil society, policy makers, trade unions and the business world, and ensuring that the needs of persons with disabilities are fully taken into consideration.

We are a European not-for-profit organisation representing over 17,000 service providers in 34 European countries. Over a third of our members provide employment-related services to persons with disabilities across the continent.

EASPD is member of the European Disability Forum (EDF), it participates to the Conference of State Parties to the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (hereinafter UN CRPD) and is member of the European Commission’s High-Level Group on Disability. Additionally, EASPD is a founding member of the “Inclusive Labour Market Alliance’ (ILMA).

It is on the basis of this expertise and of the expertise of the members that it represents, that EASPD provides its oral statement.

It is EASPD’s belief that every individual has the right to decent work in an open and inclusive labour market. EASPD advocates for an inclusive labour environment. To put an end to the situation of exclusion from the labour market of persons with disabilities and to tackle their persistent situation of unemployment, immediate action must be undertaken, in particular with the expected impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the employment of persons with disabilities. Support measures are key to unlock job potential and shift the focus from the disability to the skills and competences. The right to a decent job is another objective equally pursued by EASPD. The unemployment rates of persons with disabilities remains significantly higher than for persons without disabilities. Many persons with disabilities of working age are also inactive, meaning that they do not seek employment at all. It is also true that amongst the persons with disabilities who are job holders, too many are underemployed, underpaid and/or hired with the systematic use of temporary contracts and reportedly have poor career perspectives.

**Additional points of discussion**

* Contest of employment of persons with disabilities in Europe.
* Employment support methodologies in Europe.
* Facilitating public policies for employment-related services.

**Conclusion**

Based on that premise, EASPD is convinced that it is crucial to build a solid eco-system aimed at facilitating the implementation of Article 27 to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD). Furthermore, it is important to promote the creation of sound legal frameworks as the necessary basis for the practical enforcement of the Article 27 and of the whole UN CRPD. The creation of sound legal frameworks at national level is key to support the existent strategies of inclusive employment. Those existing strategies constitute a major vehicle for developing decent jobs for individuals with disabilities and for facilitating the transition of some of the existing European facilities into a model of inclusion, which is more in line with the UN CRPD.