Beat: Technology

FRENCH PRESIDENCY OF EU HELD A CONFERENCE OVER THE DISABLED & THEIR RIGHTS

COMMISSIONER HELENA DALLI & MINISTERS

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USPA NEWS -
As part of the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union, the State Secretariat to the Prime Minister for Persons with Disabilities hosted, on 9 March 22, a Conference in Paris under the theme "Improving accessibility and access to rights, implementing the European Strategy 2021-2030". Some ministers of the European Union (Thirteen (13) in charge of disability, as well as experts and civil society stakeholders to accelerate on the priorities of accessibility and access to the rights of people with disabilities, were received in Paris, in the Mazarine Room, of the Institut de France, whose accessibility for wheelchairs was not respected, even hindered by cables and the danger of the arrival of cars in the street with respect to the disabled in a wheelchair, arriving to enter the Building. Helena Dalli's keynote, from the European Commissioner for Equality, was highly noted for its strength of proposal in its inclusive approach and "Despite the progress made, people with disabilities still face significant barriers in exercising their rights," said EU Equality Commissioner Helena Dalli.

EUROPEAN COMMMISSIONER HELENA DALLI FOR EQUALITY DELIVERED STRONG REMARK OVER INCLUSION OF THE DISABLED
Helena Dalli's keynote, from the European Commissioner for Equality, was highly noted for its strength of proposal in its inclusive approach and "Despite the progress made, people with disabilities still face significant barriers in exercising their rights," said EU Equality Commissioner Helena Dalli. Indeed, the new strategy for the decade, approved by the Commission in March of last year, aims in particular to guarantee fundamental rights, equal opportunities and freedom of movement for people with disabilities "irrespective of their sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, age or sexual orientation". According to Eurostat, a total of 87 million people aged 16-64 have a disability in Europe, which corresponds to 17.9% of the population. "Lack of accessibility, multiple and repeated discrimination and prejudice hinder their access to quality jobs or education," according to Dalli. Discussions also focused on the rights of people with disabilities, their independence in society and non-discrimination. Source: European Commission To start with, the entrance to the Prestigious Institute de France- "Mazarine Room", where the conference took place, was handicap-unfriendly, as it was hindered by cables and cobblestones, not to mention the dangerous arrival of vehicles traveling at high speed, on the road leading to the entrance of the building. All this makes it inaccessible to the wheel chairs bound. This chaotic reception already announces a contradiction in the face of the objective of this conference that was to "Strengthen the socio-economic inclusion of people with disabilities at European level". promised by this mini Conference on disability, under European Union's French Presidency (EUFP), held in Paris, on 9 march 22. The arrival of the European guests, was worthy of an international film festival, very ostentatious welcome. Indeed, the hosts seemed more concerned with carrying out a photocall session of more than an hour than with focusing on the kick off of the conference on "Improving accessibility and access to rights, implement the European Strategy 2021-203 »" . Indeed, the Secretary of State for Handicap, and her head of communication, were under an overdose of excitement, having lots of fun, in welcoming one by one, the VIP guests, and led them to a prestigious red carpet, posing with them for a lengthy photocall imitating a great international high level summit, showing off amateurism and pretension. Later on, the same VIP were offered a special treatment by a gastronomic lunch, and spoiled with gifts contained in a bag from the "Happy Cafe". As for the few journalists present, they were rejected, and invited not to hurry this moment of photo call, because filming, by two cameramen recruited for this festive occasion.

AN INTERESTING CONFERENCE THANKS TO THE SHARING OF PRACTICES FROM EUROPEAN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES
*The challenges of inclusive education, Mr J.W. Meijer, Director, European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education.
*Inclusive education and mobility: the challenges of mobility for young people with disabilities in Europe, European Agency Erasmus +
*The role of continuing education and lifelong learning in creating employment opportunities, European Association for Adult Education

THE FPEU CONFERENCE BUT HAVING INVITED TOO FEW ASSOCIATIONS AND MEDIA REPRESENTATIVE
It is to be regretted that very few associations for the defense of disability rights were invited. The same observation can be transposed for the media, not invited, (the media specializing in disability, in particular), resulted in the presence of only three journalists present.

The field of disability already suffering from a lack of media coverage during this five-year term would have deserved "inclusive" media coverage and therefore a real journalistic treatment, in the same way as other social subjects, during this mini summit under EUFP. Only three journalists were present at the Conference and the mainstream media and those specialized in disability were missing. On the other hand, the exchange and sharing of experiences and practices of ministers and experts from European Union countries is very fruitful, and enriching from all points of view, proving that France is very late. The benchmark was rather in favor of the Scandinavian and Baltic countries, which seem to have aligned their disability management policy with the declaration of human rights. In France, the approach has remained more medico-social, boasting of inclusion, which is only in name, and too vertical.

A FRENCH FIVE-YEAR POOR TERM ON DISABILITY AND VERY BADLY EXPERIENCED BY MILLIONS OF DISABLED PEOPLE "FEELING ABANDONED"

Since he was elected in 2017, the French President of the Republic Emmanuel Macron, however, had placed the handicap "Great Cause of the Quinquennat" as a priority. He had also placed the Secretariat for Disability under the aegis of the Prime Minister and had asked Sophie Cluzel, Secretary of State for Disability to work cross-functionally with the other ministries to advance disability in France in order to better include people with disabilities, reduce their unemployment rate, and improve their daily lives. During this meeting, under EUFP, no French government minister was present, except the Minister of Higher Education and Research Frederique Vidal who sent a short message pre-recorded on video, to announce a collaborative work on the research ... The other inter-ministerial collaborations, requested by the Head of State, in 2017, did not lead to any progress in favor of the 12 million people with disabilities in France. The frustrating concern is all the stronger for these vulnerable people who represent 17% of the French population who have felt abandoned, even when the Head of State had specified that they be given priority.

The President of the Republic Emmanuel Macron, however, had placed the handicap "Great Cause of the Quinquennat" as a priority. He had also placed the Secretariat of Handicap under the aegis of Prime Ministry, a very powerful leverage towards all the other ministers, which was purely untapped as it should have been for the benefit of disabled people.Indeed, in the context of an "inclusion of disabled people" which is not reflected by the reality of the 12 million disabled people in France, very underrepresented and suffering from a very high unemployment rate, a non accessibility to prestigious positions (Media, Politics, Show Bizz), the exclusion of millions of disabled children from conventional school, strong discrimination against disability, and severe abuse (80% of disabled women suffer violence). To this is added the law of deconjugalization of the AAH (Aide Adultes Handicap, 900€/month) carried out by the government to remove this allowance, as soon as the spouse or partner has a salary, judged "law of shame" by the opposition of Republican MPs, because it is the opposite of social justice. More than 100,000 people had signed a petition against this law (discussed for 2 years in the French Parliament), which allowed the Senate to take this petition into account, and to vote against this law in the name of social justice.

THE FRENCH SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DISABILITY RESPONDED WITH WRONG ANSWERS DURING THE PRESS CONFERENCE

The French Secretary of State for Disability, for her part, closed the Conference "Improving accessibility and access to rights, implementing the European Strategy 2021-2030" by surprisingly self-gratulating on her record, which has always been judged by Associations for the Defense of Disabled Persons, very unsatisfactory or even more than mediocre.

During the press conference, the Secretary of State praised the Duo Day, of which she is very proud, set up as a French springboard for hiring people with disabilities through this "coaching" She answers a question from a journalist on the Duo Day, which reminds him that this concept is not French, contrary to what the Secretary of State Sophie Cluzel claims, but imported from Ireland born in 2008, then resumed in Belgium, in 2010, under the JobShadow name. and was only experienced for the first time in France in 2015, in Lot-et-Garonne.This event is not French, but part of the European Disability Employment Week. However, many disabled people, enrolled in Duo Day, have expressed their frustration at this unique and special moment, which unfortunately only takes place one day a year, before finding themselves in their daily life sad by the lack of work and isolation.

The Journalist reminds him of the strong frustration felt by the disabled people enrolled in Duo Day, which is in fact only a One Shot operation, showing how possible and brilliant it is for the disabled person to be part of a team of work in an ordinary environment and to be included, for a single day... Secretary of State Sophie Cluzel then replied that In 2021, the 4th national edition broke a new participation record with 17,000 duets registered on the duoday.fr platform.

Which is true, but on the other hand, The Secretary of State, makes a shortcut, wrong by claiming that 17% of duets have turned into direct hiring of disabled people, part of Duo Day.... However, no official figure exists anywhere, with the Associations, job creation

center, or the Ministry of Labor,

The concept is very enthusiastic, and largely supported by a large number of associations, communities, business leaders, employees and the government as a whole, however, it turns out in France is that it is not leading to job creations. It is even worse, creating a sens of frustration once, the Duet, is so positive and efficient, but once a Day in a Year, this kind of Anglo-Saxon concept is both very well perceived, and turns out to be very constructive, because the employers play the game and actually recruit the "protected" disabled, after a wonderful day of Duo Day, for both parties. However, the Anglo-Saxon mentality is prepared and receptive to this kind of initiative, while in France, the always retrograde mentality with regard to the handicap, willingly participates in the operation precisely because it is precisely a question of one day and will not be repeated in the long term, and take the step of hiring a disabled person. The reasons that add up to the mentality of employers, resides in particular in the refusal to make efforts to adapt working methods, ergonomic materials, wheelchair accessibility and human interaction, knowing that they only have to pay a financial fine, to AGEFIPH, when you do not wish to recruit a disabled person, as provided for by the 2005 law. This option has become such an easy way to circumvent the law and avoid hiring disabled people. Not everything is transposable from one country to another, and especially not successful concepts from Ireland to France, when it comes to the inclusion of people with disabilities. And the Duo Day, is lived by the handicapped, like a double pain, because frustrating, by the One Shot aspect, and remains only just a facade and an alibi for the secretariat of the handicap, in the face of the growing and worrying increase the unemployment rate of disabled people in France (10%). It would suffice to adopt a real Marshall Plan to recruit disabled people, whose inclusion should be addressed in line with the Declaration of Human Rights, giving them a place as full citizens in society instead of approach them from the medico-social angle in France. The notion of the inclusion of disabled people in France is more a formula of political language, but does not correspond at all to the sad reality of disabled people in France who feel rather abandoned, despite the many laws and jurisdiction in their favor.

AGEFIPH, WHICH COLLECTS FINES FOR THE NON-EMPLOYMENT OF DISABLED PEOPLE, IS AWARENESS OF MONEY WITH A GROWING BUDGET OF €570M IN 2022----------
Agefiph, the fund management association for the professional integration of disabled people, has the particular mission of collecting contributions from companies that do not respect their obligation in terms of employing people with disabilities.
The law 2005 obliges companies (>20 employees, that have ne' recruited at least 6% of disabled people) to pay a financial contribution to Agefiph (Association for the management of the fund for the professional integration of disabled people) when they do not respect their obligation to employ people with disabilities. Agefiph, the fund management association for the professional integration of disabled people, has the particular mission of collecting contributions from companies that do not respect their obligation in terms of employing people with disabilities. The law obliges companies to pay a financial contribution to Agefiph (Association for the management of the fund for the professional integration of disabled people) when they do not respect their obligation to employ people with disabilities.

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