

Conclusions from the participants of the Forum ‘Better services for persons with disabilities, a better society for all’ in Serbia

The **Service Provider Forum, organised by COD in Serbia and EASPD on 13 and 14 December 2013 in Belgrade, gathered more than 80 representatives** of service providers from more than 20 towns/cities and municipalities in Serbia, as well as policy-makers in the field, officials from the central and local levels, NGOs, media and EASPD representatives.

In order to **accelerate the reform process** in the area of social protection and inclusion of persons with disabilities, **participants agreed on the following actions for future:**

1. **Improve communication** amongst users of social services and service providers for persons with disabilities, their families and representative organisations, authorities from all levels, scientific research organisations of social policy, **through the organisation of meetings** that will focus on specific areas of services for persons with disabilities in the Republic of Serbia, with the participation of EASPD;
2. **Improve the process of licensing providers of social services** by strengthening cooperation and encouraging mutual responsibility of all actors involved in the licensing process, both at the national and local level;
3. **Enable direct participation of users and their representatives in the planning and allocation of funds** intended for the implementation of services and monitoring and evaluation of the range of social services supported by the Republic;
4. **Improve multi-sectorial cooperation at the local level** to encourage all stakeholders in the field of providing services for persons with disabilities to cooperate and **jointly develop social services**. An important step in this direction would be **increasing the transparency of decisions of local self-governments** on the establishment and funding of social services at the local level.;
5. **Promote existing databases of service providers** and encourage their expansion in order to continue **mapping the need for social services at the local level versus the existing social services**;
6. **Enhance training on monitoring the quality of services** for persons with disabilities for users and families, as well as for service providers, civil servants and inspectors in the field of social protection, representatives of the media and independent bodies;
7. **Provide multiple, regular, timely, high quality and affordable ways of informing stakeholders** at all levels and at the level of those services about the new legislative framework, models of good practice, funding, etc;
8. **Find ways of encouraging innovative services** through project financing, regular monitoring and evaluation **based on empirical indicators** by the competent authorities until the time of their introduction into the system and support development of innovative services following the standards developed by the EU;



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9. **Establish an information system as technical support for the development of sustainability services** for persons with disabilities **and improve communication with the EASPD through the national member organisations** and other networks at the international level.

For more information, please visit the website of our EASPD member COD in Serbia:

<http://www.cod.rs/en/news/conclusions-of-the-participants-of-the-forum-of-service-providers-for-persons-with-disabilities-better-services-for-persons-with-disabilities-a-better-society-for-all/>

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