



The European Deafblind Union

Established October 22, 2003

www.edbu.eu

Manifesto of the European Deafblind Union (EDbU)

for the European Day of Deafblind People, 22nd October, 2024

The European Deafblind Union (EDbU) is an organization whose main goal is to protect the rights and legitimate interests of deafblind people!

Today, 22nd October 2024, the European Day of Deafblind People, we call for immediate and concrete actions!

We unite with one voice, asking for visibility and recognition!

We want equality and a life without obstacles and barriers!

Deafblindness is a unique disability that affects millions of people in Europe who seek their rights to a dignified life!

1. Visibility and legal recognition

We demand the immediate recognition of deafblindness as a unique disability as announced in the Written Declaration 1/2004 of the European Parliament. Deafblind people face extreme difficulties in global perception, communication, mobility, access to education and information. Many European countries have not yet taken substantial measures to minimize obstacles and barriers in our daily lives, which is unacceptable and cannot be delayed.

We call on all European and national institutions to take urgent measures for our visibility and legal recognition!

2. Emergency Resolution on Professional Deafblind Interpreters and Intervenors and Equal Access to Communication and Information for Persons with Deafblindness in Europe

We urge the European Parliament to approve and adopt as a matter of urgency a resolution from the conference "Alone We Can Do So Little, Together We Can Do So Much" held in the European Parliament in 2018, which guarantees access to professional deafblind interpreters and intervenors.

We call for support to ensure the full participation of the deafblind in society as worthy citizens.



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3. Recognition of sign languages

We demand the official recognition of sign languages as national languages across Europe, as well as the recognition of deafblind persons as users of these languages. Sign language is vital to our communication and our right to use it should be respected in all areas of public life.

4. Promotion, study and practicing of communication methods and systems

We advocate the study, promotion and implementation of the various communication methods and systems for deafblind individuals, ensuring their dissemination and use by deafblind people.

We insist on promoting and supporting the haptic / socio-haptic / protactile communication system, which is key for many deafblind individuals in everyday communication and interaction. Communication is a basic human right that is regulated by international acts.

5. Independent living

We insist for easier access to personal assistants that support deafblind people in their daily activities, leisure, travel and mobility.

We insist on access to the media through modern technologies and services, which is a fundamental human right guaranteeing universal accessibility under equal conditions.

6. Exercising the civil right to vote

Civic participation is a fundamental pillar of democracy.

We, the deafblind, insist on urgent measures to ensure a qualified professional and equal conditions, when exercising the right to vote, which is a basic human right!

We insist on providing accessible and comprehensible election information, promoting the dignified and fair participation of deafblind people in democratic processes.

7. Right to decision-making

We insist on freedom in making decisions, as regulated in international legal acts: Freedom and independence in exercising the right to decide on equal terms with the rest of the population.

We insist on providing quality and qualified interpreting services for deafblind people, which is a segment of social inclusion and effective participation in all aspects of life.



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8. Access to individual and personal services and technologies

We insist to meet our communication needs by providing professional deafblind interpreters, communication mediation and access to technology.

We insist on participation in the research of new technologies for movement, communication and information. Nothing for the deafblind, without the deafblind!

9. European Day of Deafblind People

We appeal the EU and national governments to officially recognize the European Day of Deafblind People, 22nd October, date of establishment of the EDbU on 22nd October 2003. The European Deafblind Union (EDbU) is an organization with a long tradition of protecting the rights and legitimate interests of deafblind people throughout Europe.

Official recognition is essential to ensure our community receives visibility, support and resources.

10. The red-white cane - a symbol of deafblindness

The red-white cane is a symbol of deafblindness and a sign that provides visibility and identity to the deafblind community.

We call on public organizations to recognize and promote this symbol to give visibility to people with deafblindness and the challenges we face.

11. Support for deafblind associations

We call for solidarity and support for deafblind organizations in all European countries, led by deafblind persons and established with the goal of achieving equal opportunities and effective exercise of our rights, in accordance with the United Nations International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

12. Rights of deafblind women and girls

Deafblind women and girls face enormous challenges every day, such as discrimination and the risk of violence. A deafblind woman or girl is always vulnerable and an easy target for assault and humiliation.

We insist on inclusion in the development of strategies and taking adequate measures guaranteeing basic human rights and legitimate interests, on equal terms with other women and girls, with or without disabilities.



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13. Empowerment of deafblind youth

We insist on fair access to education, work, free time and equality in public life. Ensuring a fulfilling childhood and adolescence, as citizens of the European Union.

14. Dignified aging

We insist on a dignified aging of deafblind people, respecting their rights, a guarantee that aging does not mean a loss of their identity or exclusion from society.

We call for solidarity, support and quality care and services ensuring a quality life into old age for elderly deafblind people. To preserve their dignity as citizens of their country and society.

On this European Day of Deafblind People, 22nd October 2024, let's join hands and achieve our goals together!

We demand the implementation of policies and concrete actions that will improve our lives! Europe, we are here and we are calling for urgent measures and action by the competent authorities for the security and dignified life of deafblind people.

We demand the recognition we deserve. Together we can make our dreams come true.

ISSUED ON 22ND OCTOBER, 2024

BY THE EUROPEAN DEAFBLIND UNION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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