



DATES



INTERNATIONAL DAY OF DISABLED PEOPLE

3 DECEMBER

"Nothing about Us without Us" is the motto of this year's International Day of the Disabled People. Proclaimed by the General Assembly in October 1992, this day aims to raise awareness on disabled people's rights at national and international levels.

2008 Theme: "Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Dignity and justice for all of us"

Dignity and justice for all of us is the theme of this year's International Day for Persons with Disabilities, as well as for the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Around 10 per cent of the world's population, or 650 million people, live with disabilities. The Convention promotes and protects the human rights of persons with disabilities in civil, cultural, economic, political, and social life. However, all over the world, persons with disabilities continue to face barriers to their participation in society and are often forced to live on the margins of society. They are routinely denied basic rights such as to equal recognition before the law and legal capacity, freedom of expression and opinion, and the right to participate in political and public life, such as voting. Many persons with disabilities are forced into institutions, a direct breach of the rights to freedom of movement and to live in the community.

Eighty per cent of persons with disabilities – more than 400 million people – live in poor countries and there is a strong link between disability and poverty. For example, the statistics on employment for persons with disabilities are staggering. In developing countries, 80 per cent to 90 per cent of persons with disabilities of working age unemployed and in industrialized countries it is estimated to be between 50 per cent and 70 per cent. The rights to education and health are also routinely denied. Ninety per cent of children with disabilities in developing countries do not attend school, says UNESCO.

Approximately 20 million women acquire disabilities as a result of complications during pregnancy or childbirth. This continued marginalization against persons with disabilities highlights the need for all States to sign, ratify and implement the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE NEWS



Conference on Protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse

The Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse provides States with a valuable tool for preventing and combating all violations of children's fundamental rights. The Council of Europe has undertaken to alert governments to the need to ensure that the convention comes into force quickly and to support them in the ratification process by means of regional conferences. The third conference took place on 15 and 16 December, in Warsaw (Poland).

It seems that a sizeable minority of European children (10 to 20%) suffer sexual violence in the course of their childhood. There is even greater acknowledgement that this problem exists now that the spread of the Internet has spawned new offences.

The Council of Europe convention will do much to strengthen international co-operation, which is essential for prosecuting the perpetrators of such offences and putting an end to impunity, regardless of the country where the offence is committed. The convention is, moreover, the only treaty in the world to consider "grooming" (where adults seek to enter into contact with children or adolescents for sexual purposes, for example through chat rooms) a criminal offence.

The Council of Europe has made the promotion of children's rights and the protection of children against violence a priority, as is borne out by the programme "Building a Europe for and with children" (2006-2008). A game called "Wild Web Woods", now available in 20 languages, enables children to learn to surf the Internet safely.



Strasbourg poster campaign

To draw attention to the Council of Europe's new anti-discrimination campaign: "Speak out against discrimination" and in the run-up to the end-of-year holidays, there will be more than 125 campaign posters displayed throughout Strasbourg, France.

The anti-discrimination campaign is working with and through the media to raise awareness of the protection mechanisms available in Europe to victims of discrimination.

Website "Speak out against discrimination":

<http://www.coe.int/t/DG4/ANTI-DISCRIMINATION-CAMPAIGN/>

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Non-State Actors and Local Authorities in Development Public awareness and education for development in Europe

Restricted Call for Proposals 2008

Reference: EuropeAid/127765/C/ACT/Multi

Deadline for submission of Concept Notes: **17 February 2009**

The overarching objectives of this call for proposals are to support actions aiming at raising public awareness of development issues and promote education for development in the European Union (EU) and acceding countries to anchor development policy in European societies, to mobilise greater public support for action against poverty and fairer relations between developed and developing countries, and to change attitudes to the issues and difficulties the developing countries and their peoples are facing. All necessary documents you will find here:

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/europeaid/online-services/index.cfm?do=publi.welcome>