

Marlene Mizzi: L-aċċessibilità hija t-triq 'il quddiem lejn soċjetà aktar ġusta
Il-konferenza organizzata mill-MEP Marlene Mizzi tenfasizza l-htieġa ta' aktar aċċessibilità

Ħafna individwi fid-dinja tal-lum għadhom qegħdin jiffaċċjaw sfidi u ostakli kontinwi li huma diffiċli jekk mhux impossibbli biex jingħelbu. Wisq ċittadini m'għandhomx biżżejjed opportunitajiet u ħafna drabi dan ikun ġej direttament min-nuqqas ta' aċċessibilità għal opportunitajiet. Id-diskriminazzjoni għadha tilgħab rwol importanti fis-soċjetà tagħna u dan jaffettwa miljuni ta' ħajjiet.

Nhar il-Ġimgħa, 24 ta' Novembru, 2017, l-MPE Marlene Mizzi organizzat il-konferenza pubblika Accessibility Without Discrimination, bl-appoġġ tal-grupp S&D tal-Parlament Ewropew. Accessibility Without Discrimination ġiet organizzata bl-appoġġ tal-Malta Communications Authority (MCA) u l-Kummissjoni għad-Drittijiet ta' Persuni b'Diżabilità (CRPD). Għadd ta' *stakeholders, policymakers* tal-Gvern u organizzazzjonijiet mis-soċjetà ċivili attendew u pparteċipaw fil-konferenza.

L-għan ta' Accessibility Without Discrimination kien li jitqajjem għarfien dwar l-importanza tal-aċċessibilità fil-ħajja ta' kuljum ta' miljuni ta' individwi, speċjalment persuni b'diżabilità.

L-MPE Marlene Mizzi tkellmet dwar kif ħafna persuni għadhom iddiskriminati sal-ġurnata tal-lum. Hija semmiet il-ħidma tagħha f'diversi kumitati u gruppi u anke dik li qiegħda ssir fil-Parlament Ewropew fuq aċċessibilità. Mizzi enfasizzat li l-politiċi jridu jharsu d-drittijiet ta' kull persuna u jaraw li l-persuni b'diżabilità jkollhom opportunitajiet daqs kulhadd.

L-Onor. Anthony Agius Decelis, Segretarju Parlamentari għal Persuni b'Diżabilità u Anzjanità Attiva, kif ukoll l-Onor. Silvio Schembri, Segretarju Parlamentari għas-Servizzi Finanzjarji, l-Ekonomija Diġitali u Innovazzjoni, enfasizzaw il-progress li sar fuq aċċessibilità u semmew il-pjani futuri tal-gvern biex itejjeb il-ħajja u jagħti aktar indipendenza lil persuni b'diżabilità.

Oliver Scicluna, Kummissarju tad-Drittijiet tal-Persuni b'Diżabilità, spjega x'inhuma d-diffikultajiet li jiffaċċjaw ta' kuljum dawn il-persuni u kif ħafna minnhom isibuha diffiċli biex isibu xogħol minħabba d-diżabilità tagħhom.

Siobhan Long minn Enable Ireland, organizzazzjoni li ma tagħmilx profitt u hija ffinanzjata mill-istat, u li tipprovdi servizzi b'xejn għat-tfal u l-adulti b'diżabilità u lill-familji tagħhom fl-Irlanda, għamlet preżentazzjoni informattiva u spjegat kif it-teknoloġija tista' tgħin tant ħajjiet.

Vickie Gauci, Terapista Okkupazzjonali li qed tistudja fl-Università ta' Leeds, tkellmet dwar attivizmu tad-diżabilità, it-teknoloġija assistiva u d-disinn universali u għamlet preżentazzjoni interessanti dwar "Enable technology and employment of disabled people in Malta".

Clifford Protelli, Assistant Manager fis-Servizzi tas-CRPD, tkellem dwar l-esperjenza personali tiegħu b'ħala persuna b'diżabilità u dwar dak kollu li għadda minnu u, għalkemm ma kinitx faċli, irnexxielu jikseb suċċess fil-ħajja professjonali tiegħu. Aimee Cassar, Assistant HR Manager fil-KMPG Crimsonwing (Malta) Ltd, semmiet il-vantaġġi li tħaddem persuni b'diżabilità u kif il-kumpanija tagħha ħadmet biex saret aktar aċċessibbli.

Kien hemm qbil li għalkemm diġà sar ħafna xogħol fuq dan il-qasam, kemm nazzjonali kif ukoll Ewropew, dan għadu mhux biżżejjed.

"Ilkoll kemm aħna ħaqqna opportunitajiet indaqs. Irridu naħdmu bis-sħiħ biex nifitxu l-bieb tal-opportunitajiet għal kulhadd, għal kull membru fis-soċjetà tagħna, għal kull individwu u nittama li din

il-konferenza tkun pass eqreb lejn soċjetà aktar ġusta,” temmet tgħid l-MPE Marlene Mizzi fid-diskors tal-ġheluq.

Marlene Mizzi: Accessibility is the way forward for a fairer society

The conference organised by MEP Marlene Mizzi highlights the need for more accessibility

Many individuals in today's world are still facing continuous challenges and obstacles which are difficult, sometimes impossible, to overcome. Too many citizens lack opportunities and many times this derives directly from the lack of accessibility to opportunities available to some and not to others. Discrimination still plays an important role in our society and this effects millions of lives.

On Friday, 24th November, 2017, MEP Marlene Mizzi hosted the public conference Accessibility Without Discrimination, supported by the S&D group in the European Parliament. Accessibility Without Discrimination was organised with the assistance of the Malta Communications Authority (MCA) and the Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). A variety of stakeholders, government policymakers and civil society organisations attended and participated in the conference.

The aim of Accessibility Without Discrimination was to create and amplify awareness about the importance of accessibility in the everyday life of millions of individuals, especially for people with disabilities.

MEP Marlene Mizzi said that many people in our society are still discriminated. She mentioned her work in various committees and group and the European Parliament's work on accessibility. Mizzi emphasized that politicians have to protect every person's rights and make sure that people with disabilities have the same opportunities as everyone.

Hon. Anthony Agius Decelis, Parliamentary Secretary for Persons with Disability and Active Ageing, and Hon. Silvio Schembri, Parliamentary Secretary for Financial Services, Digital Economy and Innovation, highlighted the progress made on accessibility and the government's future plans to improve the lives and give more independence to people with disabilities.

Oliver Scicluna, Commissioner for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, explained the difficulties faced daily by these people and how most of them find it hard to find a job because of their disability.

Siobhan Long from Enable Ireland, a non-profit state-funded organisation that provides free services to children and adults with disabilities and their families in Ireland, gave a very informative presentation and explained how technology can help so many lives to the better.

Vickie Gauci, an Occupational Therapist who is studying at the University of Leeds, made a presentation on disability activism, assistive technology and universal design and made an interesting presentation on "Enable technology and employment of disabled people in Malta".

Clifford Protelli, Assistant Manager at CRPD services, spoke about his personal experience as a person with disabilities and explained what he went through and, even though it wasn't easy, how he managed to succeed in his professional life. Aimee Cassar, Assistant HR Manager at KMPG

Crimsonwing (Malta) Ltd, explained the advantages of employing people with disabilities and how her company managed to become more accessible.

It was agreed that although a lot is being done already, both on national and European level, it is definitely not enough.

“We all deserve equal opportunities. We have to work hard to open wide the door of opportunity for everyone, for every single member of our society, for every individual and I hope that this conference will be another step towards a fairer society,” concluded MEP Marlene Mizzi at in her closing remarks.

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