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## BETTER SUPPORTING AND INVOLVING THOSE WITH A DISABILITY: A CHALLENGE AND A NECESSITY (*government's referral*)

**There is the disability, and there is the person with the disability, and it is important not to confuse the two.**

One in four people in France are living with some form of handicap, physical limitation or disability. The number of people affected and the commitments made by France in ratifying the International Convention on the Rights of Disabled People in 2010 lead us to look beyond a mere analysis of the systems put in place to support disabled people and a specific approach. Efforts involving public authorities, the world of work and the non-profit sector and designed to support disabled people should henceforth involve the public themselves.

Such efforts are all the more essential given that our model is being put to the test by a large-scale economic, financial, social and environmental crisis. We must reassess the ways in which public policies are implemented with the aim of creating new economic and social impetus and move away from the approach of juxtaposing systems for the purposes of achieving greater coherence that makes it possible to adopt an inclusive dynamic based on a welcoming and supportive society. An inclusive society would require disability representation to be improved within French society.

The law of 11 February 2005 on equal rights and opportunities, participation and citizenship for the disabled represented an initial step in this direction, recognising the role of the environment in the production of the disability, looking at compensation in the form of monetary benefits and services and outlining the principle of access to everything for everyone.

This innovative vision of the accessibility of school, employment, public works, etc. has only partially been implemented. As is the case in Germany and Belgium, France favours the integration of those living with a disability and seeks to

'adapt' them to their environment by compensating for the difficulties they encounter. Sweden, Norway, Italy and Spain favour an inclusive approach and believe that failure to adapt public services appropriately excludes those living with a disability.

As far as France is concerned, a more inclusive society is not only a challenge but also now a necessity. The layering of systems and backers results in a complex system that is difficult for those living with a disability and their families to understand and is detrimental to making any actual future plans, including a seamless transition into old age. Is it not time for us to create a society in which goods and services are accessible to all and where all citizens are able to highlight their abilities whilst exercising their basic rights?

**11.8 million people, that is 26.4 % of the population, are living with a handicap, a physical limitation or a disability (INSEE - HID survey 2003)**



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## **PROMOTING ACCESSIBILITY**

- creating an interregional ‘universal accessibility and design’ competitiveness cluster and launching a research project looking at the concept of automatic transcription into a language that is easy to read and to understand;
- developing the tools for connecting to contributory sites listing accessible places and services based on the jaccede.com contributory platform model and compiling a list of inclusive initiatives open to all excluded segments of the population (the elderly, the poor, the disabled, etc.) based on the Richesses et différences platform;
- organising an access day involving all local authorities and promoting the S3A pictogram to encourage institutions to cater for the needs of all citizens;
- encouraging the allocation of public funding to sporting and cultural events demonstrating an inclusive dimension.

## **ORGANISING AND FUNDING RESEARCH AND EVALUATION**

- sustaining existing public funding, maintaining tax relief on donations and entrusting the ANR with the task of implementing a disability research programme with the aim of developing basic and clinical research into the living environment and links between them, entrusting the DREES with the task of compiling a body of statistics common to all State departments and regional authorities and entrusting the CNIS with the task of carrying out an expert assessment of the French statistics system in order to monitor the application of the 2005 law with the aim of promoting the inclusion of disabled people;
- organising disability meetings, along the same lines as the Bichat interviews in the medical sphere, every two to three years for the purposes of taking stock of the major developments in the school system, the workplace, etc.

## **FACILITATING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A PATHWAY APPROACH FOR THOSE WITH A DISABILITY AND THEIR FAMILIES**

- entrusting the prescriber with the task of providing pathways of support from the point of diagnosis, creating a national toll-free number for accessing a help and information service, funding home help through the Disabled Child’s Education Allowance (Allocation d’Education de l’Enfant Handicapé - AEEH), incorporating the terms governing the provision of temporary support into personal compensation plans and extending and relaxing the terms governing sick child leave;
- implementing the abolition of the age limit imposed by the law of 11 February 2005;
- developing supported employment by means of FIPHFP (Fonds pour l’insertion des personnes handicapées dans la fonction publique) and AGEFIPH (Association de gestion du fonds pour l’insertion des personnes handicapées) funding.

## **FACILITATING SUPPORT**

- through social networks by adapting prevention and detection (image-based screening) programmes and campaigns and by developing care networks and securing the funding thereof;
- through education establishments by educating all children “sans solution” (children who have no alternative solutions concerning their education) depending on the guidance that they have been offered, by incorporating a component relating to strategies for supporting and accommodating the needs of pupils with special educational needs into all school assignments, by standardising support systems and adapting the ways in which establishments are able to accommodate pupils and by increasing both support and basic and ongoing training for teachers;
- by optimising the governance system by bringing the three advisory councils (on age, disability and poverty) together at national level to form a High Council on Inclusion and replicating this Council at regional level whilst also extending it to poverty.