

Launch of the National Project for the European Disability Card

Today, 6 July 2016 at 10 am the “European Disability Card” project was presented at the Press Room of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies.

The EU Disability Card project, which finds its origins in the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020, is aimed at introducing a card that allows access to persons with disabilities to a series of free or reduced-cost services in the field of transport, culture and leisure throughout the national territory in a reciprocal regime with other EU countries. The goal is to ensure the full inclusion of persons with disabilities in social and cultural life within the communities. Eight EU countries are taking part in the project: Belgium, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Malta, Slovenia, Romania and, of course, Italy.

“Italy’s commitment to the disability card project is based on the need to work ever more incisively on the issue of full inclusion for persons with disabilities in our society,” said meeting attendee Franca Biondelli, Undersecretary of State and responsible for social policies. “We intend to make our contribution together with the other participating countries” she continued, “because the enjoyment of the rights referred to by the UN Convention for Persons with Disabilities also includes many elements of daily life such as moving and travelling, going to a museum, the cinema or the stadium ”.

FISH (Italian Federation for Overcoming Disabilities), in partnership with FAND (Federation of National Associations for Persons with Disabilities) is responsible for the implementation of the project, with the Ministry of Labour sponsoring the initiative as the National Authority on disability legislation. Both federations are members of the National Observatory on the condition of persons with disabilities, chaired by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies.

“We believe that working in synergy with the other EU countries that decided to take part in the project is an source of pride for Italy”, said Vincenzo Falabella, President of FISH, “and is an important element in contributing to the cultural challenge we face. As the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities reminds us, all barriers, of any kind, which prevent persons with disabilities from participating fully in the life of the communities, must be removed and the European Commission’s project is another fundamental step towards this goal ”.

“It is essential to make every effort so that persons with disabilities have the same chances and opportunities as all other citizens in every aspect of their lives”, said Roberto Romeo, vice president of FAND, “including full access to transport, culture and leisure (activities), with a view to full inclusion and participation. As always, the world of associations representing persons with disabilities is at hand to provide the various public and private players, ministries and businesses with their experience to achieve what we believe are objectives of civilization and modernity ”.

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