

# Invitation

International Conference on  
Good Policies for Disabled People  
22-23 January 2012 in Vienna, Austria

Convened by:

# Disability: A Human Rights Issue

The Essl Foundation, the World Future Council and Bank Austria have joined forces to organize an international conference in Vienna on good policies establishing disabled people's rights. We aim to raise awareness and to speed up political action to ensure the full enjoyment of all human rights by all disabled people.

In May 2008 the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities entered into force. However, the lack of expertise on how to plan and execute policies and strategies remains a major challenge. Outstanding examples of political responsibility that actively promote the rights of disabled people both now, and for the future, are fairly rare.

In response to this shortage of policy role models, the Vienna conference will discuss international policy examples that have successfully overcome social, legal, economic, political and environmental conditions that act as barriers for disabled people. The conference seeks to strengthen political commitment for protecting and guaranteeing disabled people's human rights.



*"Our policies reflect our values. This important conference will help spread visionary policies to safeguard the rights of those challenged by disabilities now and in the future."*

**Jakob von Uexkull, World Future Council**



*"The Essl Foundation launched the Zero Project as an innovative approach to help persons with disabilities to improve their legal rights as well as their daily lives. Carefully selected Good Policies and Good Practice get a dedicated platform."*

**Martin Essl, Essl Foundation**



*"Diversity is among the core values of Bank Austria. To include people with disabilities is a top priority for us. We are therefore proud and very pleased to be part of this exciting conference. I am confident that it will make an important contribution toward improving the situation of disabled people."*

**Willi Cernko, Bank Austria**

# One Goal: Spreading Good Policies

The International Conference on Good Policies for Disabled People takes place in Vienna on January 22 and 23, 2012.

For the first time ever, parliamentarians, representatives of NGOs and foundations, academics and disability rights activists will come together to discuss inspiring policies from all around the world and to find ways to promote and spread them to other countries.

Encouraging examples of political responsibility will be presented and discussed. The policy examples concern the most pressing issues Europe's stakeholders will need to address in the near future: anti-discrimination, accessibility and equality; supported decision-making; education; access to justice; personal assistance and independent living.

The policies have been selected by a Scientific Advisory Board, consisting of eleven leading European experts from the disability rights movement, academia, human rights institutions and foundations. Amongst the 20 laws nominated by disabled people's organizations, the following have been chosen in a multilevel selection process:

- For their comprehensive approach to, or certain features that particularly advance, non-discrimination, accessibility and equality of opportunities: the Austrian Federal Disability Equality Act, the Spanish Law of Equal Opportunities, Non-Discrimination and Universal Access for People with Disabilities and the UK Equality Act.
- For recognizing the right to support in personal decision-making and avoiding guardianship: the Representation Agreement Act of British Columbia, Canada.
- For promoting accessible investigative and judicial procedures for people with mental, intellectual or communication disabilities: the Israeli Investigation and Testimony Procedures Law.
- For successfully enabling independent living: the Swedish Act on Support and Services for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments and the Personal Assistance Benefit Act.
- For establishing the right to inclusive education for all children and students with disabilities: the Italian Framework Law for the Assistance, Social Integration and the Rights of Disabled Persons.
- For preventing guardianship, isolation and suicide amongst persons with severe mental or psychosocial disabilities: Swedish Government Decision on State Subsidies for Personal Representatives.

# Conference Programme

Sunday, January 22, 2012

18:00 Evening Cocktail Reception

Hosted by Dr Michael Häupl, Mayor of Vienna (tbc)  
Dinner speaker: Hon Rudolf Hundstorfer, Minister of Social Affairs of Austria

Monday, January 23, 2012

09:30-09:30 Welcome Addresses

- Mr Willibald Cernko, Chairman of the Bank Austria
- Mr Martin Essl, Founder of the Essl Foundation
- Mr Jakob von Uexkull, Founder and Chairman of the World Future Council

09:30-10:30 Opening Keynotes – Challenges and Opportunities for Europe's Disability Policy: Structural Funds, Accessibility Act and beyond

Chair: Mr Miguel Ángel Cabra de Luna, Co-Chair of the European Consortium of Foundations on Human Rights and Disability

- Mr Johannes Hahn, European Commissioner for Regional Policy (tbc)
- Mr Johan ten Geuzendam / Ms Inmaculada Placencia-Porrero, Unit for the Integration of People with Disabilities, European Commission (tbc)
- Ms Elisabeth Schroedter MEP, Vice-Chair of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, European Parliament
- Mr Ioannis Vardakastanis, President of the European Disability Forum

11:00-12:00 Panel – Laws Advancing Non-Discrimination, Accessibility and Equality: Successful Features and Lessons Learnt

Chair: Prof Lisa Waddington, European Disability Forum Chair in European Disability Law, Maastricht University

- Hon Rudolf Hundstorfer, Minister of Social Affairs of Austria
- Lord Colin Low of Dalston CBE, Vice-President of the Royal National Institute of Blind People of the UK
- Prof Antonio Luis Martínez-Pujalte López, Professor for Legal and Political Philosophy at the Miguel Hernandez University, Spain

12:30-16:30	Parallel Workshop Sessions Policies Tackling the Most Pressing Issues
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- Ms Esther Sivan, Executive Director, Bizchut – The Israeli Human Rights Center for People with Disabilities, Israel
- Mr Maths Jespersen, Founder and Board Member of PO-Sköne, Sweden
- Ms Christine Gordon, Chairperson of Nidus Personal Planning Resource Centre and Registry, British Columbia, Canada
- Dr Adolf Ratzka, Founder and Co-Director of the Independent Living Institute, Sweden
- Mr Salvatore Nocera, Vice-President of the Italian Federation to Overcome Handicap, and Dr Giampiero Griffo, EDF Representative of the Italian Disability Forum (tbc), Italy

12:30			
Workshop	Workshop	Workshop	Workshop
Non-discrimination and equality in the UK	Support in Personal Decision-Making in British Columbia (CA)	The Right to Live Independently in Sweden	The Right to Inclusive Education in Italy

### Lunch

14:30			
Workshop	Workshop	Workshop	Workshop
Non-discrimination and universal accessibility in Spain	Access to Justice in Israel	The Swedish Personal Ombudsman	The Right to Inclusive Education in Italy

15:30			
Workshop	Workshop	Workshop	Workshop
Support in Personal Decision-Making in British Columbia (CA)	Access to Justice in Israel	The Swedish Personal Ombudsman	The Right to Live Independently in Sweden

### Coffee / tea break

17:00-18:30	Plenary Session Good Policies: Results, Challenges and the Way Ahead
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Chairs: Dr Michael Fembek, Programme Manager of the Essl Foundation, and Ms Alexandra Wandel, Director of the World Future Council

- Reports from the policy workshops
- Discussion & final conclusions

Closing Keynote by Mr Thomas Hammarberg, Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe (tbc)

## Practical Information

Date:	22-23 January 2012
Location:	Vienna, Austria
Participants:	Policymakers, academic institutions, practitioners, public officials, disability rights activists, NGO and foundation representatives, media and enterprises
Email:	<a href="mailto:enable@worldfuturecouncil.org">enable@worldfuturecouncil.org</a>
Internet:	<a href="http://www.zero-project.org">www.zero-project.org</a>
Conference fee:	None
Attendance:	For invited guests only