

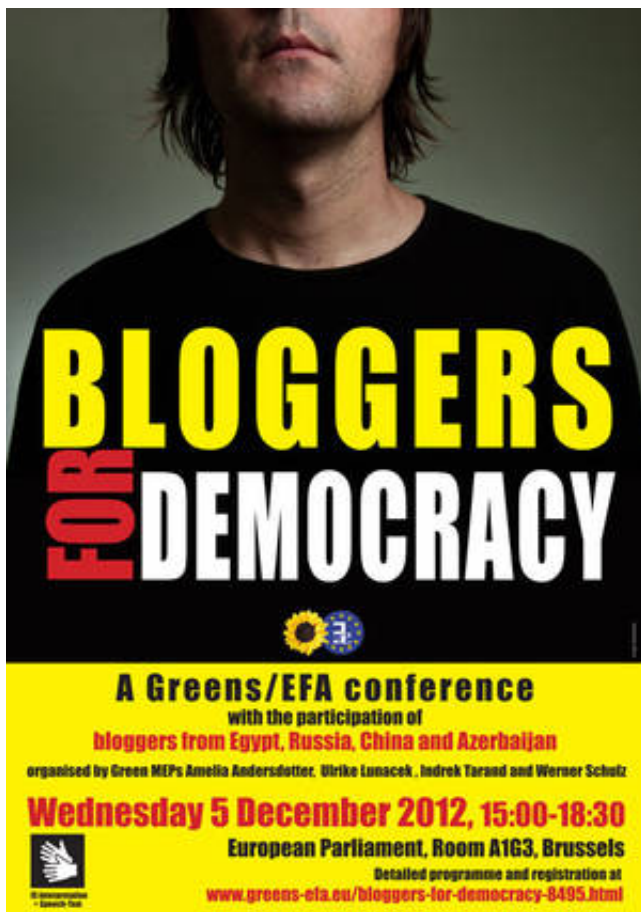
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News | 03.12.2012

International Day of people with Disabilities

Removing barriers and 'accessibility'

Monday 3rd of December is the International Day of people with Disabilities. All citizens have equal rights and are entitled to dignity, equal treatment, independent living and full participation in society. Greens/EFA MEPs have been fighting for these ends, to remove barriers for people with disabilities, and the group is continuously striving to improve access to its own work. People with disabilities are [poorer](#) than other citizens of the EU. Unemployment is higher and their opportunities to enjoy goods and services such as education, healthcare, transport, housing, and technology are more limited. Recognising such stark facts, the theme for [this year](#) is "Removing barriers to create an inclusive and accessible society for all". 'Accessibility' means that people with disabilities have access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, transportation, information and communications technologies and systems, and other facilities and services. As part of our own continuing efforts to this end, we will be marking a milestone this Wednesday with our first conference with full [International Sign](#) interpretation and Speech-to-Text.



As quickly as the Arab Spring shot up with a wave of free expression, autocracies around the world began to push society right back down, increasing internet surveillance and repression. The "[Bloggers for Democracy](#)" conference will bring together internet and software experts, specialised in avoiding digital supervision systems and supporting internet activists as well as bloggers from Russia, China, Azerbaijan and Egypt, who will report from their personal experience. Speech-to-text and IS interpreters will be in the room and their work will also be part of the livestream from our [homepage](#). This is part of an ongoing commitment to be as accessible as possible and we will continue to improve upon it. That's where your feedback will be invaluable. If you use the interpretation facilities, and have any comments, please leave them on our [facebook event page](#), or e-mail them to us using the details on the right. On the street there is still a great deal of work that still needs to be done to make our cities and public life more accessible. Our MEPs have carried out a [wheelchair survey](#) showing the many obstacles people with a disability face in the public sphere. We want to make sure everyone in Europe can shop, work, go out and do all the things a full life has to offer, irrespective of physical ability. Disability is a rights issue and enabling people with disabilities to enjoy their rights in full must be the main purpose of any European policy. We can see from the video clip that there is still some way to go. The Greens/EFA group will continue to support policy aimed at increasing accessibility while improving its own methods.

- [For the programme, registration form and livestream link to our Bloggers for Democracy event](#)
- [Visit our Facebook event page to let us know if you'll attend and what you thought of the event.](#)
- [To find out more about the EU's long-term disability strategy, click here](#)

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