

WFDB

**THE WORLD FEDERATION
OF THE DEAFBLIND**

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Zagreb, November 2022

SUBJECT: Public Letter of Support

The World Federation of the Deafblind is a global non-governmental advocacy organization by and for persons with deafblindness, aiming to improve the quality of life and protect the rights of this distinct disability group.

Deafblindness is a combined vision and hearing impairment of such severity that it is hard for the impaired senses to compensate for each other. Thus, deafblindness is a distinct disability (Nordic Definition of Deafblindness).

Since the establishment, the Deafblind Association of Slovenia DLAN continuously promotes the awareness of deafblindness as an unique, distinct disability and invest great efforts for ensuring appropriate services for the deafblind people in Slovenia.

The Deafblind Association of Slovenia DLAN has a national membership at WFDB since 2009 and represents the population of persons with deafblindness in Slovenia. Each country can only have one national member, and the board of the organization has to have at least 50 % persons with deafblindness.

WFDB believe that this distinct disability group should be represented by an organization of and for people with deafblindness. Representing people with deafblindness within organization that mainly focus on other disability is causing that one of the most vulnerable group is being neglected once again. The representation of multiple disabilities within one organization causes discrimination and is therefore problematic and contrary to professional approaches and practice.

The World Federation of the Deafblind voices a strong support for the the *Bill to Regulate the Status and Rights of Persons with Deafblindness* and the Deafblind Association of Slovenia DLAN at this important attempt to regulate this field; in their efforts to secure the fundamental rights of persons with deafblindness in Slovenia.

Best regards,

Sanja Tarczay, Ph.D.,
The President of the World Federation of the Deafblind

Globally, a vicious circle exists, whereby a lack of awareness and a lack of recognition of persons with deafblindness as a distinct disability group have led to invisibility and consequently a failure of governments to recognise inclusion requirements. Due to the specific implications of their disability, persons with deafblindness face additional barriers and require specific support, in particular interpreter-guide services and tailored rehabilitation services, among others. For more information and recommendations on this issue please visit: <https://www.wfdb.eu/wfdb-report-2018/>