



Panel on “Right to Access: Shaping Policies to Unlock Assistive Technology in Europe”

Venue: Townhall Europe, Sq. de Meeûs 5, 1000 Bruxelles

Date: 4th February 2025

Time: 15:45–16:30

Meta is hosting a [full-day conference](#) to celebrate innovation in the EU and will devote the afternoon to an Innovation & Accessibility Forum. The Forum will close with a panel, “Right to Access: Shaping Policies to Unlock Assistive Technology in Europe”.

AI brings immense potential to people with disabilities, and according to the [European Parliamentary Research Service](#), “access to assistive devices and technology derives from the basic principles of human rights”. Technologies such as dictation software, eye tracking, robotics, cochlear implants, live captions, voice assistants, and screen readers enable people with intellectual or physical disabilities to navigate physical spaces, control computers, communicate with loved ones, and live more independently.

However, assistive technology developers face ethical and legal challenges when introducing products to the markets, including affordability, data availability, and the privacy of both users and the public. This panel explores these challenges.

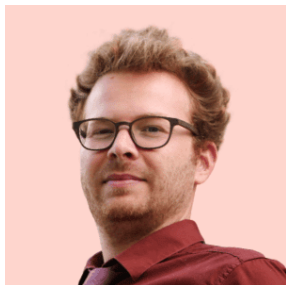
Sample Questions

- What role can AI play in supporting people with disabilities; what are the risks and opportunities?
- What steps should be taken to make assistive technologies more affordable and accessible across the EU? How can Europe lead globally in the deployment of assistive technology?
- How can policymakers navigate the trade-offs between the right of people with disabilities to access innovative assistive technology and having the rights of users and the public to robust data protection?
- How should developers embed the interests of people with disability into their design process; and policymakers into the policymaking process?

Panelists



Moderator: Natascha Gerlach, Director for Privacy and Data Policy, CIPL



Frankie Picron, Executive Director, European Union of the Deaf



MEP Assita Kanko, Member of the Disability Intergroup



Kave Noori, Artificial Intelligence Policy Officer, at European Disability Forum



Donald D. Overton Jr., Executive Director, Blinded Veterans Association