**THEREWITH Project** - Promoting Rights and Values for People with Mobility Challenges

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| Newsletter: |

Dear Members and Stakeholders,

We are delighted to announce the official kickoff of the THEREWITH project which aims to empower individuals with mobility challenges and promote their rights and values across Cyprus.

The THEREWITH project is implemented within the framework of the BUILD program, with the Cyprus Paraplegic Organization (OPAK) as the implementing body. The programme ‘Building a robust and democratic civic space’ (BUILD) aims to protect, promote and raise awareness of EU fundamental rights & values by supporting civil society organisations (CSOs) in Greece & Cyprus and by increasing their capacity and sustainability. BUILD is co-funded by the European Union, through the Citizens, Equality, Rights, and Values (CERV) program, and by the Bodossaki Foundation and Cyprus NGO Support Centre, with a total grant amounting to €2.9 million. The coordinator of BUILD is the Bodossaki Foundation (Greece) in partnership with the NGO Support Center (Cyprus).

The primary objectives of THEREWITH include:

* **Enhance Awareness and Knowledge of EU Rights and Values:** Our goal is to increase awareness and understanding of EU rights and values among individuals facing mobility challenges in Cyprus.
* **Improve Access to Services and Support Mechanisms:** We are committed to advocate for facilitation of access to essential services and support mechanisms for individuals with mobility challenges.
* **Advocate for Stronger Legislative Frameworks and Policy Changes:** We will launch an advocacy campaign to push for comprehensive legislative frameworks that ensure accessibility and equal treatment.
* **Strengthen the Advocacy and Watchdog Role of CSOs:** Empowering Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) is crucial to our efforts. We will provide resources and networking opportunities to enhance their advocacy capabilities and monitoring roles.

The project will undertake the following activities:

* Comprehensive research to identify barriers faced by individuals with mobility challenges in Cyprus.
* Awareness and empowerment workshops to equip participants with knowledge about EU rights and available support services.
* An advocacy campaign featuring an online petition and expert meetings to advocate for policy changes and raise awareness.

The THEREWITH project aims to benefit:

* Individuals with mobility challenges and their families
* CSOs advocating for disability rights
* Policymakers and government authorities
* Stakeholders invested in disability rights and inclusion.
* The general public

We look forward to working closely with all stakeholders to achieve our goals and create a more inclusive society where everyone, regardless of mobility challenges, can fully participate and thrive.

For more information and updates on the THEREWITH project, please visit OPAK's website <https://opak.org.cy/> or contact us at opak.cyprus@gmail.com.

Warm regards,

Demetris Lambrianides,

Project Coordinator and OPAK Director



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