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**Breaking down the barriers.  
Access to employment and the economics of brain health**

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Speech summary:

First of all, we want to raise awareness of this condition... This is a neurodegenerative condition diagnosed during the early years of the professional career of a person. The objective is to put an end to prejudice and to inform people.

What we really want to do is improve visibility and raise awareness.

Employment is not a competence of the European Union, but Europe has a lot to say in the fight against discrimination.

We really need to work so the Convention of the United Nations for people with disabilities is endorsed and enforced, and that certain adaptations are introduced in the workplace so that people with these conditions can remain at work.

When people with MS are diagnosed they are usually out of work and there is a lack of adaptation with regard to work time arrangements and accessibility measures.

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Discrimination is a very important issue because people with MS are at a disadvantage in accessing employment. There is a lack of information and a lack of active policies which can ensure that these people remain at work and they are not discriminated against.

I am Vice-President of the Interest Group on Disabilities...and we are working on the implementation of the UN Convention for people with disability. We are following up on how the member states are enforcing this Convention and we are working on a report.

The key word is accessibility. In employment, healthcare, transportations, housing – everywhere. We are fighting so that we can persuade the Commission to approve a European Accessibility Act – for instance, introducing breaks at work, adapting the office, flexible work time arrangements and a reduced working scheme. Also, access to healthcare and treatment.