



Disability Perspective
Assessing the EU Regulatory and Policy Framework on
Poverty and Social Exclusion

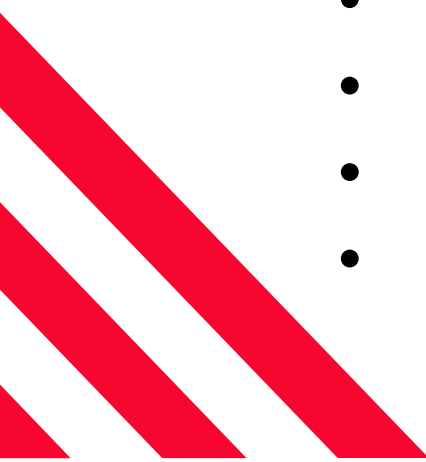
Simona Giarratano, EDF Social Policy Officer

THE EUROPEAN DISABILITY FORUM

Who we are

- 80 millions persons with disabilities
- Independent NGO
- Umbrella organisation of persons with disabilities in Europe

Our members

- More than 100 organisations
 - Full and ordinary members
 - Observer members
 - Associate members
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EDF's SECRETARIAT IN BRUSSELS


10 staff members focusing on:

- human rights
- accessibility
- new technologies & innovation
- built environment
- transport
- standardisation
- employment & social policies
- communications
- membership
- finance & administration

WHAT DO WE DO?

- Advocacy towards the EU, the Council of Europe, and the UN to fully implement the **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD)** & related areas
 - Member of the EU's **Independent Monitoring Framework** for the UN CRPD
 - Involvement in **projects** which bring added value in progressing the UN CRPD in the European region
 - Secretariat of the **Disability Intergroup** of the European Parliament
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Legal and Policy Framework

- The right to an adequate standard of living and social protection is one of the eight areas for action in the **European Disability Strategy 2010-2020**.
 - **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**
 - Europe 2020 Strategy and its governance
 - European Structural and Investment Funds 2014-2020
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UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

- UN CRPD convention
- Adopted in 2006 / European Union:
 - Signature: 30/03/2007
 - Ratification: 23/12/2010
- First Human Rights International Treaty for the EU
- Consolidation of the HRs approach to disability
- Definition of persons with disabilities: *include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.*

UN CRPD (art 28): Adequate standards of living and social protection

1. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to an adequate standard of living for themselves and their families, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions, and shall take appropriate steps to safeguard and promote the realization of this right without discrimination on the basis of disability.

2. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to social protection and to the enjoyment of that right without discrimination on the basis of disability, and shall take appropriate steps to safeguard and promote the realization of this right, including measures:

UN CRPD (art 28): Adequate standards of living and social protection

- a) To ensure equal access by persons with disabilities to clean water services, and to ensure access to appropriate and affordable services, devices and other assistance for disability-related needs;
- b) To ensure access by persons with disabilities, in particular women and girls with disabilities and older persons with disabilities, to social protection programmes and poverty reduction programmes;
- c) To ensure access by persons with disabilities and their families living in situations of poverty to assistance from the State with disability-related expenses, including adequate training, counselling, financial assistance and respite care;
- d) To ensure access by persons with disabilities to public housing programmes;
- (e) To ensure equal access by persons with disabilities to retirement benefits and programmes

Impact of the Strategy 2010-2014: crisis & disability data

The economic crisis has a greater impact on the standard of living of persons with disabilities compared to the general population. The number of persons at risk of poverty has increased across the whole EU. Evidence based on EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) supports the view that persons with disabilities face a higher risk of poverty than persons without disabilities. In 2011, 31% of persons with disabilities aged 16 and over lived in households at risk of poverty or social exclusion as compared to 21% of persons without disabilities. This is a pattern in all EU Member States.

At EU level severely disabled people living in households at risk of poverty or social exclusion is 49% compared to 22% for persons without disabilities. The risk of falling into poverty is increased among families where additional costs due to a disability have to be taken into account. The increase in the personal contribution to be paid by the patient may exclude many families from enjoying appropriate services and medication.

Austerity measures supported by the European Union directly and indirectly have affected the wellbeing of persons with disabilities, having a significant impact on their standard of living. A wide range of mechanisms were used by EU Member States to reduce the real value of cash benefits to persons with disabilities reducing dramatically their possibility to access basic goods and services, as well as the possibility to cover the disability related costs.

Impact of the Strategy 2010-2014: crisis & disability data

- EU-SILC does not measure in detail the impact of the austerity measures on the lives of persons with disabilities. There is an absence of proper indicators with no systematic information being gathered by EUROSTAT on the status of persons with disabilities.
- a priority of EU Member States is to contain public deficits and implicitly accepts thereby that EU Member States defer their efforts to actively implement policies that reduce poverty and, to a lesser extent, policies that increase employment. While the Europe 2020 strategy was recommending lifting people from the risk of poverty, the Troika was prioritising economic objectives that encouraged austerity measures.

Gender equality as a cross cutting issue

Women with disabilities and mothers taking care of children or other persons with disabilities face additional obstacles to combine their work and private life.

- Hiring procedures, salary and social security payments.
- Flexible working hours or part-time teleworking, and have high disability-associated expenses in relation to motherhood and motherhood and care for other persons with high support needs

At EU level, about 24% of women with disabilities live in households with low work intensity compared to 9% of women without disabilities and that 13% of women with disabilities live in severely materially deprived households compared to 7% of women without disabilities. Single mothers households with dependent children the risk of poverty increases even more.

UN CRPD Recommendations to the EU


The Committee is concerned at the lack of consistent and comparable data on persons with disabilities in the European Union, and the lack of human rights indicators.

The Committee recommends that the European Union develop a human rights-based indicators system in cooperation with persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, as well as a comparable comprehensive data collection system, with data disaggregated by gender, age, rural or urban population and impairment type.

UN CRPD Recommendations to the EU

The Committee notes with deep concern the disproportionately adverse and retrogressive effect that the austerity measures in the European Union have on the adequate standard of living of persons with disabilities.

The Committee recommends that the European Union take urgent measures, in cooperation with its member States and representative organizations of persons with disabilities, to prevent further adverse and retrogressive effects of the austerity measures on the adequate standard of living of persons with disabilities, including by setting a social protection floor that respects the core content of the right to an Adequate standard of living and to social protection.



Additional Recommendations

1. mainstreaming disability across the Europe 2020
2. adequate implementation of the ESI Funds to include persons with disabilities
3. specific legislative and policy initiatives to promote transition from institutional to community based care as part of the fight against poverty and social exclusion
4. specific sub targets and indicators related to persons with disabilities should be included in the Strategy

Additional Recommendations

6. The European semester process to be more transparent and should give adequate time for consultation
7. The European parliament should have a strong role to play in the semester process
8. The European Union should improve reconciliation between professional and private life of women with disabilities and parents carers of children with disabilities through effective measures based on their specific demands.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

simona.giarratano@edf-feph.org
www.edf-feph.org

