

Introduction

Around 80 million people in the European Union have a disability.



Disabled people are often poorer than other people and sometimes are not fully involved in society and the economy.

This strategy will try to improve the conditions of people with disabilities and guarantee their rights for the next 10 years.



The European population is also getting older and more people will have disabilities because of that.



The European Union is trying to make sure that people with disabilities can use their basic human rights to be included and participate in society.

Disability rights and the United Nations



People with disabilities have the same rights as anyone else.



These rights include:

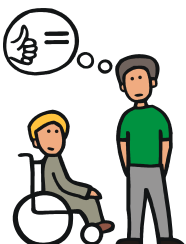
- 1) dignity
- 2) independence
- 3) full participation in society



The United Nations guarantees these rights in its Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.



The convention was agreed in May 2008.



It exists to promote and protect human rights and freedom for people with disabilities.

The European Union strategy is based on this document and has many of the same points.

Areas which will be improved



There are 8 areas the European Union is focusing on.

Here are the different areas and what will happen.

1. Accessibility



Accessibility means taking away the barriers that face people with disabilities.

Things that must be easier to access include buildings, transport and information.



The European Union will use laws to provide accessible services and products.

The European Union is also promoting a 'Design for all' plan.

This means that services, buildings and other products will be designed to benefit everyone including people with disabilities.



The strategy plans a law called the European Accessibility Act which will make goods and services more accessible for people with disabilities.

2. Participation



People with disabilities have the right to take part on an equal basis with everyone else in all areas of their lives.

They need to be able to take advantage of their rights as citizens.



These rights include: Choosing where and how they live
Full access to cultural, leisure and sport activities

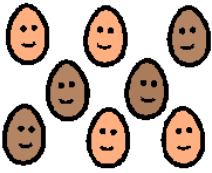


The European Union wants to remove the obstacles that people with disabilities face in everyday life.

The European Union has already made some progress on removing these obstacles.

Areas which will be improved

3. Equality



Over half of the people in Europe think discrimination is common against people who have disabilities and people who are old.

The European Union is using an approach focusing on 2 things to promote equal treatment of people.



These 2 things are: 1) using anti-discrimination laws
2) promoting equal opportunities in all other laws and documents.

The European Union is making sure there is a law banning discrimination in jobs against people with disabilities.



The European Union will also be supporting charities and non-governmental organisations by giving them money.

4. Employment



Jobs are important because they protect people from being poor and make sure that people have their own independence.

The European Union plans to: 1) make workplaces more accessible
2) support job training
3) increase access to jobs for people with disabilities.



There is a big need for carers and service providers to help people with disabilities in jobs too.

The European Union hopes that 3 out of 4 people in Europe will have jobs by 2020.



To get to this number more people with disabilities have to get jobs.

This should help the European Union plan of taking 20 million people in Europe out of poverty.

Areas which will be improved

5. Education and Lifelong Learning



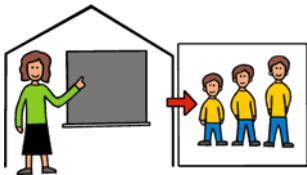
The disability strategy focuses on equal access to education and lifelong learning.

Lifelong learning means making sure people with disabilities have a full education for their whole lives.



Education is a big part of helping people with disabilities feel included in society.

People with disabilities are often still educated separately from other children.



The European Union supports inclusive education and lifelong learning.

Inclusive education means teaching people with disabilities in the same school as other children.

6. Social Protection and Inclusion



People with disabilities need to be able to benefit from all services in society.

These services include social services such as social welfare.



Other social services include:

- 1) poverty-reduction programmes,
- 2) disability related assistance,
- 3) public housing.

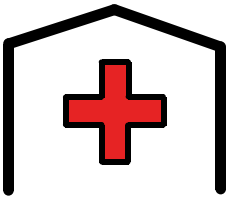


The European Union will help countries that want to join the European Union to improve their social welfare systems.

The European union will support all countries as they try to ensure people with disabilities are protected with social services.

Areas which will be improved

7. Health



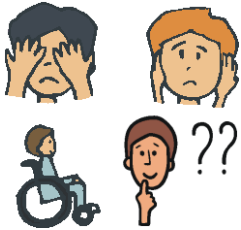
People with disabilities need equal access to high quality healthcare.

This access includes rehabilitation, preventative care and other disability services.



Rehabilitation means recovering from problems. Preventative care means healthcare that stops possible future health problems from happening.

The European Union will support countries when they try to improve access to care and services for people with disabilities.



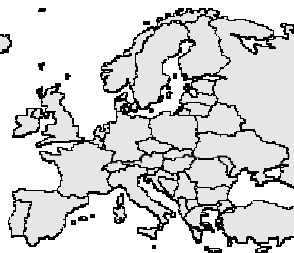
The European Union will also promote health and safety at work to reduce the chances of someone becoming disabled because of accident at work.

8. External action



The European Union will promote the rights of people with disabilities in external policies.

External policies happen when the European Union adds new members or when it is dealing with poorer developing countries.



The European Union will highlight the status of disabilities as a human rights issue by talking about the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

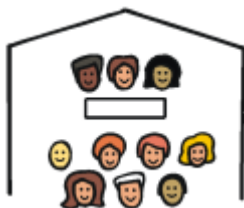


The European Union will promote disability issues internationally like at United Nations meetings.



The European Union will also look at the progress made by countries that want to join the European Union in promoting the rights of people with disabilities.

Involving Citizens



Every year on December 3, the European Union holds a conference to mark the European Day of People with Disabilities.



They hold this conference with the European Disability Forum as a partner.



This conference brings policy people together with experts, the media and other people who are involved with disability issues.

They are part of the European Union's efforts to promote disability issues in the Disability Strategy.



Each year has a different disability related theme.

The findings of these conferences shape the European Union's disability policy.



- To get information
 - To tell us about news and meetings
- Please contact us!

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