



Disability and Development at the EU

A Mapping Report

IDDC, September 2010



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List of Abbreviations

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific Countries
CONCORD	European Confederation of Relief and Development
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSP	Country Strategy Paper
DCI	EU Development Cooperation Instrument
DFID	The UK Department for International Development
DG DEV	DG Development
DG	Directorate General
DG EMPL	Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunity
DG EuropeAid	AIDCO
DG RELEX	DG External Relations
DPI	Disabled Peoples' International
DPOs	Disabled Peoples Organizations
EEAS	European External Action Service
EBU	European Blind Union
EC	European Commission
ECHO	European Commission's humanitarian aid office
EDbN	European Deafblind Network
EDF	European Disability Forum
EIDHR	European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights
ENIL	European Network of Independent Living
EP	European Parliament
EU	European Union
FAC	Foreign Affairs Council
GAERC	The General Affairs and External Relations Council
GPDD	The Global Partnership on Disability and Development
HLG	The High Level Group on Disability
HRDN	The Human Rights and Democracy Network
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IDDC	International Disability and Development Consortium
IF	International Federation for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus
iQSC	The Interservice Quality Support Group
MEPs	Members of European Parliament
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
VOICE	Voluntary Organizations in Cooperation in Emergencies

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Introduction

The purpose of this report is to give a basic overview of relevant stakeholders, policies and programmes concerning disability and development at the European Level.

This document has been produced as part of the Project '[Making Development Inclusive](#)', funded by the EC EuropeAid; the original [EU Mapping Report](#) on which this is based was developed as part of the project '[Disability mainstreaming in Development Co-operation](#)', 2006-2008. Updates include, but are not limited to, a section on the Treaty of Lisbon, a section on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD) and updates of role and function of the Directorate Generals working on issues of disability and development.

The methodology used to update this document was internet based research, face-to-face meetings with IDDC members closely following EU issues, analyzing the literature available.

This report can be considered a living document. Due to the CRPD, it is a very dynamic time for disability and development issues; we expect regular changes and indeed improvements to the current situation, and new stakeholders in this field. We encourage any feedback and /or comments that you might have regarding the content of this mapping report. If you have any such comments please contact Lars Bosselmann at lars.bosselmann@cbm.org

Changes to EU after Treaty of Lisbon

The Lisbon Treaty was signed by the Heads of State and Government of the 27 EU Member States on 13 December 2007. It is intended to reform the functioning of the European Union

following the two waves of enlargement which have taken place since 2004 and which have increased the number of EU Member States from 15 to 27. The Lisbon Treaty is now ratified in all 27 EU Member States and entered into force on 1 December 2009. (<http://www.lisbon-treaty.org/wcm/the-lisbon-treaty.html>)

The Lisbon Treaty includes key changes aimed at increasing the consistency and coherence of the EU's external actions. It provides for a "High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy" who will be responsible in the Council for the EU's common foreign and defence policies. The High Representative will chair the EU's External Relations Council and (s)he will also be a Vice-president of the European Commission. The High Representative will be responsible for coordinating the Commission's external actions in order to ensure consistency and coherence between all of EU external actions, whether they fall under the competence of the Council or of the Commission.

The High Representative will be supported by a European External Action Service (EEAS). It will be made up of officials from both the Council and the Commission as well as civil servants from the EU Member States. Although the details of the implementation of the External Action Service are still under discussion, it is evident that its creation will have a major impact on the structure of the EU in the field of external policies. For example, the role and reporting lines of the various DGs of the Commission that are currently working on aspects of external relations will see a significant change.

Furthermore, the EU Delegations - formerly known as EC Delegations - will now fall under the responsibility of the External Action Service. The decision to open or close a Delegation shall be adopted by the High Representative, in agreement with the Council and the Commission. Moreover, staff in Delegations shall comprise EEAS staff and, where appropriate for the implementation of the Union budget and Union policies other than those under the remit of the EEAS, Commission staff.

The Head of Delegation shall receive instructions from the High Representative and the EEAS, and shall be responsible for their execution. Moreover, the Head of Delegation shall have the power to represent the Union in the country where the Delegation is accredited, in particular for the conclusion of contracts, and as a party to legal proceedings. (http://www.eeas.europa.eu/background/index_en.htm)

The EU Delegations have an important role to play regarding disability and development issues outside of the EU. Except for consular tasks, the Delegation of the European Union is functioning in the same way as an Embassy would. It is a diplomatic mission representing the EU to the place where the Delegation is based, together with the 27 Member States of the European Union. It performs a variety of tasks aimed at enhancing relations between the EU and partner countries. In that capacity, the Delegations have a vital role to play in conducting the political dialogue (including with civil society and the disability movement). In addition, the EU Delegations are responsible for designing and launching an increasing number of calls for

proposals. These calls constitute an important entry point for the inclusion of the rights of persons with disabilities in the EU's development activities. Today, over 70 Delegations have now appointed a contact person for disability issues. To contact these persons please get in touch with the relevant Delegation:

http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/delegations/web_en.htm

In addition to the abovementioned institutional changes, the Lisbon Treaty also provides for a number of changes to the EU's external policies. It both strengthens and clarifies the EU's development cooperation policy and, for the first time, sets out humanitarian assistance as a specific Commission competence.

Other significant changes set out in the Lisbon Treaty include:

- reforming the system of Council presidencies from its current six-month rotation to appointing a full-time Council President for a period of two-and-a-half years;
- reducing the number of Commissioners (applicable from 2014);
- changing the weighting of votes by Member States (applicable from 2014); and
- extending the scope of qualified majority voting to new areas.

The Treaty of Lisbon amends the current EU and EC treaties, without replacing them.

It also aims for:

A more democratic and transparent Europe, with a strengthened role for the European Parliament and national parliaments, more opportunities for citizens to have their voices heard and a clearer sense of who does what at European and national level.

A more efficient Europe, with simplified working methods and voting rules, streamlined and modern institutions for an EU of 27 members and an improved ability to act in areas of major priority for today's Union.

A Europe of rights and values, freedom, solidarity and security, promoting the Union's values, introducing the Charter of Fundamental Rights into European primary law, providing for new solidarity mechanisms and ensuring better protection of European citizens.

Europe as an actor on the global stage will be achieved by bringing together Europe's external policy tools, both when developing and deciding new policies. The Treaty of Lisbon gives Europe a clear voice in relations with its partners worldwide. It harnesses Europe's economic, humanitarian, political and diplomatic strengths to promote European interests and values worldwide, while respecting the particular interests of the Member States in Foreign Affairs.

The European Council, which has the role of driving EU policy-making, now becomes a full EU institution. Although it does not gain any new powers, it is headed by a newly created

position of President. Elected by the European Council for 2½ years, the main job of the President is to prepare the Council's work, ensure its continuity and work to secure consensus among member countries. The President cannot simultaneously hold any elected position or office nationally.

Lawmaking: the 'co-decision procedure' (renamed 'ordinary legislative procedure') has been extended to several new fields. This means that Parliament now has the same degree of lawmaking power as the Council in some areas where it used to be merely consulted or not involved at all. These areas include legal immigration, penal judicial cooperation (Eurojust, crime prevention, alignment of prison standards, offences and penalties), police cooperation (Europol) and some aspects of trade policy and agriculture. The Parliament now has a role to play in almost all lawmaking.

United Nation's Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

[The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(CRPD\)](#) and its Optional Protocol were adopted on 13 December 2006 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The purpose of the CRPD is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities. Both the CRPD and its Protocol entered into force on 3 May 2008, after the CRPD received its 20th ratification.

Today, the CRPD has been signed by 146 countries and ratified by 91. The optional Protocol to the convention has been signed by 89 countries and ratified by 57.

In terms of its content, the CRPD represents a significant change: it establishes disability not as a social welfare matter, but as human rights issue and matter of law. The rights recognised by the CRPD cover almost all policy fields from justice to transport, from employment to information technology, from social to health policy.

The CRPD marks a "paradigm shift" in attitudes and approaches to persons with disabilities. It establishes in law, the shift from viewing persons with disabilities as "objects" of charity, medical treatment and social protection towards viewing persons with disabilities as "subjects" with rights, who are capable of claiming those rights and making decisions for their lives based on their free and informed consent as well as being active members of society.

The CRPD is a human rights instrument with an explicit, social development dimension. It adopts a broad categorization of persons with disabilities and reaffirms that all persons with all types of disabilities must enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms. It clarifies and qualifies how all categories of rights apply to persons with disabilities and identifies areas where adaptations have to be made for persons with disabilities to effectively exercise their rights and areas where their rights have been violated, and where protection of rights must be reinforced.

At European level, on 29 August 2007, the Commission adopted and transmitted to the European Parliament and the Council two proposals concerning the conclusion by the European Community, of the United Nations CRPD and its Optional Protocol. In November 2009 the European council made the decision for the ratification of the UN CRPD by the European Community. The CRPD is the first UN human rights convention that both the European Union and its Member States will be a party to and that obliges parties to include persons with disabilities in international cooperation.

<http://www.iddcconsortium.net/joomla/index.php/home/38-news-and-events/303-council-decision-ratifying-the-convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities>)

From the point of view of a disability and development organization, special consideration should be given to Articles 11 and 32 of the CRPD.

Article 11 “**Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies**” states that:

“States Parties shall take, in accordance with their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law, all necessary measures to ensure the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risk, including situations of armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and the occurrence of natural disasters.”

Article 32 “**International cooperation**” states that:

1. States Parties recognize the importance of international cooperation and its promotion, in support of national efforts for the realization of the purpose and objectives of the present Convention, and will undertake appropriate and effective measures in this regard, between and among States and, as appropriate, in partnership with relevant international and regional organizations and civil society, in particular organizations of persons with disabilities. Such measures could include, inter alia:

- (a) Ensuring that international cooperation, including international development programmes, is inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities;
- (b) Facilitating and supporting capacity-building, including through the exchange and sharing of information, experiences, training programmes and best practices;
- (c) Facilitating cooperation in research and access to scientific and technical knowledge;
- (d) Providing, as appropriate, technical and economic assistance, including by facilitating access to and sharing of accessible and assistive technologies, and through the transfer of technologies.

2. The provisions of this article are without prejudice to the obligations of each State Party to fulfill its obligations under the present Convention.

By deciding to conclude the CRPD, the EU has accepted to fulfill all obligations that are part of this Convention. This includes the obligation to ensure a high degree of participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in the design and implementation of all policies that affect them (Article 4.3). It also means that, in areas where the EU has a responsibility, all policies and programmes must be in line with the provisions of the CRPD. This obligation applies, for example, to development cooperation as well as to humanitarian aid. EU is currently drafting its next 10 year Disability Strategy. The adoption of the new strategy is expected in autumn 2010. There is a full section on External Action in the upcoming Disability Strategy, which will outline the EU's objectives in relation to disability and development for the coming 10 years.

The European Commission

The Commission is independent of national governments. Its job is to represent and uphold the interests of the EU as a whole. It drafts proposals for new European laws, which it presents to the European Parliament and the Council.

It is also the EU's executive arm – in other words, it is responsible for implementing the decisions of Parliament and the Council. That means managing the day-to-day business of the European Union: implementing its policies, running its programmes and spending its funds.

Like the Parliament and Council, the European Commission was set up in the 1950s under the EU's founding treaties. (http://europa.eu/institutions/inst/comm/index_en.htm)

There are four main Directorate Generals (DGs) involved in developing and implementing development cooperation and external relations policy within the European Commission: DG Development (DG DEV), DG External Relations (DG RELEX), DG EuropeAid (also called AIDCO) and DG ECHO. It should be mentioned that DG RELEX will become part of the [external action service](#) of the European Union. These Directorate Generals are comparable to a Ministry at national level – although the European Commission has the power of initiative unlike the national Ministries. The focal DG for the CRPD is DG Employment and Social Affairs. Other DGs will also have some relevance to external action issues, but are not reviewed here.

DG Development

Directorate General Development and Relations with African, Caribbean and Pacific States is responsible for the Commission's input to EU external relations with more than half of the countries of the world. Furthermore, it sets Commission development policy and federates European development policy across the globe. As such it also aims to demonstrate the added value of Europe working together to tackle the major challenges facing the world. The

DG's mission is also to help to reduce and ultimately eradicate poverty in the developing countries through the promotion of sustainable development, democracy, peace and security.

DG Development's role is to initiate and draft development policies as set out in the EU Treaty. It promotes a European approach to development across the EU countries to influence international debate and work more effectively to combat poverty. The DG coordinates political relations with sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP), the African Union, regional economic communities, and the overseas countries and territories in all the areas for which it is responsible, based on the Cotonou agreement and strategies relating to those countries. In this context, DG Development drafts cooperation strategies with ACP countries and the overseas countries and territories, and coordinates and monitors funding provided through the European Development Funds and the Development Cooperation Instrument.

However under changes brought in under the Lisbon treaty with regards to the EEAS, DG Development will evolve into a different type of player on the European scene. Following majority approval by the European Parliament at the last plenary session in Strasbourg before the summer break, the final preparations for establishing the European External Action Service (EEAS) are underway. The latest plans envisage the Commission's Directorate General for Development being divided, with around half of its 300 staff being subsumed into the EEAS. (Directorates D and E)

DG Development's departments for governance and thematic areas are to be divided, and geographical desks will be entirely incorporated into the EEAS. DG Development will retain expert staff responsible for the substance of development policy and cross-cutting issues such as education and good governance.

(http://www.eurostep.org/wcm/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1145&Itemid=158)

>View organizational chart of DG DEV [here](#)

>Find contact details [here](#)

DG RELEX

The [Directorate-General for External Relations](#) (DG RELEX ) contributes to policy formulation and works closely with other Directorates General, notably [EuropeAid](#), [Development](#), [Trade](#) and [Humanitarian Aid](#). It manages relations with:

- [European countries](#) which are not members of the European Union or part of the wider enlargement process;
- the countries of [Central Asia](#);
- the countries of the [Mediterranean, Middle-East & the Gulf](#);

- [North America](#), [Latin America](#), [Pacific](#) and [Asia](#);
- international organizations, such as the [United Nations](#), the [OSCE](#), and the [Council of Europe](#).

It has been planned to merge DG RELEX with the External Action service under the Lisbon treaty.

Traditionally DG RELEX is responsible for Human Rights Conventions.

DG EuropeAid (also known as AIDCO)

The European Union, composed of the Member States and the European Commission, is the world's biggest aid donor. The Commission's EuropeAid co-operation office manages EU external aid programmes and ensures that development assistance is delivered worldwide. EuropeAid's [main mission](#) is to implement the Commission's external aid instruments, both those funded by the Union's budget and the European Development Fund. The [Who's who](#) section will tell you how EuropeAid is organised. To ensure coherence, complementarity and coordination in implementing external assistance programmes worldwide, EuropeAid works in close collaboration with [its various partners](#). The overall aim is to make external aid more effective. [Civil society](#), [international organisations](#) and [governments of EU Member States](#) are all important actors in this field.

AIDCO follows the OECD DAC Codes for monitoring development cooperation. DAC codes focus on sectors. This makes it difficult to monitor issues which are not "sectors" but rather "target groups" such as people with disabilities. AIDCO is however now considering the inclusion of a number of "target groups" to facilitate internal monitoring.

There are five operational [Office support groups](#) (oQSGs), one for each of EuropeAid's four geographical Directorates and another one dealing with measures funded from Thematic Budget Lines. The main role of the oQSG Secretariat is to provide the methodological approaches and to promote cross-fertilisation between the geographical and thematic areas. Meetings are chaired either by the Director of the geographical directorate concerned or by the Director of the thematic programmes directorate. EuropeAid Director-General, [Koos Richelle](#), is responsible for the overall realisation of the DG's mission, which consists in the implementation of the Commission's external aid instruments financed by the Community budget and the European Development Funds.

EuropeAid is presently undertaking a study of the EC's work on Disability and Development; the results of this study will be available in autumn 2010. The study is based on desk and field based research and analysis and has been undertaken in close collaboration with civil society stakeholders.

>View organizational chart of DG EuropeAid [here](#)

DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities

The European Commission's Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities works towards the creation of more and better jobs, an inclusive society and equal opportunities for all. This DG has been active in mainstreaming of disability across all areas of EU policy, including on external actions; in this regard it supported the IDDC project [Disability Mainstreaming in Development Cooperation \(2006-2008\)](#).

The DG provides practical guidance to citizens, for example, in finding a job, moving to another Member State for work or other reasons, upgrading skills, etc. In partnership with national authorities, social partners, civil society organisations and other stakeholders, the Directorate-General tries to address challenges linked to globalisation, the ageing of Europe's population and changing social realities. Examples of the areas in which this DG is active include support for:

- [More and better jobs](#) through the European Employment Strategy (which brings national policies closer in this field) and the [European Social Fund](#) (€9 billion per year managed in partnership with the Member States).
- [Free movement of workers](#) and [coordination of social security schemes](#), which means that every EU national has the right to work and to live in any EU country and that people who move between countries are not disadvantaged in relation to social security including healthcare.
- [Better working conditions](#) through common minimum standards in the workplace, by supporting and developing social dialogue at European level, by modernising labour relations, and by assisting EU workers who want to be mobile.
- [Social inclusion](#) and [non-discrimination](#) by supporting efforts to combat poverty and social exclusion, reform social protection systems, assess new demographic and social developments, take action against discrimination, promote fundamental rights and enhance the integration of people with disabilities.
- [Equality between men and women](#) through legislation, programmes designed to improve equal opportunities for women and men and ensuring that the gender issue is taken into account in all fields of Community action.
- The European Commission's priorities are set out in the [Annual Management Plan](#) of the Directorate General for employment, social affairs and equal opportunities.

It should also be noted that this DG is the focal point for implementing and monitoring the UN CRPD, and for coordination of the EU Disability Strategy 2011-2020. Every three years a new action plan will be produced to ensure the disability strategy is being correctly implemented. It is expected that by November 2010 there will be a communication produced about this strategy.

Viviane Reding (Vice-President of the European Commission, EU Commissioner for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship) is responsible for the G3 Unit, Integration of people with disabilities. By the end of the year this Unit will probably have been moved to the Justice section, which in turn will have separated from Home Affairs. This shift is characterized by the shift from the legislative to a more rights based approach regarding persons with disabilities.

>Contact DG Employment, Social affairs and Equal Opportunities [here](#)

European Commission's humanitarian aid office and civil protection (ECHO)

The European Union's mandate to ECHO [[Regulation \(CE\) n° 1257/96](#)] is to provide emergency assistance and relief to the victims of natural disasters or armed conflict outside the European Union. The aid is intended to go directly to those in distress, irrespective of race, religion or political convictions.

ECHO's task is to ensure goods and services get to crisis zones fast. Goods may include essential supplies, specific foodstuffs, medical equipment, medicines and fuel. Services may include medical teams, water purification teams and logistical support. Goods and services reach disaster areas via ECHO partners.

Since 1992, ECHO has funded humanitarian aid in crisis zones of more than 85 countries via its partners. Its grants cover emergency aid, food aid and aid to refugees and displaced persons worth a total of more than €700 million per year.

>View Organizational structure [here](#)

The Inter-Service Group on Disability

This group provides a forum where desk officers across all European Commission DGs, with particular responsibility and/or interest in disability issues, can meet together and discuss issues of mutual interest. This Inter-Service Group meets once every two months and is sometimes attended by representatives from DG DEV, RELEX and EuropeAid.

>Find Members [here](#)

The European Council

The Council is the main decision-making body of the European Union. The Ministers of the Member States meet within the Council of the European Union. Depending on the issue on

the agenda, each country will be represented by the Minister responsible for that subject (Foreign Affairs, Finance, Social Affairs, Transport, Agriculture, etc.)

The presidency of the Council is held for six months by each Member State on a rotational basis.

The Council is responsible for decision-making and co-ordination:

- The Council of the European Union passes laws, usually legislating jointly with the European Parliament.
- The Council co-ordinates the broad economic policies of the Member States.
- The Council defines and implements the EU's common foreign and security policy, based on guidelines set by the European Council.
- The Council concludes, on behalf of the Community and the Union, international agreements between the EU and one or more States or international organisations.
- The Council co-ordinates the actions of Member States and adopts measures in the area of police and judicial co-operation in criminal matters.
- The Council and the European Parliament constitute the budgetary authority that adopts the Community's budget.

The council has the possibility to influence development cooperation in favour of disability if Member States representatives bring the issue onto the agenda and generate consensus on it.

>Find contact details [here](#)

Foreign Affairs Council (FAC, formerly The General Affairs and External Relations Council)

From the point of view of disability and development, the FAC is a relevant body. The FAC meetings bring together the Foreign Ministers of Member States. Ministers responsible for European Affairs, Defence, Development or Trade also participate depending on the items on agenda. The FAC meets monthly.

The FAC has therefore the possibility to influence development policy in favour of disability. This is underlined by the "[Council conclusions on the Millennium Development Goals for the United Nations High-level Plenary meeting in New York and beyond](#)" which indeed contains references to disability. The paper not only recognizes disability as an important cross-cutting issue relevant to all fields of development policy and all of the MDGs; it also pays particular attention to disability within the specific asks on education (MDG 2, achieving universal primary education for all).

This has become possible as a result of an intense advocacy campaign by IDDC, who have been lobbying intensely for the inclusion of disability in the EU position on the MDGs, which was to be finalized at the meeting of the EU Foreign Affairs Council in mid-June. To this end, the IDDC partners wrote letters to the European Union's Member States' Foreign and Development Ministers as well as a letter to Catherine Ashton, the Union's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, asking them to argue for and actively promote the inclusion of disability within the MDG framework. This was particularly supported by Member States such as Denmark.

The High level Group on disability

The high level Group on Disability (HLG) is a forum where Ministries responsible for Disability across the 27 European Union Member States, meet together with the European Commission (EC) to decide future priorities and joint working. The HLG meets approximately twice a year. The HLG is not particularly occupied with development issues. The HLG mandate is: "As proposed by the Commission in its Communication (COM(96) 406 final), the High Level Group is set up to monitor the latest policies and priorities of Governments concerning people with disabilities, to pool information and experience, and to advise the Commission on methods for reporting in future on the EU-wide situation with regard to disability.

The High Level Group in particular focuses its attention on the orientations set out in Section II of the Resolution adopted by the Council and representatives of governments on 20 December 1996, viz.:

- empowering people with disabilities for participation in society, including the severely disabled, while paying due attention to the needs and interests of their families and carers;
- mainstreaming the disability perspective into all relevant sectors of policy formulation and implementation;
- enabling people with disabilities to participate fully in society by removing barriers;
- nurturing public opinion to be receptive to the abilities of people with disabilities and towards strategies based on equal opportunities.

The High Level Group also share experience with regard to the involvement of representatives of people with disabilities in the implementation and the follow-up of relevant policies and actions in their favour. Furthermore, the High Level Group advise the Commission on the implementation of section II of the Resolution.

In these ways, whilst recognizing that responsibility in this field lies with the Member States, the Commission and Member States strengthen co-operation in the field of disability, and

encourage the exchange and the development of good practice in the European Union, as agreed in the Resolution.

(http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/soc-prot/disable/hlg_en.htm)

The list of members is also available to the link above.

The European Parliament (EP)

The European Parliament is the only directly-elected body of the European Union. The 736 Members of the European Parliament are there to represent the citizens of the EU. They are elected once every five years by voters right across the 27 Member States of the European Union on behalf of its 500 million citizens.

Development policy is a Community policy, in respect of which the European Parliament has the power of co-decision. It is the only area of foreign policy in which the Council shares legislative powers with Parliament. The principle EP Committees involved in development cooperation issues are: the EP Committee on Development and the EP Committee on Foreign Affairs. This Committee on Foreign Affairs is assisted by a Sub-Committee on Human Rights. There are a number of mechanisms whereby these committees within the Parliament can influence development policy in favour of including disability.

For example, on May 10th 2010 there was a hearing by the European Parliament Committee on Development on persons with disabilities in European development cooperation. The European Commission presented its work and challenges in this area. All the speakers underlined the importance of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) as the foundation for approaching the inclusion of people with disabilities in development cooperation and the importance of the UN Millennium Development Goal Review Summit in September 2010 to ensure that people with disabilities are brought onto the international development agenda. The Commission underlined that the IDDC is a key partner for the EU to succeed in this area and invited MEPs to contribute their views more actively.

(<http://www.iddcconsortium.net/joomla/index.php/component/content/article/38-news-and-events/340-ep-debates-inclusive-development>)

In 2005, a hearing was arranged in the Development Committee on disability and development. In follow-up to this a Parliamentary Resolution on Disability and Development was drafted by MEP John Bowis and was discussed and unanimously adopted by the European Parliament in January 2006.

In his report "Report on Progress towards the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals", which was written in preparation of the UN High-level meeting in September 2010, MEP Michael Cashman has highlighted the importance of mainstreaming more effectively the

interests of vulnerable groups in the EU's development strategy, recognizing in particular the specific needs of persons with disabilities.

Parliamentary committees can also undertake 'own initiative' reports and ask Parliamentary questions to the Commission as a mechanism to influence the EU policy on issues that are of key concern to them.

Another important way of cooperating with the European Parliament is via its EP delegations, the Joint Parliamentary Assembly ACP-EU in particular. The ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly was created out of a common desire to bring together the elected representatives of the European Community - the Members of the European Parliament - and the elected representatives of the African, Caribbean and Pacific states ("ACP countries") that have signed the Cotonou Agreement: it is the only institution of its kind in the world.

The Assembly regularly forms exploratory or fact-finding missions. The members of the Joint Parliamentary Assembly are thus in direct contact with the situation on the ground in the various developing countries which are signatories of the Cotonou Agreement.

The impact of the work of the Joint Parliamentary Assembly thus goes well beyond economic considerations and embraces the fundamental objectives of the development of mankind and the establishment of peaceful relations between the nations of the world. The ACP-EU Joint Assembly is a democratic, parliamentary institution which aims to promote and defend democratic processes in order to guarantee the right of each people to choose its own development objectives and how to attain them.

>To **request a visitors pass** to the Parliament please click on the following link.

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/parliament/public/staticDisplay.do?language=EN&id=50>

>To see the Parliamentary Calendar [click here](#)

>To review all the different committees and their agendas [click here](#)

>To research / contact your MEPs [click here](#)

The Disability Intergroup of the European Parliament

The Disability Intergroup of the European Parliament is an informal grouping of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) from all nationalities and most political groups who are interested in promoting the disability policy in their work at the European Parliament as well as in the national contexts. The Disability Intergroup is one of the oldest Intergroups of the European Parliament; it was established in 1980. Following the European Parliament

elections in June 2009, it had to be re-formed, according to the European Parliament rules governing the Intergroups.

Following the campaign to recruit new members and ensure the political support of the EP Groups for the establishment of the Disability Intergroup, it was re-established in December 2009. The election of the new Bureau took place on 16 December at the European Parliament in Strasbourg. Adam Kosa MEP (HU, EPP) was elected as the new Intergroup President by acclamation. The Disability Intergroup has had meetings on Development Cooperation matters and actually they have included development work in the work plan 2010.

Civil Society Networks

The International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC)

The [International Disability and Development Consortium](#) (IDDC) and its 23 [members](#) aim to promote inclusive development. Inclusive development means respecting the full human rights of every person, acknowledging diversity, eradicating poverty and ensuring that all people are fully included and can actively participate in development processes and activities regardless of age, gender, disability, state of health, ethnic origin or any other characteristic.

IDDC members include DPOs, and also disability specific, mainstream development and humanitarian NGOs.

The IDDC works together through Task Groups which focus on the following topics:

[Community Based Rehabilitation](#)

[Conflict & Emergencies](#)

[European Union](#)

[HIV&AIDS and Disability](#)

[Inclusive Education](#)

[Livelihood](#)

[United Nations](#)

IDDC members include DPOs, and also disability specific, mainstream development and humanitarian NGOs. The EU Task Group focuses on EU advocacy and works closely with EDF, the European Parliament and the European Commission in this regard. Some IDDC members have Brussels-based EU offices (CBM, LIGHT FOR THE WORLD, EU-CORD)

specifically dedicated to EU advocacy issues. Regular updates on the activities of the IDDC EU Task Group can be found on the IDDC website.

>For the contact details of IDDC, [click here](#)

The European Disability Forum (EDF)

The European Disability Forum is the representative umbrella organization of the European disability movement. EDF is the only European pan-disability platform which is run by people with disabilities or the families of people with disabilities unable to represent themselves. It was created in 1996 by its member organisations to defend issues of common concern to all disability groups, and to be an independent and strong voice for disabled citizens towards the EU institutions and other European authorities. Its mission is to promote equal opportunities for people with disabilities based on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and to ensure disabled citizens' full access to fundamental and human rights through their active involvement in policy development and implementation in the European Union. In addition, EDF has strong links with the European Parliament Disability Intergroup by providing its Secretariat, and is a member of the International Disability Alliance. EDF and a number of its members are also active on advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities in International Cooperation.

>View EDF Membership [here](#)

>View EDF Work structure [here](#)

>Find EDF contact details [here](#)

Members of EDF which are undertaking some work in a development context:

The European Blind Union

The European Blind Union is a non-governmental, non profit-making European organization founded in 1984. One of the six regional bodies of the [World Blind Union](#), it is the only organization representing the interests of blind and partially-sighted people in Europe. EBU currently has [45 member countries](#), each represented by a national delegation. The detailed work of EBU is carried out by [Standing Commissions](#) and Working Groups, whose areas of activity reflect the major interests of EBU. The EBU has a Commission on Cooperation with Blind and Partially Sighted in Developing Countries. This Commission promotes and coordinates efforts towards assisting blind and partially sighted people in developing countries. Special priority is given to the establishment and strengthening of organisations of the blind and partially sighted persons.

>Contact details:

EBU Central Office

58 avenue Bosquet, 75007 Paris, France

Tel: +33 1 47 05 38 20

Fax: +33 1 47 05 38 21

E-mail: ebu@euroblind.org

Disabled Peoples' International Europe (DPI-Europe)

Disabled Peoples' International Europe is a network of national organizations or assemblies of people with disabilities, established to promote human rights of people with disabilities through full participation, equalization of opportunity and development.

>Contact DPI Europe [here](#)

International Federation for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus (IF)

The International Federation for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus (IF) is the world-wide umbrella organisation (INGO) for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus organisations. It was created in 1979 by national organisations of people with these impairments and their parents. Today IF's membership consists of 38 regional and national umbrella organisations for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus. Further, IF has intensive contact with regional and national organizations in over 50 countries, spread over five continents. Its mission (goals) is to improve the quality of life of people with Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus throughout the world and to decrease the prevalence of Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus by primary prevention.

>Read IF activities [here](#)

>Contact IF [here](#)

Inclusion Europe

Inclusion Europe is the representative umbrella of family-based organizations advocating for the human rights of people with intellectual disabilities. Inclusion Europe is part of the wider international network, Inclusion International, and takes an interest in development cooperation via this wider international network.

>Contact Inclusion Europe [here](#)

European Deafblind Network (EDbN):

This is the representative network of European NGO of organizations of deafblind people, parents, relatives and professionals. In 1987 the ECDBS, European Community Deafblind Secretariat, was established by national representatives of deafblind organisations, family members, organisations and professional organisations from the EU countries. In 1994 the Council meeting of ECDBS in Greece decided to change the name of the organisation to EDbN (European Deafblind Network). The governing body of EDbN is the General Assembly and the Management Committee. In 2003 a decision was made to continue the work of EDbN despite a lack of funding.

The activities of EDbN are diverse and have developed over the years. In the past EDbN supported about 120 different multinational projects during the first 12 years of its existence; conferences, seminars, study groups, cultural exchanges and meetings. Many of them were Dbl network activities. Three very successful European conferences for family members were also organised. Now EDbN is a network of people campaigning for greater recognition of deafblindness in Europe and the inclusion of the needs of deafblind people in European society and policy work.

The Chair of EDbN is a member of the European Disability Forum (EDF). This allows EDbN to work with other European disability organisations and take part in the policy work of the European Union. EDF often asks EDbN to contribute to policy work to ensure that the needs of deafblind people are included. The expertise of all the members of EDbN is valuable to this work. A group of 'Experts' has been created to formalise this work.

European Network of (ex) Users and Survivors of Psychiatry

ENUSP is an initiative to give (ex) users and survivors of psychiatric services a means to communicate, to exchange opinions, views and experiences in order to support each other in the personal, political and social struggle against coercion and compulsion, injustice and stigma in our respective countries.

ENUSP is the only grassroots umbrella organisation on a European level that unifies national organisations of (ex) users and survivors of psychiatry across the continent to provide a direct representation of people who are or have been on the receiving end of psychiatric services. Involvement of both user and survivor organisations from all over Europe is a unique added value of the Network.

Contact: www.enusp.org or desk@enusp.org

Autism Europe

Autism Europe is an international association whose main objective is to advance the rights of persons with autism and their families and to help them improve their quality of life. In order to implement its objectives and maximise its impact on EU policies, Autism-Europe has built strategic alliances with European social partners. Autism-Europe holds the Vice-Presidency of the [European Disability Forum \(EDF\)](#). Autism-Europe is also a member of the [European Coalition for Community Living \(ECCL\)](#) and the [Platform of European Social NGOs](#).

>Contact Autism Europe [here](#)

European Network of Independent Living (ENIL)

ENIL was founded to address the under-representation of persons with extensive disabilities in disability politics. ENIL undertakes some campaign work at EU level on disability and development cooperation issues. ENIL and its member organisations believe that full citizenship and human rights for disabled people will only be achieved through increasing awareness, challenging traditional services and positive debate throughout Europe and internationally.

>Contact ENIL [here](#)

CONCORD

CONCORD is the European NGO Confederation for Relief and Development. Its 18 international networks and 25 national associations from the European Member States represent more than 1600 European NGOs vis-à-vis the European Institutions.

Cooperation between the NGO community and the EU dates back to 1976, with the setting up of CLONG, the Liaison Committee of NGOs. Its purpose was to facilitate cooperation between development NGOs and the European Commission. In 2003 CLONG developed into CONCORD which is structured differently both financially as well as in relation to its membership.

Membership of CONCORD is explained in more detail [here](#).

CONCORD is divided into working groups. These are:

Pillar 1

- Policy Forum

- Aid Watch Forum: monitoring of the real figures of the Official Development Assistance in Europe
- PCD: Policy Coherence for Development (gathers 4 working groups)
 - European Food Security Group
 - Trade
 - Climate change and development
 - Migration and development
- Development Education Forum
- Cotonou
- EU-Africa
- Gender
- HIV and AIDS working group

Pillar 2

- Quadrilogue
- Development Effectiveness of Civil Society Organisations
- Enlargement, pre-accession and neighbourhood
- Funding for Development and Relief (FDR)”

These working groups are the central dynamic behind the confederation; they meet frequently and are attended in excess of 500 members.

The Working Groups can be characterized as follows:

-They bring together Members' expertise on European issues linked to development, relief and humanitarian aid.

-They promote representation within CONCORD through the participation of its Members.

-Each Working Group is animated by one or more Members of CONCORD assisted by the Secretariat.

-Their aim is to analyze and follow up European policy, to strengthen relations with the European Institutions, to accumulate and share expertise and information with CONCORD Members as well as the European Institutions, to give advice and direction to the Board and the General Assembly of CONCORD.

>Request CONCORD information pack [here](#).

VOICE

VOICE stands for Voluntary Organisations in Cooperation in Emergencies. It is a network representing 86 European non-governmental organisations (NGOs) active in humanitarian aid worldwide.

VOICE's overall vision is a collective European NGO response to humanitarian crises. To reach this goal, VOICE seeks to influence the policy and practice of the European Union regarding emergency aid, relief, rehabilitation and disaster preparedness. It enhances the collective influence of the network's members with the EU, including its Member States. It promotes respect for international humanitarian law and humanitarian principles, and endorses quality and effectiveness in humanitarian action.

In the humanitarian aid sector, VOICE is the main NGO interlocutor with the European Union promoting the comparative advantages and specificities of NGOs in aid delivery. It also engages in dialogue with other major providers of humanitarian aid, such as the Red Cross and relevant UN agencies.

Based in Brussels, VOICE has been active since 1992 and became an independent organisation under Belgian law in 2001.

Its objectives are:

-To advocate for independent humanitarian action

VOICE monitors the implementation of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid and advocates for the consistent application of the humanitarian principles contained within it. NGOs' added value and expertise are brought to the attention of the EU and Member States decision-makers. Thematic working groups draw together VOICE members' experience in the areas of disaster risk reduction (DRR), the European Commission's contractual partnership requirements (FPA), EU civil-military relations and the UN-led humanitarian reform process.

-To facilitate members' collective influence

VOICE facilitates the collective influence of its member NGOs on EU humanitarian aid-related policies by developing advocacy strategies and policy positions. Established dialogue and regular exchange with EU institutional and Member State actors are used to promote NGO positions. VOICE also ensures relevant information sharing within the network on EU context and trends, while engaging member organisations in working groups and capacity-building activities.

-To support quality and professionalism

VOICE supports a high level of quality in its members' humanitarian aid responses. VOICE contributes to Members' professionalism through information-sharing, workshops and the maintenance of links with quality networks and initiatives, universities and research institutes.

>Access the VOICE strategic plan [here](#)

>Read more on VOICE membership [here](#)

>Contact VOICE [here](#)

The Human Rights and Democracy Network (HRDN)

The Human Rights and Democracy Network (HRDN) is an informal grouping of NGOs operating at EU level in the broader areas of human rights, democracy and conflict prevention. Participation in the network is open to non-governmental organizations which engage at EU level in the promotion of human rights, democracy and conflict prevention in and outside the EU.

The vision of the HRDN is that human rights and democracy are placed at the heart of the EU's internal and external policy agenda. This vision should manifest itself in an EU that effectively protects human rights at home and is a force for positive change in the world. In pursuit of this vision, the network aims to influence EU and member state human rights policies and the programming of their funding instruments to promote democracy, human rights and sustainable peace.

Organisations such as Amnesty International EU Office (AI) and Human Rights Watch (HRW), but also children rights organizations such as PLAN International, are member of this network. LIGHT FOR THE WORLD joined HRDN in 2006. CBM is a member since 2008.

>To contact, please get in touch with

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Annex 1 List of Contacts

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Annex 2 Summary of EU policies and programmes directly related/ including the rights of people with disabilities

Name of legislative, policy or programming document	Link	Issued by/ date	Include disability or marginalised groups (specify)
INVESTING IN PEOPLE Strategy Paper for the Thematic Programme 2007–2013 from the European Commission	http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/how_we_do_strategy_paper_en.pdf	Feb. 2007	Following an extended advocacy effort, the last version of the Thematic Programme ‘Investing in People’, includes disability as a cross-cutting issue—this is the first time disability has been given such important attention in an EU programme strategy.
United Nation Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	http://www.un.org/disabilities/convention/convention.shtml	Mch. 2007	This Convention is the first human rights Convention to have a stand-alone article on Development Cooperation (Article 32), which paves the way for Development Cooperation to systematically take disability into account.
The Council took the decision for the EU conclusion of the CRPD		Nov. 2009	milestone achieved
Public consultation on the EU-Africa strategy Preliminary report of the Internet consultation	http://europafrica.files.wordpress.com/2007/03/draft-report-on-the-consultation-27-march-07.doc	Mch. 2007	“The topic which has dominated the contributions made on key development issues is the need to focus on vulnerable groups of society, referring specifically to people with

			disabilities, women and children”.
REGULATION (EC) No 1905/2006 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL- Development Cooperation Instrument	http://eur-lex.europa.eu/lexUriServ/lexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:378:0041:0071:EN:PDF	18.12.2006	There are explicit references to disability in the sectors on health, and there is reference to inclusion and combating all forms of discrimination in respect to education, employment and social cohesion.
Joint EU Africa Strategy	http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/er/97496.pdf	Dec. 2007	“Africa and the EU will together work towards ensuring long-term predictable funding for national education plans to help ensure quality education for all and that all girls and boys attend and complete school. Particular attention will be given to the inclusion of hard-to-reach children and children and youth with disabilities”.
A Special Place for Children in EU External Action	http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+REPORT+A6-2009-0085+0+DOC+PDF+V0//EN	5.2.2008	It specifies that children with disabilities are particularly at risk. "There are groups of children and adolescents who have special needs and who are particularly at risk: children belonging to ethnic or other minorities, child migrants, displaced children or refugees, children affected by armed conflicts, child soldiers, orphans and children without parental care, children

			affected by HIV/AIDS, and children with disabilities, all warrant special attention".
EU Africa Strategy - Report from the European Parliament: One year after Lisbon: The Africa-EU partnership at work		19.2.2009	Notes that "basic health and primary and secondary education are crucial catalysts to spend at least 20% of the Community's aid budget in these sectors"; calls on the Commission to extend this commitment to the EDF; recalls that all efforts in this regard should include persons with disabilities; achieving the MDGs; consequently encourages the African countries to make these areas one of the main priorities of their poverty reduction strategies; calls on the partnership to promote such a development
European Parliament report on MDG contracts	http://www.euro-parl.europa.eu/sites/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+REPORT+A6-2009-0085+0+DOC+PDF+V0//EN	20.2.2009	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities signatories are obliged to take disability into account in their development cooperation.
Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions 'Supporting developing countries in coping with the crisis' COM(2009)0160	http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52009DC0160:EN:HTML	8.4.2009	Help poorer countries through economic crisis. "In particular, the Commission emphasises the risk of poverty for the world's most vulnerable groups, amongst whom it names women, children, the

			elderly and the disabled."
Working Paper for EC staff on education "More and better education in Developing Countries"	http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/SEC2010_0121_EN.pdf	4.2.2010	States that children with disability are disproportionately numerous when it comes to not being in school.
The EU Role in Global Health	http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/COMM_PDF_COM_2010_0128_EN.PDF	31.3.2010	This EU Communication does not include specific issues on access to services for people with disabilities, but rather places a focus on equity in general
European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) Strategy Paper 2011 - 2013	http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/human_rights/docs/eidhr_strategy_paper_2011-2013_en.pdf	21.4.2010	The new Strategy Paper especially emphasizes the importance of enhancing political representation and participation for persons with disabilities, most especially women.
FAC conclusions on MDGs	http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/genaff/115157.pdf	Jun. 2010	The paper not only recognizes disability as an important cross-cutting issue relevant to all fields of development policy and all of the MDG, it also pays particular attention to disability within the specific asks on education