



## Disability and Development at the EU

### Framework and Actors: An Outline

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IDDC, September 2012

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## List of Abbreviations

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific Countries
ANED	Academic Network of European Disability
CONCORD	European Confederation of Relief and Development
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSP	Country Strategy Paper
DAP	Disability Action Plan
DCI	EU Development Cooperation Instrument
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DG	Directorate-General
DG DEVCO	Directorate-General for Development
DG EMPL	Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion
DG RELEX	Directorate-General for the External Relations
DPOs	Disabled People's Organisations
EEAS	European External Action Service
EC	European Commission
ECHO	European Community's Humanitarian Office
EDF	European Disability Forum
EIDHR	European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights
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
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
iQSC	The Interservice Quality Support Group
MEPs	Members of European Parliament
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
UN	United Nations
VOICE	Voluntary Organisations in Cooperation in Emergencies

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Editor: Lars Bosselmann, CBM EU Liaison Office

## Introduction

The purpose of this report is to give an overview of the relevant actors and stakeholders, as well as the policies and programmes, concerning disability and development at the EU level.

This document is aimed in particular at individuals who are unfamiliar with disability and development at the EU level. We hope that this may also be used by IDDC members, advocates. This is a practical document that may also be used as a reference guide to the disability and development sector that wishes to engage in EU development.

Readers will thereby gain an understanding of the framework within which both EU institutions and civil society organisations operate in this field. To illustrate the complex policy-making framework at EU level, an easy-to-read diagram has been provided.

This document was first produced as part of the Project '[Making Development Inclusive](#)', funded by the former EC EuropeAid, in 2010. 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.

This document was last revised in 2012, with updates primarily centred on:

- The relevance of the European Union for disability and development
- The introduction of the European External Action Service
- The European Disability Strategy 2010-2020
- The general structure and layout of the document

The methodology used to update this document involved: analysis of relevant literature, policies and programmes, meetings with IDDC members and internet based research.

This report is considered to be a “living document” since it will continue to be adjusted to incoming policies and changes at EU level. We therefore encourage any feedback and/or comments that you might have regarding the content of this report. If any should indeed arise, please contact Lars Bosselmann at: [lars.bosselmann@cbm.org](mailto:lars.bosselmann@cbm.org).

## **The Role of the European Union within Disability and Development**

Before having a look at institutional and non-institutional actors, it is important to understand why the European Union is relevant to the disability and development areas, and what role it plays within them.

The role that the European Union plays in the disability and development sector is two-fold. Firstly, due to the fact that the European Union is the biggest donor of aid in the world, providing more than 50% of aid worldwide, its development programmes are significant to the disability and development sector. Indeed, the Lisbon Treaty (see page 12) has both strengthened and clarified the EU's development cooperation policy and it has for the first time set out humanitarian assistance as a specific EU Policy area. In short, it is important to work with the European Union due to its political and financial weight as the biggest donor in the world so as to ensure that the money spent in development is spent in an inclusive way. The aim is to ensure that the EU's impact in the developing world is directed to the appropriate areas and with a suitable approach in terms of disability. Secondly, due to the EU's political and financial importance, there is a possibility for the EU to influence other donors in development to also become inclusive in their policies.

As the EU should not only promote inclusion outside its borders, it is also important to note that it can have a direct impact on the lives of approximately 80 million persons with disabilities in Europe. In that respect, the EU has the competence to support, coordinate and supplement national disability policies. The aim is a barrier-free Europe for all.

Directly relevant to disability and development is the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. Indeed, Article 21 states that any discrimination based on disability is prohibited. Furthermore, Article 26 states that “the Union recognises and respects the rights of persons with disabilities to benefit from measures designed to ensure their independence, social and occupational integration and participation in the life of the community. The Charter came into force with the arrival of the Treaty of Lisbon.

To access the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, please follow the link: <http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2007:303:0001:0016:EN:PDF>

## The 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. Both the CRPD and its Protocol entered into force on 3 May 2008. The European Union concluded the CRPD on the 22nd of January 2011. It was an historic step since the CRPD is the first UN human rights convention that both the European Union and its Member States are part of. By deciding to conclude the CRPD, the EU accepted to fulfil 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 organisations 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 and the spirit of the CRPD. This obligation applies, for example, to international cooperation (article 32) as well as to humanitarian aid (article 11).

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 fulfil its obligations under the present Convention.

To access the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, please follow the link: <http://www.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml>

## **The European Disability Strategy 2010-2020**

The overall aim of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 is to empower persons with disabilities so as to ensure that they enjoy their full rights and benefit fully from participating in society and in the European economy. The strategy provides for policies that are designed to supplement national programmes and it gives ways in which the CRPD can be effectively implemented.

The focus is placed on eliminating barriers and the European Commission has identified eight main areas on which it will centre: accessibility, participation, equality, employment, education and training, social protection, health, and external action.

This strategy is intended to harness the combined potential of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and the Convention, and to make full use of Europe 2020 and its instruments. Furthermore, the EU Disability Strategy is based on a rights-based approach which emphasizes the importance of ensuring that individual rights can be enjoyed in practice, in accordance with the CRPD.

Particular attention should be placed on chapter 8 "External Actions":

"The EU and the Member States should promote the rights of people with disabilities in their External action, including EU enlargement, neighbourhood and development programmes. The Commission will work where appropriate within a broader framework of non discrimination to highlight disability as a human rights issue in the EU's external action; raise awareness of the UN Convention and the needs of people with disabilities, including accessibility, in the area of emergency and humanitarian aid; consolidate the network of disability correspondents, increasing awareness of disability issues in EU delegations; ensure that candidate and potential candidate countries make progress in promoting the rights of people with disabilities and ensure that the financial instruments for pre-accession assistance are used to improve their situation.

EU action will support and complement national initiatives to address disability issues in dialogues with non-member countries, and where appropriate include disability and the implementation of the UN Convention taking into account the Accra commitments on aid

effectiveness. It will foster agreement and commitment on disability issues in international fora (UN, Council of Europe, OECD). Promote the rights of people with disabilities within the EU external action."

Indeed, this relates explicitly to the disability and development field, as it provides a concrete action plan on what the EU committed itself to implement before the year 2020. To access the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 please follow the link below:  
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0636:FIN:EN:PDF>

## **The European Union institutions and forums relevant to disability and development**

In the European Union, there are three institutions and one forum that are directly relevant to disability and development, these being: the European Commission, the European Council, the European Parliament and the High Level Group on Disability. Since the EU gave itself a new institutional structure (Lisbon Treaty 2009/2010), a new actor in the field of external relations came into being: The European External Action Service (EEAS). The entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty also gave legal force to the Charter of Fundamental Rights thereby ensuring better protection of the rights of European citizens.

To access the Treaty of Lisbon text, please follow the link below:  
<http://www.lisbon-treaty.org/wcm/the-lisbon-treaty.html>

## **The European Commission**

The [European Commission](#) is independent of national governments. Its role 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 the European Parliament and the Council. This means managing the day-to-day business of the European Union: implementing its policies, running its programmes and spending its funds.

Like the European Parliament and the European Council, the European Commission was set up in the 1950s under the EU's founding treaties. Currently, José Manuel Barroso is the European Commission's president until 2014.



There are five main Directorate-Generals (DGs) involved in developing and implementing policies related to disability and development cooperation within the European Commission: the European External Action Service (EEAS), DG Development and Cooperation - EuropeAid, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, DG ECHO and DG Justice. Other DGs will also have some relevance to external action issues, but are not reviewed here.

These Directorate-Generals are comparable to a Ministry at national level.

### **DG Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid (DEVCO)**

The DG's mission includes helping to reduce and ultimately eradicate poverty in developing countries through the promotion of sustainable development, democracy, peace and security. DG DEVCO designs development policy for all developing countries, and enhances policy coherence for development while further improving implementation and delivery mechanisms.

DG DEVCO has four main overarching areas of focus:

- governance and human rights
- human development
- food and natural resources
- economy and trade

DG DEVCO's programmes focus on the following geographic regions:

- Africa, Caribbean and Pacific
- Latin America
- Asia and Central Asia
- Gulf Region
- EU Neighbourhood and Russia
- Worldwide Programmes

Development and Cooperation - EuropeAid brings together two former DG: DG Development and DG EuropeAid. DG DEVCO is also the single interlocutor for the European External Action Service (EEAS), and for all sectoral DGs. This means that there is one address for development policy and thereby a single contact point for stakeholders both inside and outside the EU. Its wide scope of work (from policy formulation to programme implementation) makes DG DEVCO the main interlocutor for Civil Society Organisations working in the field of disability and development. Its [unit DEVCO D3](#) explicitly mentions the aim of ensuring "social inclusion including for specific groups such as youth and people with disability".

Recent initiatives to promote the rights of persons with disabilities in development include:

- A [study](#) on disability and development examining how disability is included in the EC's work.
- The design of a training on disability and development for EC staff.
- The creation of a [web-based tool](#) for information sharing on disability and development.

## DG Justice

DG Justice's main role is in building a Europe-wide area of justice. This includes a wide range of policy areas: Fundamental rights, citizenship and free movement, civil justice, consumer and marketing law, contract law, criminal justice, data protection, gender equality, tackling discrimination, drug control policy and relations with third countries. Part of that broad mandate is to eliminate and prevent discrimination and barriers that persons with disabilities face. It mainly takes action with the European Union to:

- improve knowledge of discrimination by raising awareness of their rights and obligations and also of the benefits of diversity;
- support intermediary actors such as NGOs, social partners and equality bodies to improve their capacity to combat discrimination;
- support the development of equality policies at national level and encourage the exchange of good practices between EU countries;
- achieve real change in the area of anti-discrimination through anti-discrimination training activities;
- push for business-oriented diversity management as part of a strategic response to a more diversified society, customer base, market structure and workforce.

Importantly, DG Justice (in particular Unit G3, Integration of people with disabilities) is the focal point for implementing and monitoring the CRPD (including the articles related to external actions and development), 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.

The Commission also supports the Academic Network of European Disability experts (ANED). DG Justice also aims to bring about the disability objective of the EU Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs, this being the improvement in the comparatively low work participation rates of persons with disabilities in Europe. Furthermore, this Directorate-General promotes equal access to quality education and lifelong learning.

To achieve the aim of providing persons with disabilities the same individual choices and control over their daily lives as non-disabled people, DG Justice is encouraging affordable, accessible and quality social services.

The EU also supports the de-institutionalisation of persons with disabilities.

To access the DG Justice “People with Disabilities”, please click [here](#).

## **DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion**

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

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

To contact DG Employment, Social affairs and Equal Opportunities, please click [here](#).

## **European Commission’s Humanitarian Aid Office and Civil Protection**

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 140 countries via its partners. Over the past few years, its [grants](#) cover emergency aid, food aid and aid to refugees and displaced persons worth, on average, a total of more than €800 million per year. In 2012, the European Commission has given €35 million to disaster preparedness programmes alone.

More advocacy work is needed to ensure that awareness is raised in the European humanitarian aid community of the rights of persons with disabilities in emergencies. This becomes increasingly important due to the stronger emphasis that the EU gives to its humanitarian aid work, as well as due to article 11 of the CRPD.

### **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 DEVCO or the External Action Service.

To find more information on the current Members, please click [here](#).

### **The European External Action Service**

The [European External Action Service](#) is essentially a foreign ministry and diplomatic body. The former DG RELEX was absorbed by the EEAS. It is made up of officials from the [Council](#) and the Commission as well as civil servants from the EU Member States.

The EEAS is under the authority of the Union's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton. She coordinates the Commission's external actions in order to ensure consistency and coherence between all of the EU's external actions. She also has under her responsibility a network of 136 EU Delegations that represent the Union abroad. They form part of a diplomatic mission representing the EU,

together with the 27 Member States of the European Union. The Delegations perform a variety of tasks aimed at enhancing relations between the EU and partner countries.

These EU Delegations have an important role to play regarding disability and development issues outside the EU. Except for consular tasks, the EU Delegations function in the same way as an Embassy. In that capacity, the Delegations have a vital role to play in conducting the political dialogue, including with civil society and the disability movement. They are increasingly important in launching calls for proposals in developing countries, thus becoming an even more important entry point for civil society organisations and DPOs. Today, the majority of the EU Delegations have appointed a contact person for disability issues. To contact these persons, please follow the link below and get in touch with the relevant Delegation:

[http://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/web\\_en.htm](http://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/web_en.htm)

## The European Council

The [European 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 rotating basis. But for continuity, a permanent Council President was established. Currently, Herman Van Rompuy is the President of the European Council until 30 November 2014.

The Council is responsible for decision-making and coordination:

- 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.

### **The Foreign Affairs Council**

From the point of view of disability and development, the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) is a relevant body. It was previously referred to as the "General Affairs and External Relations Council".

The FAC meetings bring together the Foreign Ministers of Member States, meeting once a month. Depending on the nature of the agenda, ministers responsible for European Affairs, Defence, Development or Trade might also participate. The FAC meetings are chaired by Catherine Ashton and prepared by a number of thematic and geographic working groups and diplomats.

The FAC has the possibility to influence development policy in favour of disability.

This is underlined by the 2010 [Council conclusions on the Millennium Development Goals for the United Nations High-level Plenary meeting in New York and beyond](#) which contains strong references to disability. This success was achieved thanks to an active IDDC letter campaign addressed to the European Union's Member States' Foreign and Development Ministers.

### **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 but 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 shares experience with regard to the involvement of representatives of persons with disabilities in the implementation and the follow-up of relevant policies and actions in their favour. Furthermore, the High Level Group advises the Commission on the implementation of section II of the Resolution.

In these ways, whilst recognising 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.

To access the list of members, please follow the link below:

[http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/soc-prot/disable/hlg\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/soc-prot/disable/hlg_en.htm)

## **The European Parliament**

The European Parliament is the only directly-elected body of the European Union. The 754 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 10 July 2012 the European Parliament Committee on Development approved amendments to include the disability dimension to the Agenda for Change: the

future of EU development policy. The amendments explicitly ensure that people with disabilities are brought onto the international development agenda.

Parliamentary committees can also undertake 'own initiative' reports and ask Parliamentary questions to the Commission and/or the Council as a mechanism to influence the EU policy on issues that are of key concern to them. These mechanisms are efficient tools to bring the rights of persons with disabilities to the political agenda/where they are often absent unless explicitly asked to be included.

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 to bring together the elected members of the European Parliament and the elected representatives of the African, Caribbean and Pacific states ("ACP countries") that signed the [Cotonou Agreement](#).

The Assembly regularly forms exploratory or fact-finding missions and meets twice per year to debate issues of common interest and concern on which it adopts resolutions. The 2011 ACP-EU JPA [report](#) on persons with disabilities was a positive outcome of their work for disability and development.

To access the Parliamentary Calendar, please click [here](#).

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

To research or contact your MEPs, please 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, having been established in 1980. Ádám Kósa MEP (HU, EPP) is the current Intergroup President. It receives secretarial support from the [European Disability Forum](#) (EDF).

The full potential of the Intergroup to discuss disability issues related to EU external policies still needs to be exploited.



## The Ordinary Legislative Procedure

Currently, the procedure through which new legislation is introduced is referred to as the “Ordinary Legislative Procedure”, previously known as the “co-decision procedure”. This process involves three main institutions: the European Commission, the European Parliament and the European Council.

Before, consulting the visual illustration of the ordinary legislative procedure, the decision-making process will be put into context and explained.

In this legislative process, no single institution holds the legislative competence. Although only the Commission holds the “right of initiative” for new proposals (unless the Lisbon Treaty explicitly mentions an exceptional case), the legislative competence is effectively shared between the three institutions. This means that the European Parliament has the same degree of lawmaking power as the Council in some areas, and the EP has a role to play in almost all lawmaking.

The reason why various institutions are involved in the decision-making process lies in that it is an attempt to share the competency, ensuring greater democratic representation of the EU citizens and policy-making which is more informed and effective.

Unless stated otherwise, the Commission is exclusively able to put forward legislative proposals. Having produced a proposal, it is sent to both the European Parliament and the European Council. Generally speaking, the European Parliament and the European Council are presented with three options at each step of the legislative process: to approve, reject or amend the proposal.

For a legislative proposal to be converted into a new legislation, both the European Parliament and the European Council need to cooperate with each other. Indeed, an exchange of opinions takes place whereby both institutions can amend the proposal that the European Commission has offered. This is done through the First and Second Reading, as shown in the figure. If either one of them does not agree with the other’s position or with the Commission’s position, it has the opportunity to block the proposal by rejecting it.

This process involves a high degree of negotiation, and for a legislative proposal to pass and be adopted, both institutions tend to have to adjust to the other’s position and possible related amendments.

Additionally, the process includes consultation with national Parliaments, Committee of the Regions, the Economic and Social Committee, although these bodies hold no authority in this legislative process.

The Ordinary Legislative Procedure applies to development and disability issues. However, other issues may not classify under the Ordinary Legislative Procedure, in accordance with the Lisbon Treaty provisions. A special legislative procedure is used in sensitive areas. This would entail one of the institutions prevailing over the other institution, with the latter only holding a consultative position. In order to influence policies in such a complex legal/political environment, at least three general rules apply:

- The earlier a reference to an issue that one is advocating for enters the draft proposal (ideally at the Commission stage of the process), the more likely it is that the reference is maintained until the end of the entire legislative process.
- Due to the multitude of actors involved in EU law-making, the most successful influence can be exercised by advocating at different levels (Commission, Parliament and the national level) promoting the same message but coming from different organisations.
- Before starting an advocacy activity, it is essential to find out whether the subject at stake falls under the "ordinary legislative procedure" or not, as this has an influence on which institution holds the most power.

For a detailed explanation of the Ordinary legislative Procedure, please access the link below:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/aboutparliament/en/0080a6d3d8/Ordinary-legislative-procedure.html>

# Start of the legislative procedure

European Commission drafts a proposal

First reading by the European Parliament



## First reading by the European Parliament

EP makes no amendments

EP makes amendments

Council offers its common position and decides on EP's position

Council offers its common position and decides on EP's position

Council can adopt act without adding further amendments

Council approves EP's amendments

Council makes amendments

## Second reading by the European Parliament

Act is adopted

Act is adopted

European Parliament offers its position

EP approves Council's position or makes no comments

EP proposes amendments to Council's position at first reading

EP rejects Council's position at first reading

Act is adopted

Act is not adopted



## Conciliation mechanism

Second Reading by the European Council

Council approves amendments

Council does not approve EP's amendments

Conciliation Committee is convened

Conciliation Committee cooperate to agree on a joint text

## Conciliation mechanism

EP and Council agree on a joint text

EP and Council do not agree on joint text

Conciliation Committee does not agree on joint text

Act is adopted

Act is not adopted

Act is not adopted

# End of the legislative procedure



## Civil Society Networks

A list of civil society umbrella networks will follow to refer to a number of non-institutional actors that operate in the area of disability and development, in conjunction with the official European Union institutions. This is not an exhaustive list, meaning that not all individual member organisations working on disability and development have been included.

### The International Disability and Development Consortium (IDDC)

The [International Disability and Development Consortium](#) (IDDC) and its 26 [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, and state of health, ethnic origin or any other characteristic. IDDC members include DPOs, and also disability specific, mainstream development and humanitarian NGOs.



### The European Disability Forum (EDF)

The [European Disability Forum](#) is the representative umbrella organisation of the European disability movement. EDF is the only European pan-disability platform which is run by persons with disabilities or the families of persons with disabilities unable to represent themselves. It was created to defend issues of common concern to all disability groups.



### CONCORD

[CONCORD](#) is the European NGO Confederation for Relief and Development, composed of 18 international networks and 25 national associations from the European Member States, representing more than 1600 European NGOs vis-à-vis the European Institutions.

Its aim is to analyse 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.



## 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.



## 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. 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. 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.



## Annex 1 Summary of EU policies and programmes directly related or that include the rights of persons with disabilities: 2004-2009

Name of legislative, policy or programming document	Link	Issued by/ date	Include disability or marginalised groups (specify)
REGULATION (EC) No 1905/2006 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL- Development Cooperation Instrument	<a href="http://eur-lex.europa.eu/lex/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:378:0041:0071:EN:PDF">http://eur-lex.europa.eu/lex/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:378:0041:0071:EN:PDF</a>	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.
INVESTING IN PEOPLE Strategy Paper for the Thematic Programme 2007–2013 from the European Commission	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/development/center/repository/how_w_e_do_strategy_paper_en.pdf">http://ec.europa.eu/development/center/repository/how_w_e_do_strategy_paper_en.pdf</a>	02.2007	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.
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	<a href="http://www.un.org/disabilities/convention/convention.shtml">http://www.un.org/disabilities/convention/convention.shtml</a>	03.2007	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.

Public consultation on the EU-Africa strategy Preliminary report of the Internet consultation	<a href="http://europafri.ca.files.wordpress.com/2007/03/draft-report-on-the-consultation-27-march-07.doc">http://europafri.ca.files.wordpress.com/2007/03/draft-report-on-the-consultation-27-march-07.doc</a>	03.2007	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 persons with disabilities, women and children.
A Special Place for Children in EU External Action	<a href="http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+REPORT+A6-2009-0085+0+DOC+PDF+V0//EN">http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+REPORT+A6-2009-0085+0+DOC+PDF+V0//EN</a>	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.

## Annex 2 Summary of EU policies and programmes directly related or that include the rights of persons with disabilities: 2009-2014

Name of legislative, policy or programming document	Link	Issued by/ date	Include disability or marginalised groups (specify)
European Parliament report on MDG contracts	<a href="http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+REPORT+A6-2009-0085+0+DOC+PDF+V0//EN">http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+REPORT+A6-2009-0085+0+DOC+PDF+V0//EN</a>	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	<a href="http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52009DC0160:EN:HTML">http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52009DC0160:EN:HTML</a>	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"	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/development/center/repository/SEC2010_0121_EN.pdf">http://ec.europa.eu/development/center/repository/SEC2010_0121_EN.pdf</a>	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	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/development/center/repository/COMM_PDF_COM_2010_0128_EN.PDF">http://ec.europa.eu/development/center/repository/COMM_PDF_COM_2010_0128_EN.PDF</a>	31.3.2010	This EU Communication does not include specific issues on access to services for persons with disabilities, but rather places a focus on equity in general.



European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) Strategy Paper 2011 - 2013	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/human_rights/docs/eidhr_strategy_paper_2011-2013_en.pdf">http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/human_rights/docs/eidhr_strategy_paper_2011-2013_en.pdf</a>	21.4.2010	The new Strategy Paper especially emphasises the importance of enhancing political representation and participation for persons with disabilities, most especially women.
FAC conclusions on MDGs	<a href="http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsData/docs/presdata/EN/genaff/115157.pdf">http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsData/docs/presdata/EN/genaff/115157.pdf</a>	06.2010	The paper not only recognises 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.
EC Study on Disability and Development	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/social-protection/documents/223185_disability_study_en.pdf">http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/social-protection/documents/223185_disability_study_en.pdf</a>	December 2010	Gives a good overview of the EC work in that area and comes up with forward-looking recommendations how to make more progress.
Joint Africa EU Strategy Action Plan 2011-2013 Introductory Part	<a href="http://europafrica.files.wordpress.com/2008/07/second-final.pdf">http://europafrica.files.wordpress.com/2008/07/second-final.pdf</a>	01/12/2010	Details the concrete ways in which the strategy will be implemented. Includes numerous action points on persons with disabilities in the MDG Partnership
European Disability Strategy 2010-2020	<a href="http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0636:FIN:EN:PDF">http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0636:FIN:EN:PDF</a>	15.11.2010	Highlights the issues that need to be addressed, explaining the objectives and the ways in which they will be achieved.

			Chapter 8 on external actions specifies the EU's action points in external affairs.
ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, Committee on Social Affairs and the Environment, on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in developing countries	<a href="http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/acp/dr/878/878381/878381en.pdf">http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/acp/dr/878/878381/878381en.pdf</a>	23/11/2011	Calls for an enhanced exchange of good practices re inclusion of persons with disabilities between EU and ACP countries.
June 2011 EP report on the future of EU budget support.	<a href="http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+REPORT+A7-2011-0206+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN">http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+REPORT+A7-2011-0206+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN</a>	June 2011	Calls for targeting specifically persons with disabilities in EU budget support schemes.
Commission's Proposal for new 7 year development funding instruments	<a href="http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/finance/mff/financial_framework_news_en.htm">http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/finance/mff/financial_framework_news_en.htm</a>	07.12.2011	Proposes to view the rights of persons with disabilities as a cross-cutting issue in the Development Cooperation Instrument.
Agenda for Change Council Conclusions	<a href="http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/130243.pdf">http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/130243.pdf</a>	14.05.2012	Includes a reference to rights-based approach to development and to vulnerable groups of the population.
EU Strategic framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy	<a href="http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/131181.pdf">http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/131181.pdf</a>	25.06.2012	This new package represents an excellent opportunity for the EU to strengthen its commitment in the field of human rights and democracy. It is disability-inclusive.