

**December 2020**

Estimates by the World Health Organization (WHO) suggest that 15 % of the world's population live with some form of disability. This makes people with disabilities the world's largest minority. EU-wide, some 80 million EU citizens have a disability. Disability is complex and multi-dimensional: it denotes impairments, limitations on activity and restrictions on participation – a combination of medical and contextual factors. Some people are born with a disabling condition, others develop a disability through injury, chronic disease, or in older age. The EU's disability policy strives for full inclusion of persons with disabilities in society, by respecting the key principles of non-discrimination, self-determination and unconditional equal treatment. The EU's disability policy framework is set out in the European Disability Strategy, which serves to implement the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), to which the EU and its Member States are party.

Implementation of the Employment Equality Directive in light of the UN CRPD

Study by Irmgard Anglmayer, December 2020

3 December marks the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. EPRS has prepared a study on the implementation of the Employment Equality Directive in light of the UN CRPD, in support of the ongoing implementation report of the European Parliament's Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL). The study places a particular focus on reasonable accommodation, positive action, sanctions and equality bodies, and also to employment-related data regarding persons with disabilities.

Employment and disability in the European Union

Briefing by Marie Lecerf, May 2020

Even if there has been an overall improvement in the employment situation of persons with disabilities in the EU (given the increase in employment rates), they still remain among the most disadvantaged groups as regards employment. This phenomenon considerably affects the EU's social integration ability and economic growth. Alongside and in support of Member States' policies, the EU has introduced a series of legal provisions, initiatives, actions and strategies to improve the employment situation of disabled people. This briefing provides an overview of EU actions.

Lowering hurdles to sport for persons with disabilities

At a glance by Ivana Katsarova and Lucille Killmayer, December 2020

This infographic provides an overview of statistics on persons with disabilities and points to the international and EU policy framework which aims to enable those with disabilities to participate on a par with others in recreational, leisure and sporting activities. It also highlights the EU efforts to remove barriers facing people with disabilities and improve their participation in sports.

Digital Culture – Access issues

Briefing by Magdalena Pasikowska-Schnass, June 2020

Technology has huge potential to facilitate and democratise access to cultural resources. However, certain technical conditions are required to allow access to these cultural resources, for example webpages devoted

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to digitised cultural heritage and its hidden treasures as well as those devoted to novel creations. The technology used must go hand in hand with digital skills that are not evenly acquired by all ages and social groups. Persons with disabilities are in a particularly difficult situation, since ICT equipment often does not suit their specific needs. Moreover, cultural resources are often not available in suitable formats for them. European Union policies and strategies in many areas take all these challenges and access barriers into consideration. EU funds finance connectivity infrastructure in areas in need, training, and educational initiatives across policy areas going from culture and education to innovation and technology. The relationship between technology, science, the arts, and culture is becoming increasingly close in the digital era.

Access to cultural life for people with disabilities

Briefing by Magdalena Pasikowska-Schnass, December 2019

The United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities entered into force in 2011. It enshrined, among other rights, the right of people with disabilities to access cultural venues such as theatres, cinemas and museums, and to enjoy cultural materials, books, films and music in an accessible format. It also highlighted the right of people with disabilities to participate in cultural life as both amateur and professional artists. The European Union, party to the Convention, is committed to working on legislation, and implementing and promoting programmes and actions in favour of these rights. The EU disability strategy is a step in this direction.

European Accessibility Act

Briefing on Legislation in Progress by Marie Lecerf, July 2019

To ensure the full participation of people with disabilities in society, and to reduce the fragmentation of legislation governing access to products and services, the European Commission has adopted a proposal for a directive – often referred to as the European Accessibility Act. This Commission proposal, published in December 2015, has been adopted by the Parliament and the Council in March 2019. Member States have to transpose the measures of the directive into national law by 28 June 2022, and apply them from 28 June 2025. However, a transitional period will allow service providers that were already using them lawfully to continue to use products that do not meet the requirements of the directive up to 28 June 2030.

Assistive technologies to support people with disabilities

Briefing by Nicole Scholz, June 2015

The way disability is addressed has shifted from a purely medical approach to one that focuses on maximum functioning and well-being. Assistive technologies in support of people with disabilities have considerably evolved throughout the five broad categories of motor, vision, hearing, cognitive and communication disabilities. They now cover sophisticated ICT, software, cyber-physical and stem-cell applications. They include non-invasive and invasive brain-computer interfaces, wearable devices, stem-cell applications, neuroprosthetics, humanoid robots and applications (apps). The EU has funded several research projects on the development of assistive technologies under its research and innovation framework programmes.

Further reading

The European Disability Strategy 2010-2020

Briefing by Irmgard Anglmayer, July 2017

European disability policy: From defining disability to adopting a strategy

In-depth analysis by Marie Lecerf, June 2017

What if technology helped society to become more inclusive?

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At a glance by Philip Boucher, June 2016

The obligations of the EU public administration under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

In-depth analysis by Irmgard Anglmayer, March 2016

EU implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

In-depth analysis by Irmgard Anglmayer, February 2016

The employment equality directive

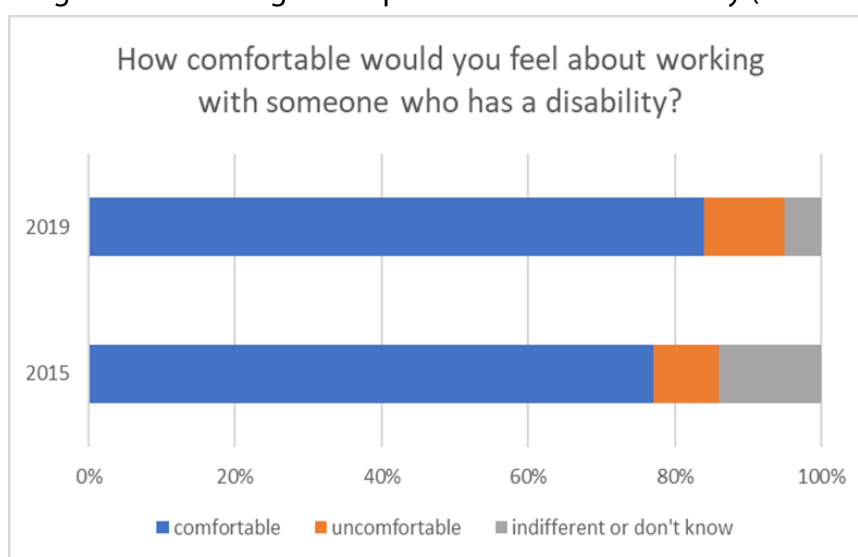
Study by Jan Tymowski, February 2016

EPRS graphics

Implementation of the Employment Equality Directive in light of the UN CRPD

Study by Irmgard Anglmayer, December 2020

Feeling at ease working with a person who has a disability (2015-2019)



Data source: Eurobarometer.

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(Internet) | www.eprs.ep.parl.union.eu (Intranet)

You can access this Topical Digest online at the websites below, or by scanning the QR code:

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/EPRS/TD_Persons_with_disability.pdf

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