Reporting on the  
Disability Intergroup   
Work programme 2020-2022

# Introduction

This document takes stock on the work of the European Parliament Disability Intergroup (DIG) in **2019-2021** as per its [work programme 2020-2022](https://www.edf-feph.org/disability-intergroup-workplan/). If there is any missing activity or you require further information, please write to [alejandro.moledo@edf-feph.org](mailto:alejandro.moledo@edf-feph.org).

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# Key events 2020

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Agenda** | **Date** | **Kind of meeting** | **Co-organiser** | **Venue** | **Update** |
| **New year reception** | 22 January 2020 | Open event with EDF | EDF/Ms Langensiepen (Greens) | Brussels, European Parliament (ASP 0G Salon) | [Completed](https://twitter.com/MyEDF/status/1220034717925376000) |
| **DIG-EDF executive committee meeting** | 23 January 2020 | In camera meeting of proposed members of the Bureau | EDF / Mr Benifei (S&D) | Brussels, European Parliament(ASP 5G305) | [Completed](https://twitter.com/MyEDF/status/1220342930117931009) |
| **1st Disability Intergroup meeting** | 13 February 2020 | DIG members + EDF | EDF / Ms Maxová (Renew) | Strasbourg, European Parliament (WIC 100 (STR)) | [Completed](https://www.edf-feph.org/ureau-of-the-disability-intergroup-of-the-european-parliament-established/) |
| **Born accessible (web and media accessibility)** | 17 March 2020 | Public event | Mr Kosa (EPP) | Brussels, European Parliament, Antall building 6Q1 | [Postponed](https://www.funka.com/en/projekt/an-event-on-digital-accessibility/) because of COVID-19 outbreak |
| **Event with Commissioner Helena Dalli on COVID-19** | April 30 | Public event | Commissioner Dalli, EDF and MEPs | Online (+500 participants) | [Completed](https://www.edf-feph.org/disability-intergroup-meeting-online-with-commissioner-for-equality-helena-dalli-2/) |
| **Meeting of the Disability Intergroup bureau** | 1 July | Meeting | DIG Bureau members | Online | Completed |
| **Meeting with Commissioner Dalli on Disability Strategy** | 22 July | Meeting | DIG Bureau members + Commissioner Dalli | Online | Completed |
| **European Disability Strategy** | 28 October | PETI workshop | PETI secretariat | Brussels, European Parliament | [Completed](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/worskhop-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-d/product-details/20201021WKS03003) |
| **EDF Board conference “COVID-19 and disability”** | 30 October | Event | EDF + German DPOs + MEP Langensiepen | Online | [Completed](https://www.edf-feph.org/newsroom-news-covid-19-and-disability-urgent-actions-needed-ensure-human-rights-and-inclusive/) |
| **Accessibility Hackathon** | 30 November | Event | Funka, Facebook, EDF, MEP Kosa | Online | [Completed](https://www.funka.com/en/about-funka2/news/en/facebook-funka-accessibility-hackathon-winner/) |
| **International Day of Persons with Disabilities** | 3 December | Action | Disability Intergroup | Online | [Completed](https://www.edf-feph.org/a-turning-point-for-disability-rights-in-europe/) |
| **2021** | | | | | |
| **EMPL-LIBE public hearing COVID-19 in residential institutions** | 28 January | EP Public hearing | EMPL & LIBE committees | Online | [Completed](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20210125IPR96316/rights-of-people-in-residential-institutions-in-times-of-covid-19) |
| **DIG bureau – EDF executive committee** | 29 January | Meeting | MEP Maxová / EDF | Online | [Completed](https://www.edf-feph.org/the-parliaments-disability-intergroup-and-edf-agree-disability-rights-priorities-for-2021/) |
| **DIG bureau statement after publication of Disability Strategy** | 5 March | Public statement | DIG Bureau | Online | [Completed](https://www.edf-feph.org/the-disability-intergroup-is-ready-to-strengthen-the-eu-disability-rights-strategy/) |
| **DIG high level discussion on International Cooperation** | 26 March | Meeting | MEP Zacharopoulos, MEP Maxová | Online | [Completed](https://www.edf-feph.org/high-level-exchange-disability-inclusion-in-eu-external-action/) |
| **DIG event on European Disability Rights Strategy** | 30 March | Event | MEPs González, Langensiepen, Maxová, Kympouropoulos | Online | [Completed](https://www.edf-feph.org/the-disability-intergroups-holds-a-discussion-to-set-in-motion-the-european-disability-rights-strategy-2021-2030/) |
| **Disability Intergroup Bureau meeting on strategy for EP CRPD focal point** | 12 May | Meeting | MEP Maxova, Langensiepen, Metz and Kympouropoulos | Online | Completed. |
| **Resuming Disability Intergroup newsletter** | 18 June | Communication |  | Online | [Completed](https://www.edf-feph.org/disability-intergroup-newsletters/) |
| **Disability Intergroup statement on inaccessibility of the SOTEU** | 15 September | Communication |  |  | [Completed](https://www.edf-feph.org/the-state-of-the-union-must-be-accessible-to-all-citizens/) |
| **DIG Bureau meeting** | 30 September | Meeting | MEP Kympouropoulos | Online | [Completed](https://www.edf-feph.org/the-disability-intergroup-will-meet-again-in-november/) |
| **Petitions committee workshop on Concluding observations** | 9 November | Workshop | Petitions Committee | EP | [Completed](https://www.edf-feph.org/the-european-parliament-discuss-if-the-new-disability-strategy-responds-to-the-recommendations-from-the-crpd-committee/) |
| **European Day of Persons with Disabilities on the Future of Persons with DIsabilities** | 3 December | Public statement | DIG bureau | Communications | [Completed](https://www.edf-feph.org/the-future-of-europe-for-persons-with-disabilities/) |
| **Public event on the Digital Services Act** | 8 December | Event | Renew Europe – MEP Charanzova | Online | [Completed](https://www.edf-feph.org/policymakers-experts-industry-and-consumer-representatives-discuss-how-to-ensure-accessible-digital-services-and-platforms-for-persons-with-disabilities/) |

# 1. UN CRPD

## UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The Disability Intergroup helps in the review of the EU by the CRPD committee by hosting expert meetings and reports that shed light on the implementation of the Convention (2021 TBC). The Intergroup can propose to the European Commission to nominate a qualified EU candidate with disabilities for the elections of the CRPD Committee (2020 and subsequent elections).

* Nothing to report – EU CRPD review has been postponed.

## European Disability Strategy (Disability Rights Agenda 2020-2030)

The Disability Intergroup leads the way in ensuring that the post-2020 disability strategy is more ambitious that its predecessor, with a foreseen budget for implementation and monitoring, targets to measure its success and the necessary structure to succeed (including a central focal point for the CRPD, focal points in all relevant institutions and agencies and an interinstitutional coordination mechanism), including meaningful involvement of organisations of persons with disabilities and a well-funded Disability Rights Guarantee (2020-2021).

* [Oral question](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/O-9-2019-000046_EN.pdf) tabled by MEPs Estaràs Ferragut, Franssen, Kósa, and Kympouropoulos. [Procedure file](https://oeil.secure.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?lang=en&reference=2019/2975(RSP)). [Debate in plenary](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/CRE-9-2019-12-17-ITM-010_EN.html) with Commissioner Dalli – 17 December 2019. [Resolution on post 2020 Disability Strategy](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2020-0156_EN.html) adopted in plenary on 18 June 2020.
* MEP Estaràs participation in the [EESC event](https://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/agenda/our-events/events/feb-20-shaping-eu-agenda-disability-rights-2020-2030/programme) “Shaping the next Disability Rights Agenda 2020-2030” on 26 February 2020.
* Meeting with Commissioner Dalli on 22 July.
* MEP Agius Saliba written question on the [rights of persons with disabilities](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2019-002969_EN.html).
* MEP Maxová written question [to the Commission](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2020-003868_EN.html) and [to the Council](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2020-003883_EN.html) on the CRPD focal points, co-signed by 44 MEPs.

**2021:**

* Joint letter of the Disability Intergroup to the EP Secretary General on the EP focal point, co-signed by all DIG chairs + 22 members.
* Disability Intergroup [public statement](https://www.edf-feph.org/the-disability-intergroup-is-ready-to-strengthen-the-eu-disability-rights-strategy/) after publication of the European Disability Rights Strategy 2021-2030.
* MEP Van Sparrentak [statement on the Disability Strategy (in Dutch)](https://groenlinks.nl/nieuws/meer-actie-nodig-om-discriminatie-van-mensen-met-een-beperking-tegen-te-gaan).
* MEP Gemma press release on the Disability Strategy.
* Disability Intergroup members asked questions to Commissioner Dalli in the [public hearing of the Petitions committee on the Disability Rights Strategy](https://multimedia.europarl.europa.eu/en/committee-on-petitions_20210322-1645-COMMITTEE-PETI_vd), as well as in the [Employment and Social Affaris committee](https://multimedia.europarl.europa.eu/en/committee-on-employment-and-social-affairs_20210317-1345-COMMITTEE-EMPL_vd).
* Disability Intergroup [public event](https://www.edf-feph.org/the-disability-intergroups-holds-a-discussion-to-set-in-motion-the-european-disability-rights-strategy-2021-2030/) with Commissioner Dalli on the European Disability Rights Strategy 2021-2030, on March 30th.
* MEP Maxová and Langensiepen arguments to create an EP focal point.

## Horizontal Antidiscrimination Directive

The Disability Intergroup keeps urging the Council to agree on an Equal Treatment Directive that protects persons with disabilities from discriminations beyond employment (2020-2021).

* Nothing to report.

2021:

* MEP Spurek written question on the [protection of persons with disabilities from discrimination outside employment](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2021-003108_EN.html), co-signed by 19 MEPs.

## Political participation and right to vote

The Disability Intergroup take the lead in promoting Parliament resolution that amends the EU Electoral law from 1976 with the aim of ensuring that in the next European elections in 2024 all persons with disabilities, including those with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities, will be able to exercise their right to vote (2021).

* MEP Durant report on [stocktaking of European elections](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2020-0327_EN.html) adopted on 26 November 2020.
* MEPs Kosa, Tomc, Bogovič written question on [right to vote of Slovenians with intellectual disabilities](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2020-005380_EN.html).

2021:

* MEP Pagazaurtundúa written question on [the participation of persons with disabilities in the Citizens Panels of the Conference on the Future of Europe](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2021-002487_EN.html).
* Disability Intergroup statement on 3rd of December, international day of persons with disabilities, [on the Conference on the Future of Europe](https://www.edf-feph.org/the-future-of-europe-for-persons-with-disabilities/).
* MEP González and other Disability Intergroup members work on the AFCO initiative for a new [EU Electoral Law](https://oeil.secure.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?reference=2020/2220(INL)&l=en).

## EP CRPD network

The Disability Intergroup supports the members of the CRPD network and vice versa (2020-2021). The Intergroup can work intensively through this network to argue the creation of a standing Disability Committee.

* Intergroup members who take part in the CRPD Network:
  + Chair (EMPL): MEP Langensiepen. Substitute Al-Sahlani.
  + Members: González (DEVE), Fernandes (BUDG), Kympouropoulos (REGI), Maxová (CULT), Bogdan (LIBE), Estarás Ferragut (FEMM), Kosa and Agius Saliba (PETI). Substitutes: Spurek, Metz, Kanko, Zacharopoulou
* Nothing to report. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the CRPD Network has not yet met.

## CRPD independent monitoring framework

The intergroup supports the members of the monitoring framework (from the Committees of Petitions, Civil Liberties and Employment) (2020-2021).

* Intergroup members taking part in the CRPD independent monitoring framework: Kosa, Agius Saliba (PETI), Langensiepen and Al-Sahlani (EMPL), Bogdan (LIBE).
* [All resources can be found at the FRA webpage](https://fra.europa.eu/en/cooperation/eu-partners/eu-crpd-framework/resources).

## Petitions regarding persons with disabilities rights

The Intergroup is aware of the Petitions sent to the PETI Committee concerning persons with disabilities and follows up when necessary, and pays particular attention to incorrect implementation of the UN CRPD (2020-2021).

* Inclusion Europe petition [0470/2020](https://petiport.secure.europarl.europa.eu/petitions/en/petition/content/0470%252F2020/html/Petition-No-0470%252F2020-by-Helen-Portal-%2528Luxemburgish%2529%252C-on-behalf-of-Inclusion-Europe-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-intellectual-disabilities-in-the-COVID-19-crisis) on the impact of COVID-19 to persons with intellectual disabilities was discussed at the Petitions Committee on [19 May 2020](https://multimedia.europarl.europa.eu/en/peti-committee_20200519-1000-COMMITTEE-PETI_vd) and a [motion for resolution](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2020-0183_EN.html) was adopted in plenary on 8 July 2020.
* Disability Intergroup bureau discussed on 1 July 2020, the following petitions related to the rights of persons with disabilities forwarded by the Petitions Committee:
  + 1077-17 by R. A. (Italian) on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
  + 1084-17 by F.G. (Greek) concerning the delay in licensing a public transport vehicle for people with disabilities in the prefecture of Drama (Greece)
  + 0356-18 by Ivan Yanev (Bulgarian) on problems encountered by persons with disabilities in Bulgaria
  + 0367-18 by Arianna Colonello (Italian) on the right to work of persons with disabilities
  + 0724-18 by N. R. (Finnish) on the fundamental rights of people with unacknowledged disabilities
  + 0959-18 by Constantin Vlădescu (Romanian) on denial of health care services for disabled persons in Romania
  + 0773-19 by S.B. (Greek) on supposedly unequal treatment on the base of disability of a family member
  + 0053-20 by Eduardo Prieto Garaita (Spanish) on discrimination against disabled people by the University of the Basque Country
  + 0470-20 Petition on the rights of people with intellectual disabilities in times of covid-19 emergency
* European Union of the Deaf petition submitting petitions in national sign languages. Supported by different Intergroup members in the debate on [14 July 2020](https://multimedia.europarl.europa.eu/en/peti-committee-meeting_20200714-0900-COMMITTEE-FEMM_vd).

**2021:**

* MEP Agius Saliba report on “[the protection of persons with disabilities through petitions: lessons learnt](https://oeil.secure.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?lang=en&reference=2020/2209(INI))” with contributions from many Disability Intergroup members, such as MEPs Lexmann, Brglez, Cañas

## Implementation of the CRPD within the Parliament as a public administration

The Intergroup, in collaboration with the disability support groups and the Parliament administration takes steps to make the Parliament inclusive and accessible for employees, guests and elected officials. This includes the Disability Intergroup participation in the EP Bureau High Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity (new).

* Disability Intergroup bureau letter to the EP Secretary General concerning the accessibility of the multilingual video conference platform and remote voting system sent by MEP Zacharopoulou on 12 May 2020. Response received.
* MEP Durand [amendment](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/CONT-AM-646990_EN.html?redirect) (116) to the [2021udget of the European Parliament](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2020-0084_EN.html).

**2021:**

* Disability Intergroup bureau letter to Vice President Papadimoulis, chair of the EP Bureau High Level Group on Gender Equality and Diversity
* MEP Langensiepen and MEP Maxová proposals to the HLG on Gender Equality and Diversity Roadmap on Diversity 2022-2024, and participation in the meeting, as well as a meeting with VP Papadimoulis (September 2021)
* Disability Intergroup bureau sent a letter to the EP Bureau requesting membership in the HLG on Gender Equality and Diversity (8 November).
* Disability Intergroup [statement](https://www.edf-feph.org/the-state-of-the-union-must-be-accessible-to-all-citizens/) on the lack of accessibility of the State of the European Union debate.

# 2. Mainstreaming Disability Rights

## Disability inclusive response to COVID-19[[1]](#footnote-1)

The Disability Intergroup works to ensure the rights and health of persons with disabilities is protected during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

* MEP Langensiepen [joint letter](https://www.edf-feph.org/members-of-the-european-parliament-urgent-call-relating-to-the-situation-of-persons-with-disabilities-amidst-the-coronavirus-pandemic/) with other Green MEPs to Commission President Von der Leyen on 23 March 2020.
* MEP Pagazaurtundúa information on Spain disability inclusive response by Spanish national DPO CERMI on 1 April 2020.
* MEP Cañas written question on [flexible measures for autistic people during lockdown](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2020-002106_EN.html).
* [Joint letter](https://www.edf-feph.org/request-to-take-immediate-actions-to-mobilise-crii-eu-funds/) signed by 47 Disability intergroup members on situation of care and support services of persons with disabilities during the COVID-19 outbreak featured by the [EP Magazine](https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/news/article/mep-letter-highlights-alarming-lack-of-funding-for-disability-care-and-support-services). Responded by European Council President.
* MEP Langensiepen written question on the [Coronavirus Response Instrument Initiative to protect the rights of persons with disabilities](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2020-003780_EN.html), co-signed by 15 MEPs.
* Disability Intergroup members promoted support to amendments 26, 27 and 58 for [EP Resolution on an EU coordinated response to COVID-19](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2020-0054_EN.html).
* Disability Intergroup [online meeting](http://www.edf-feph.org/online-meeting-disability-intergroup-impact-covid-19-outbreak-persons-disabilities) with Commissioner for Equality Helena Dalli, and organisations of persons with disabilities: This includes the video, a summary report, and answers to the questions that were not responded during the meeting.
* Following a joint letter of EDF, AGE and EPSU, MEP Majorino along with other MEPs released a [statement](http://www.edf-feph.org/newsroom/news/european-parliament-must-investigate-situation-residential-institutions) supporting further investigation on the impact of COVID-19 in residential institutions.
* MEP Langensiepen participation in a webinar about Human Rights violations of persons with disabilities during COVID-19 and a webinar about the [recovery plans after COVID-19](https://www.edf-feph.org/webinar-on-covid-19-recovery-and-the-eu-budget-influencing-the-process/).
* MEP Benifei written question on [COVID-19 vaccination](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2020-006171_EN.html) and persons with disabilities.
* MEP Estaràs [amendments](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/FEMM-AM-657386_EN.pdf) on the draft report on The gender perspective in the Covid-19 crisis and post-crisis period (2020/2121(INI))

**2021:**

* EMPL – LIBE [public hearing](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20210125IPR96316/rights-of-people-in-residential-institutions-in-times-of-covid-19) on the rights of people living in residential institutions in times of COVID-19, with the participation of Commissioners Suica and Dalli.
* MEPs Gusmao, Kosa and other Disability Intergroup members participate in the plenary debate about [homologation and and distribution of transparent facemasks](https://multimedia.europarl.europa.eu/en/homologation-and-distribution-of-transparent-masks-meps-debate_I201892-V_v).
* MEP Zacharopoulou, vice chair of the Disability Intergroup, was appointed as [co-chair of the COVAX initiative](https://multimedia.europarl.europa.eu/en/statement-by-chrysoula-zacharopoulou-renew-fr-co-chair-of-the-covax-council-statement-and-meeting-with-david-sassoli-ep-president-_I204835-V_v).
* DIG members support to a [joint letter](https://www.epsu.org/article/epsu-calls-european-parliament-investigate-tragic-effects-covid-19-care-sector) of EPSU-AGE-EDF calling for the establishment of a COVID-19 committee.
* MEPs Majorino, Pelletier, Maxová, Metz, and Pietikainen participated in the joint [EDF-EPSU-AGE Platform event](https://www.epsu.org/article/members-regional-national-and-european-parliaments-call-covid-19-inquiry-committees) calling for an inquiry committee on the impact of COVID-19 in residential institutions.
* MEP González joint letter with 17 DIG members to Vice President Jourová, Commissioner Reynders on the Digital Green Certificate.
* MEP González written question on the accessibility of the [COVID Digital Certificate](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2021-001500_EN.html).
* MEP González and many Disability Intergroup members influenced the final text and vote of the [COVID Digital Certificate](https://oeil.secure.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?reference=2021/0068(COD)&l=en).
* MEP Maxová amendments to report on [EU Pharmaceutical Strategy](https://oeil.secure.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?lang=en&reference=2021/2013(INI)).

## Data on persons with disabilities

The intergroup works to support the collection of disaggregated data on persons with disabilities, including those living in residential institutions, which can support policy proposals.

* MEP Fragkos written question on [data about persons with disabilities](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2020-006492_EN.html) co-signed by 13 Intergroup members.
* MEP Kosa written question on [inappropriate terminology in Eurostat](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2020-005582_EN.html) co-signed by 37 MEPs.

## The next EU budget

The Disability Intergroup members keep track the negotiations concerning the regulations setting up the next EU budget to ensure that it fits for a social purpose, guaranteeing principles of non-discrimination, accessibility and meaningful involvement of representative organisations of persons with disabilities in the use and monitoring of EU funds (2020). The intergroup can adopt a general manifesto about it, and bring the voice of persons with disabilities to regulations such as Horizon Europe, Digital Europe, Creative Europe, Eramus+, Solidarity Corps or InvestEU, NDICI, among others.

* MEP Pislaru and Gusmao work on [Recovery and Resilience Facility](https://oeil.secure.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?reference=2020/0104(COD)&l=en).
* MEP Langensiepen. [Webinar “Cohesion Policy and COVID 19 Recovery and the EU Budget: Influencing the process”](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BIzUn6DeIyY&t=3468s) – 8 July 2020

## Cohesion Policy and Structural Funds

The Disability Intergroup does everything in its power to ensure that the main Regulations concerning cohesion policy (Common Provisions Regulation, Social Fund + and Regional Development Fund) abide by the CRPD, particularly with regards to non-discrimination, accessibility, forbidding investment in institutional care settings and ensuring the involvement of persons with disabilities and their representative organisations in the governance and monitoring processes (2020-2021).

* Common Provisions Regulations and the European Regional Development Fund have been concluded with members of the Disability Intergroup supporting EDF in the tabling of amendments and approving the reports.
* The European Social Fund+ is still being finalised in the trilogues. We have already seen a strong EP report with the inputs from the disability movement, thanks to the active work of MEPs Benifei and Gusmao (shadow rapporteurs of the ESF+).

2021:

* The [ESF+](https://oeil.secure.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?reference=2018/0206(COD)&l=en&mailer=true), [ERDF](https://oeil.secure.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?reference=2018/0197(COD)&l=en&mailer=true) and [CPR](https://oeil.secure.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?reference=2018/0196(COD)&l=en&mailer=true) were adopted with amendments from the Disability Intergroup.

## Gender Equality and women with disabilities

The Intergroup promotes a Gender Equality Strategy fully inclusive of women and girls with disabilities, particularly addressing the specific challenges and violations they face (2020-2021).

* MEP Estaràs Ferragut amendments and EMPL [opinion](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/EMPL-AD-646871_EN.pdf) to the FEMM report on the EU Strategy for Gender Equality.
* MEP Estaràs Ferragut (FEMM) [opinion](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/FEMM-AD-655669_EN.pdf) on the on the implementation of Council Directive 2000/78/EC establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation in light of the UNCRPD on 3 December 2020.
* Plenary [debate](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/CRE-9-2020-02-12-ITM-017_EN.html) on the EU Gender Equality Strategy: interventions of MEPs Estaràs Ferragut, Spurek on 12 December 2020.

**2021:**

* MEP Maestre written question on the [gender perspective of the Disability Strategy](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2021-002000_EN.html).
* Report on the [situation of sexual and reproductive health and rights in the EU, in the frame of women’s health](https://oeil.secure.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?reference=2020/2215(INI)&l=en&mailer=true).
* MEP Angel amendments to the [Pay Transparency Directive](https://oeil.secure.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?reference=2021/0050(COD)&l=en).
* MEP Spurek written question on the [situation of women and girls with disabilities](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2021-003107_EN.html), co—signed by 19 MEPs.

Members of the Intergroup bring the perspective of women and girls in overall work of the Parliament, for example on issues such as poverty, employment, EU in the world and the COVID-19 response.

## Children with disabilities and inclusive education

The Intergroup defends the full inclusion of children with disabilities and the right to access inclusive and accessible education that takes into account their characteristics and needs, including in language immersion education systems. The inclusion of children with disabilities and their families within the Child Guarantee (2020-2021).

* MEPs González, Estaràs and Maite Pagazaurtundua evento on children with disabilities on 3 December 2019.
* MEP Agius Saliba written question on [Inclusive education of children with disabilities](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2020-000473_EN.html).
* MEP Maxová written question to the Commission about the [EU schools](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2020-007022_EN.html) co-signed by 38 MEPs.
* MEP Maxová written question to the Commission about the exclusion of children with disabilities from the [PISA tests](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2020-006604_EN.html), co-signed by 20 MEPs.

**2021:**

* MEP Gemma written question on [individualised academic learning pathways for students with disabilities](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2021-000630_EN.html), co-signed by 13 MEPs.
* MEP Maxová follow-up written question [on the exclusion of students with disabilities from PISA tests](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2021-002258_EN.html), co-signed by 21 MEPs.
* As shadow rapporteur for the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs opinion in the European Education Area, MEP Lexmann tabled many amendments focused on inclusiveness and non-discrimination in education

## EU Green Deal

The Intergroup is instrumental in ensuring that the rights of Persons with disabilities are included in the Green New Deal, including for example a core element of the “renovation wave” for buildings when the programmes are taking more concrete shape (2020-2021).

* MEPs Borzan, Kympouropoulos, Metz and Langensiepen on [addressing mobility and accessibility in the building and renovating framework of the European Green Deal](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2020-000579_EN.html) on 31 January 2020.
* MEP González amendments on [REGI opinion](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/REGI-AD-652420_EN.pdf) to the Climate Law.

**2021:**

* MEP Pietikainen Joint meeting on the European Year of Greener Cities.

## EU in the world

The Disability Intergroup ensures that the budget focusing on external actions is inclusive pf persons with disabilities transversally and in line with the SDGs. The Disability Intergroup highlights the best examples in which EU external action has a critical role in promoting human rights, inclusion and accessibility for persons with disabilities globally (2020-2021). The Disability Intergroup monitors the implementation of the [DG ECHO Operational Guidance](https://ec.europa.eu/echo/sites/echo-site/files/2019-01_disability_inclusion_guidance_note.pdf) on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in EU-funded humanitarian aid operations.

* MEP Zacharopoulou work on [EU-Africa strategy](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/DEVE-AM-654008_EN.pdf)
* MEP Al-Sahlani written question on discrimination against [Afghan girls with disabilities](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2020-005934_EN.html) co-signed by 12 MEPs.

**2021:**

* Disability Intergroup high level discussion on [disability inclusion in EU external action](https://www.edf-feph.org/high-level-exchange-disability-inclusion-in-eu-external-action/) with the participation of Commissioners Dalli, Lenarcic and Urpilainen, and hosted by MEP Zacharopoulou and MEP Maxová.
* MEP González written question on di[sability in international cooperation](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2021-003578_EN.html), co-signed by 5 MEP -one from each political group-.
* MEP González written question on the [Bridging the Gap project](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2021-003412_EN.html).
* MEP González: Letter to Commissioner Urpilainen calling on making European International Cooperation Inclusive to persons with disabilities, co-signed by 14 MEPs
* MEP González amendments into the INI report of EU Humanitarian Action (2021/2163(INI))

# 3. Social Policies

## Poverty, Social Exclusion and homelessness

The Intergroup promotes action to fight the disproportionate level of poverty and homelessness faced by persons with disabilities in the EU. In light of this worrying trend, the Intergroup will work to support more protective and social policies taking into consideration the extra cost of living that comes from having a disability in a society with multiple barriers (2020-2021).

* MEP Vind report on [reducing inequalities with a special focus on in-work poverty](https://oeil.secure.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?reference=2019/2188(INI)&l=en).
* MEP Langensiepen [amendments](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/EMPL-AM-655978_EN.pdf) to the report on reducing inequalities with a special focus on in-work poverty
* MEP Pislaru EMPL [opinion](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/EMPL-PA-655645_EN.pdf) on establishing a Technical Support Instrument.

**2021:**

* Disability Intergroup [high level discussion](https://www.edf-feph.org/high-level-exchange-disability-inclusion-in-eu-external-action/) on disability inclusion in EU external action on March 26th.

## Deinstitutionalisation and independent living

The Intergroup supports efforts against institutionalisation of persons with disabilities and showcases best practices regarding independent community-based living and non-coercive measures in mental health (2020-2021).

* MEP González [video message](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NN__MWrSEyA&feature=youtu.be&ab_channel=MyEDF) on fire in a residential institution in Czechia.
* MEP Gusmao, Matias – GUE support to the study “[Lost in interpretation](https://enil.eu/news/lost-in-interpretation-new-study-by-enil-and-gue-ngl/)” on use of EU funds in institutionalisation, conducted by ENIL. Webinar to present the study on 9 December 2020.

**2021:**

* MEP Spurek written question on [EU funds and Deinstitutionalisation of support services for persons with disabilities](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2021-001744_EN.html) co-signed by 17 MEPs.
* MEP Agius Saliba support to Maltese national council of persons with disabilities on petition concerning personal assistance in Malta.
* MEP Gemma proposal for a pilot project for an app connecting persons with disabilities and care professionals.
* MEP Langensiepen participation in the [European Youth Event on independent living](https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch_permalink&v=565247431375432) (see [agenda](https://www.edf-feph.org/events-slug/the-european-youth-event-eye2021/)).
* [Joint letter of the Disability Intergroup and the Coalition on Mental Health and Wellbeing](https://www.edf-feph.org/withdrawoviedo-joint-letter-from-meps-to-the-council-of-europe-against-the-adoption-of-the-additional-protocol/) calling to withdraw the additional protocol to the Oviedo Convention.

## EU Pilar of Social Rights

The Intergroup works to ensure accessibility and inclusion within the upcoming action plan on the Pillar, and its implementation (in line with objective 17 “inclusion of persons with disabilities” to live in dignity) (2020-2021). The Intergroup also promotes steps to provide support and advance the inclusion of migrants with disabilities.

* Nothing to report.

## Employment

The Disability Intergroup members work to ensure persons with disabilities can access the open labour market with decent work conditions, including a fair minimum wage. The intergroup advocates for EU initiatives in job creation for persons with disabilities. This work can also include actions involving the private sector. (2020-2021).

* MEP Gusmao report on [guidelines for the employment policies of Member States](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-9-2020-0124_EN.html).
* MEP Durand video on [employment and persons with disabilities](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ugkPzcGquBU&ab_channel=PascalDURAND).
* MEP Langensiepen report on the [implementation of Council Directive 2000/78/EC establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation in light of the UNCRPD](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/EMPL-PR-657235_EN.pdf) with an explanation in easy-to-read format.
* MEP Agius Saliba written question on [Quality employment](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2019-002970_EN.html) for persons with disabilities.

**2021:**

* MEP Langensiepen report on [the implementation of the employment Directive in line with the CRPD](https://oeil.secure.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?lang=en&reference=2020/2086(INI)).
* MEP Gusmao and Langensiepen participation in a [webinar about inclusive labour market for persons with disabilities](https://www.epr.eu/event/policy-webinar-eu-role-in-ensuring-inclusive-labour-market-in-europe/).
* MEP Dura event on ‘[What future for Inclusive Enterprises? Exploring the link between social and inclusive enterprises](https://estrelladura.eu/en/webinar-on-the-role-of-inclusive-companies-within-the-social-economy/)’
* Disability Intergroup members participation in the [plenary debate on inclusive employment for autistic people](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aKES_8sr0BQ), thanks to an [oral question](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/O-9-2021-000017_EN.html) put forward by MEPs Ďuriš Nicholsonová, Estaràs, Majorino, Cañas, Zambelli, Langensiepen, and Gusmão on behalf of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs.
* MEP Vind self-initiative report on a [new EU strategic framework on health and safety at work post 2020](https://oeil.secure.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?lang=en&reference=2021/2165(INI)).
* MEP Pislaru motion for a resolution on empowering European youth: post-pandemic employment and social recovery.

# 4. Accessibility & free movement

## Accessibility and assistive technologies

The Disability Intergroup is instrumental to keep advancing on legislation incorporating accessibility as a pre-requisite. Domains in which the Intergroup could work are:

* accessibility to the built environment and housing,
* accessibility of transport services
* accessible ICT (web, telecommunications, media) – digital technologies
* accessible health care services,
* accessibility in culture,
* assistive technologies
* MEP Van Sparrantak report on [Access to decent and affordable housing for all](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/EMPL-PR-653984_EN.pdf).
* MEP Agius Saliba written question on [Subtitles for deaf and hard of hearing](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2020-000073_EN.html) and [taxi services](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2019-004214_EN.html) for persons with disabilities.
* MEP Benifei dissemination of [RDDA project](http://pocrdda.com/library/REPORTS/OA0320569ENN.en.pdf) (EC Publications Office).
* MEP Zacharopoulou opinion onf the [EU4Health Programme](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/FEMM-AD-657308_EN.pdf).
* MEP Kosa participation as jury member in the first [Accessibility Hackathon](https://www.funka.com/en/about-funka2/news/en/facebook-funka-accessibility-hackathon-winner/) in Europe, organised by Funka and Facebook, on 30 November.
* MEP Alieva Veli jury member of the EDF-Oracle [e-Accessibility scholarship](https://www.edf-feph.org/apply-european-disability-forum-and-oracle-e-accessibility-scholarship-2019-2020/).
* MEP Agius Saliba written question to create the [EU Access Board](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2020-005863_EN.html), co-signed by 39 MEPs.
* MEP Maestre [written question on accessible information for deaf people](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2020-002892_EN.html).
* MEP Cañas amendments on the report about [Strengthening the single market: the future of free movement of services](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2021-0007_EN.html).

**2021:**

* MEP Van Sparretak report on [decent and affordable housing for all](https://oeil.secure.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?reference=2019/2187(INI)&l=en) adopted in plenary.
* MEP Agius Saliba participation in the [EDF-Facebook roundtable on the European Accessibility Act](https://www.edf-feph.org/facebook-edf-policy-roundtable-on-the-european-accessibility-act/).
* MEPs Langensiepen and Pislaru participation in the [EDF-Microsoft Accessibility Summit on the Future of Work](https://www.edf-feph.org/european-accessibility-summit-accessibility-and-the-future-of-work-the-role-of-digital/).
* MEP Maxová written question on the [European Commission action plan on web accessibility](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2021-003604_EN.html), co-signed by 33 MEPs.
* MEP Charanzová and Agius Saliba – Renew Europe discussion on [accessibility in the Digital Services Act](https://www.edf-feph.org/policymakers-experts-industry-and-consumer-representatives-discuss-how-to-ensure-accessible-digital-services-and-platforms-for-persons-with-disabilities/).

## Artificial Intelligence and other emerging technologies

The Intergroup defends an inclusive approach to Artificial Intelligence (AI) respecting accessibility, mobility and non-discrimination of persons with disabilities. The Intergroup will liaise with the special EP Committee on AI and promotes specific investment plans for the research and application of inclusive algorithms taking into account human diversity.

* MEP Maxová opinion on INI report on [EU Strategy on data](https://oeil.secure.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?lang=en&reference=2020/2217(INI)).
* MEP Cañas on report about [ethical aspects of AI, robotics and other related technologies](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2020-0275_EN.html).

## Passengers’ Rights

Currently, the Rail Passengers’ Rights Regulation is in trilogues (2020). The Intergroup advocates for a strong EP position in the negotiations. Furthermore, the Intergroup pushes the Commission to revise the Air Passengers’ Rights Regulation (2021).

* [Joint letter](https://www.edf-feph.org/dont-compromise-the-right-of-persons-with-disabilities-to-train-travel/) signed by 44 MEPs on Rail Passengers Rights negotiations.
* MEP Cañas written question on [air passengers rights for persons with disabilities](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2020-004972_EN.html).

**2021:**

* Different Disability Intergroup members tried to influence through plenary amendments the final vote of the [Rail Passengers Rights](https://oeil.secure.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?reference=2017/0237(COD)&l=en), notably MEPs Benifei, Durand, Konecna, and Pelletier who tabled them.

## EU Disability Card

The Intergroup keeps encouraging the Commission invest the resources to extend the pilot project of the Disability Card to all Member States paving the way for a mutual recognition of disability rights across the EU (2020-2021).

* MEP Langensiepen written question on the [EU Disability Card](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2020-001053_EN.html), co-signed by 19 MEPs.
* MEP Gemma written question on the [EU Parking Card](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2020-002003_EN.html).
* MEP Cañas written question on the [EU Disability Card](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2020-005046_EN.html).

**2021:**

* MEP Maestre written question on the [EU Disability Card](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2021-002008_EN.html).

# 5. Raising awareness and collaboration

## Visibility of the rights of persons with disabilities and of the Disability Intergroup

The Disability Intergroup members promote through different communication channels the rights of persons with disabilities and the work of the Intergroup.

* [Renew Europe’s Group commitments](https://reneweuropegroup.eu/en/news/1516-renew-europe-s-commitments-to-ensure-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities/) to ensure the rights of persons with disabilities.
* MEP González [video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NNtCptcuaMQ&feature=youtu.be&ab_channel=SocialistasParlamentoEuropeo) on 3rd December 2020 on the international day of persons with disabilities promoted on social media.
* MEP Zacharopoulou featured in the [EP Magazine](https://library.myebook.com/theparliament/the-parliament-magazine-issue-517-15-june-2020/2581/#page/29).
* MEP Maxová [campaign on focal points](https://twitter.com/MaxovaRadka/status/1334526894633590784) on 3rd December 2020.
* [MEP Cañas video](https://www.facebook.com/CiudadanosEuropa/videos/302139064392520) on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities in 2020.
* [Disability Intergroup statement](https://www.edf-feph.org/a-turning-point-for-disability-rights-in-europe/) on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, translated in several languages, featured in the [EP Magazine](https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/news/article/a-turning-point-for-disability-rights-in-europe).

2021:

* MEP Vind interview in Politiken, a Danish newspaper.
* [EP magazine](https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/news/article/disability-campaigners-welcome-eus-vaccine-certificate) on the Intergroup’s campaign to include accessibility in the COVID Digital Certificate.
* MEP Brglez [letter](https://www.edf-feph.org/partnership-of-the-european-parliament-in-the-wethe15-campaign-letter-from-meps-to-president-of-the-european-parliament/) co-signed by 72 MEPs to EP President for the EP to join the #WeThe15 campaign

## Collaboration with the Commission

The intergroup maintains regular exchanges with Commissioner for Equality, Helena Dalli, and with the Commission’s Disability and Inclusion unit.

* Public online event with Commissioner Dalli on the [impact of COVID-19 on persons with disabilities on 30 April 2020](https://www.edf-feph.org/disability-intergroup-meeting-online-with-commissioner-for-equality-helena-dalli-2/). Over 500 participants registered.
* Meeting of the Disability Intergroup bureau with Commissioner Dalli on the post 2020 Disability Strategy on 22 July 2020.
* MEP Langensiepen written question on the Commission [Task Force on Equality](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2020-005863_EN.html), co-signed by 37 MEPs.

## 5th European Parliament of Persons with Disabilities

The Disability Intergroup members are central in the organisation of the 5th European Parliament of Persons with Disabilities to be organised in 2020 or beginning of 2021 to support the participation of persons with disabilities across the EU, get the political support of their groups as well as the President and administration of the Parliament. Given the preparation of the next Disability Strategy and the high number of new MEPs, having the EPPD as soon as possible is a political opportunity.

* Nothing to report.

## Visibility and raising awareness of specific disabilities

The intergroup works to raise awareness among other EU policy makers and the general public of the specific needs of the diverse community of persons with disabilities, e.g. deafblindness, intellectual and learning disabilities, mental health issues, etc.

* MEP Gemma expert meetings about autism – July 14th with Autism Europe, EDF and Italian organisations and experts on autism.
* MEP Metz [ambassador of Multiple Sclerosis](https://twitter.com/eumsplatform/status/1285137386150793218).
* Written question on an [EU mental health strategy](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2020-004545_EN.html), co-signed by 6 MEPs.
* MEP Kympouropoulos [written question on employability and rare diseases](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2020-002554_EN.html), co-signed by 25 MEPs.
* MEP Cañas [video on sign language day](https://twitter.com/CiudadanosCs/status/1308746689629622272?s=08).
* MEP Pagazaurtundúa written question on [protecting deafblind people](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2020-002885_EN.html).
* MEP Cañas [request for funding for biomedical research on Myalgic Encephalomyelitis](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2020-0140_EN.html).

**2021:**

* MEP Agius Saliba hosts event “[Hearing care for all](https://www.efhoh.org/virtual-lunch-debate-european-parliament-3-march-2021/?fbclid=IwAR0SxgEUZdr30f2pCOAGdrlagHe2_mYGODKfBGCy66XaNaKdlC-iNtvVcYc)”, along with the European Federation of Hard of Hearing.
* MEP Maestre written question on [orphan medicines and rare diseases](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2021-002001_EN.html).
* MEPs Estarás and Pagazaurtundua welcoming of cyclists with ALS at the European Parliament “[BrussALS challenge](https://www.instagram.com/p/CQYh31Xqpxp/)”
* MEP Gemma written question on [discontinuity of care services for autistic people](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2021-003630_EN.html), co-signed by 12 MEPs, and on [increasing prevalence of autism spectrum disorders](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2021-003097_EN.html), co-signed by 7 MEPs, and [integration into the labour market of autistic people](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2021-002747_EN.html), co-signed by 5 MEPs.
* MEP Gemma meeting 27 October with organisations of autistic people in Italy.
* MEPs Estaras, Kympouropoulos, Agius Saliba [event](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_uE5sZ_Z2S8mvm15h2jPmGw) on people with achondrophasia, and other Skeletal Dysplasias with Dwarfism on October 28th.

## Meaningful involvement of persons with disabilities through their organisations

Intergroup members maximise the opportunities for organisations of persons with disabilities to address the Parliament and the Disability Intergroup to explain their priorities (2020-2021).

* Round of meetings with MEP Langensiepen with different disability organisations for preparing the report on the [implementation of Council Directive 2000/78/EC establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation in light of the UNCRPD](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/EMPL-PR-657235_EN.pdf).
* MEP Pelletier meeting with disability organisations on 4th February 2020.
* MEP Homs with EUD inclusion of sign language in the European charter for minoritarian and regional languages.

## Collaboration with other equality intergroups and the Disability Support Group of the European Parliament

The Disability Intergroup regularly collaborates with other human rights based intergroups of the Parliament, as well as with the Disability Support Group formed by EP staff with disabilities (2021-2022). For example, on poverty, social exclusion and homelessness, the Intergroup can contact the "Fighting against poverty"-intergroup to join forces, or for accessibility, assistive technologies and other emerging technologies, the Intergroup can liaise with the "Artificial Intelligence and Digital" intergroup.

* MEP Langensiepen participated in the LGTBI Intergroup online [event on Lesbian Visibility Day](https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1087906258246540).
* Letter with other equality intergroups to the PM of North Macedonia about the national antidiscrimination law.
* MEP Maxová participation in the virtual meeting of the EP Disability Support Group on 25 June 2020. MEP Langensiepen participation in the EP Disability Support Group meeting on 22 October 2020.

**2021:**

* Disability Intergroup collaboration with the EP Disability Support Group on the HLG Roadmap on Diversity 2022-2024.

# Contact

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1. Item added by the Disability Intergroup secretariat after the COVID-19 outbreak. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)