

# How the European Union can use its money to promote independent living

Easy-to-read

Easy-to-read is information

that is written in a simple way   
so that people with intellectual disabilities   
and all people can understand it.  
You can find more information about easy-to-read

at [www.inclusion-europe.eu/easy-to-read](http://www.inclusion-europe.eu/easy-to-read).

## Who we are

We are two organisations that work   
to protect the rights of people with disabilities   
in Europe:

* The European Disability Forum   
  In short: EDF

and

* The European Network on Independent Living  
  In short: ENIL

We believe that people with disabilities

should be part of the community

and make their own choices in life.

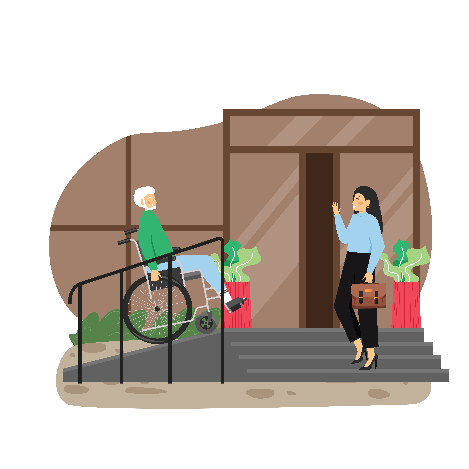
Nothing should be decided about us without us!

## What this booklet is about

We made this booklet to talk about   
how the **European Union** can use its money   
to promote independent living   
for all people with disabilities in the world.

All the difficult words in the text are marked in **bold**   
and you can find their explanation at the end of this booklet.

## Independent living

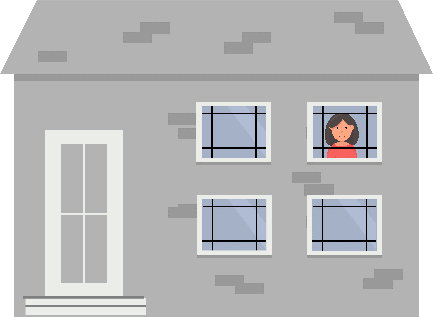
Independent living means   
you can make your own choices about your life.

For example, you can choose   
where, how and with whom you want to live.

All people have the right to live independently

and to be part of the community.

Sadly, in practice,

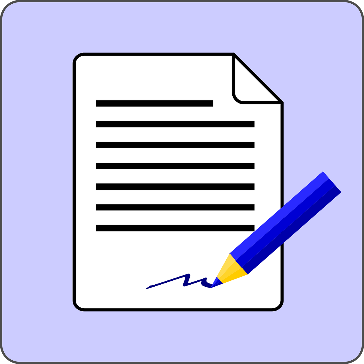
many people with disabilities   
do not enjoy their right to live independently   
like other people.

They may:

* Live in **institutions**   
  away from their families and friends.
* Not be allowed to make their own choices   
  about their lives.
* Not get the support they need to be able

to take part in the community like other people.

## The role of the European Union

The European Union has signed   
‘the UN Convention on the Rights   
of Persons with Disabilities’.   
In short, we call it ‘the UN Convention’.

The UN Convention is an agreement that says   
what rights people with disabilities have   
and how countries should protect these rights.

Amongst others, the UN Convention says   
that people with disabilities have the right   
to live independently and to be part of the community.

By signing the UN Convention,  
the European Union agreed to do   
what the UN Convention says

to protect people with disabilities.

The European Union should respect

what the UN Convention says in everything it does.

That means in the way it spends its money too.

## Use of European Union’s money

The European Union gives a big amount of money

to help countries in the world that are in need.

For example, countries that are poor.

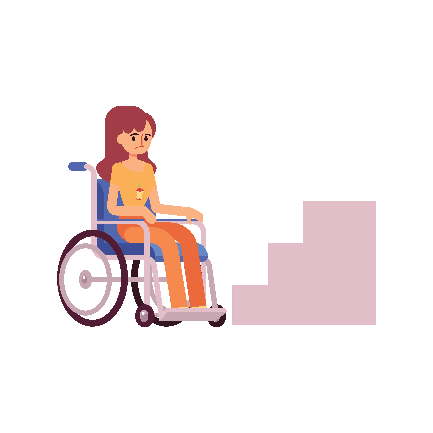
This money is used to help people in these countries

to have a better and safer life.

For example, to have access to clean water and food

and to build schools and hospitals.

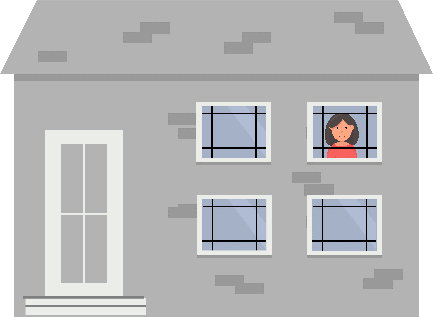
This money should be used   
to help people with disabilities too.

For example, it should be used to:

* Make things and services **accessible**so that people with disabilities   
  can use them to take part in the community.
* Create services that help   
  people with disabilities to live independently.   
  For example, some people with disabilities may need a support person to help them   
  in their daily life.

Sadly, in practice,

some of this money is used in projects

that do not promote independent living   
for people with disabilities.

For example, it may be used for **institutions**   
where people with disabilities live

away from the community.

This is against the rights in the UN Convention

and the European Union needs to stop it.

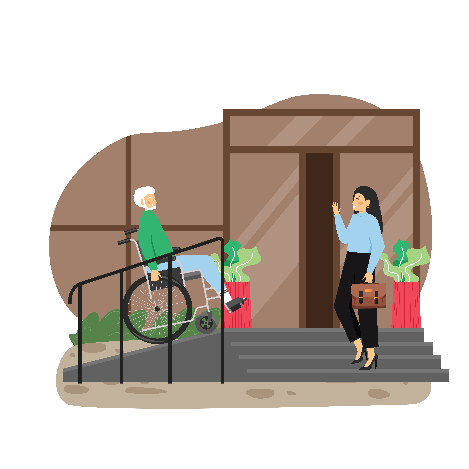
## Promoting independent living

The **European Union** should make sure

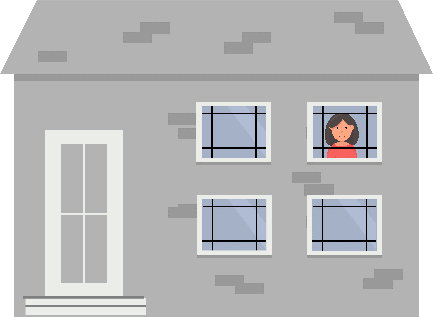
that the money it gives to countries in need

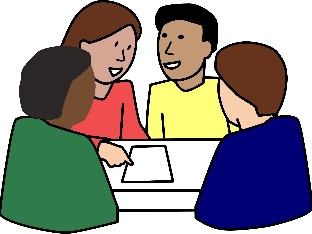
is used in a way that respects

the rights of people with disabilities.



Amongst others, the European Union should:

* Spend its money on projects   
  that support people with disabilities   
  to live independently.
* Not support institutions   
  where people with disabilities live   
  away from the community.
* Check if countries use this money   
  for the good of people with disabilities   
  and all people.



* Listen to organisations   
  of people with disabilities   
  when it plans how it will use its money.

## More information

For more information about our work,

you can check:

* [The website of the European Disability Forum](https://www.edf-feph.org/)
* [The website of the European Network   
  on Independent Living](https://enil.eu/)



If you have any questions,

you can send us an email at:

[info@edf-feph.org](mailto:info@edf-feph.org).

## Explanation of difficult words

### European Union

The European Union is a group of 27 countries in Europe   
that work together to make things better for their people.



### Institutions

Institutions are places   
where people with [disabilities](https://www.inclusion-europe.eu/easy-to-read-term/#IntellectualDisability) live   
away from other people   
and from the community.

Often, people who live in institutions   
must follow the rules of the institution   
and cannot decide for themselves.

### Accessible

Things are accessible   
when they are easy to use   
for people with disabilities and all people.

For example, when buildings have ramps   
that people in wheelchairs can use to get in.   
Or when information is easy to read   
and people with intellectual disabilities   
can understand it.