



# Rights of persons with disabilities and climate action – Final report

European Disability Forum Position Paper  
October 2024

**Urgent actions are required to promote a climate and  
social justice inclusive of persons with disabilities!**

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## Foreword

### **The European Disability Forum**

The European Disability Forum (EDF) is an independent NGO that represents the interests of 100 million Europeans with disabilities. EDF is a unique platform which brings together representative organisation of persons with disabilities from across Europe. EDF is run by persons with disabilities and their families. We are a strong, united voice of persons with disabilities in Europe.

### **Acknowledgements**

EDF wants to thank all persons who answered the online survey and gave the necessary data to draft this report.

## Executive Summary

Climate change is under way faster than ever according to the recently published Indicators of Global Climate Change 2023<sup>1</sup>. The effects of climate change on persons with disabilities is well documented by now. Persons with disabilities are disproportionately impacted by climate change, which exacerbates the preexisting inequalities of our ableist societies. Climate change effects are even more severe for persons with disabilities experiencing intersectional discrimination.

In this context, understanding how national climate policies include the rights, requirements and voices of persons with disabilities in Europe and Central Asia is a foundation for future advocacy. Incorporating disability inclusion will enhance climate action and promote sustainable resilience across society as a whole. When disability inclusion takes precedence, systems and processes become more efficient and effective for everyone, not just for persons with disabilities.

## About this Report

This study collected data about national disability inclusive climate change legislation and plans to compare them and identify trends and gaps. Subsequently recommendations for improved disability inclusive climate action are provided. The study aimed to gather data from the 53 member states of the European Region of the World Health Organisation (WHO). In total, 13 countries were covered. Climate change mitigation, adaptation as well as disaster preparedness, response and recovery are cross-sectoral in nature and impact all areas of life. The following elements were therefore prioritised: disability mainstreaming in climate legislation, persons with disabilities' and OPDs' participation, data, livelihoods and the world of work, skills acquisition and accessibility of transport, building and energy infrastructures.

From mid-July to mid-September 2024, data was collected from the European Disability Forum (EDF) memberships, allied organisations and various disability mailing lists. Out of 53 countries, only 16 provided responses, representing 30% of the expected total input. The report should be viewed as an in-depth exploration of current developments in some European and central Asian countries. Another limitation consists in the study's limited resources for extensive fact-checking or translation

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<sup>1</sup> Forster and all, Indicators of Global Climate Change 2023: annual update of key indicators of the state of the climate system and human influence, 2023, <https://essd.copernicus.org/articles/16/2625/2024/essd-16-2625-2024-discussion.html>, [Accessed on 7 June 2023]

services. The accepted responses are assumed to be accurate and reliable without comprehensive validation.

## **A Brief Review of Disability-Inclusive Climate Change Related Provisions in International and European Frameworks**

None of the disability rights and/or climate change international frameworks comprehensively covers the nexus of the human rights of persons with disabilities and climate action. It can however be noticed that there are increasing references to disability-inclusive climate action as new instruments are being adopted. The United Nations (UN) Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC) is the key international treaty for coordinating efforts to prevent catastrophic human impact on the climate. It has no references to socially disadvantaged people or persons with disabilities. Adopted in 2015, the Paris Agreement is the current main framework for global climate action. At-risk groups and/or persons with disabilities are referred to in the Preamble, Articles 7 and 12. In practice, most Parties to the Paris Agreement fail to realise their obligations<sup>2</sup>. In regards to other UN instruments, disability and climate cross-referencing can be found in the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Commitments of the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) 2015-30, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) as well as the 2019 Human Rights Commission Resolution 41/21 on Human Rights and Climate Change. Only the Sendai Framework and the non-binding Resolution 41/21 are proving comprehensively inclusive of the rights of persons with disabilities in regards to climate action.

In the recent years, the European Union (EU) has been equipped with a set of binding and non-binding legislation to address climate change. The primary EU framework addressing climate change is the European Green Deal adopted in 2019. Within the Green Deal, some initiatives are more relevant to persons with disabilities. Accessibility for persons with disabilities is a mandatory obligation for charging stations of electric vehicles (Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Charging Regulation (AFIR)) as well as for all building projects (Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD)). The Green Deal Industrial Plan has 1 out of 4 pillars dedicated to enhancing green skills of the labour. The Social Climate Fund (SCF) and Just Transition Fund (JTF) are meant to ensure that those most affected by the transition are supported and not left behind with a focus on

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<sup>2</sup> Sébastien Jodoin, Katherine Lofts, Amanda Bowie-Edwards, Laurence Leblanc, & Chloe Rourke, Disability Rights in National Climate Policies: Status Report (Centre for Human Rights & Legal Pluralism & International Disability Alliance), 2022

"energy poverty" and "transport poverty" for the SCF and on green skills for the JTF. Finally, the EU's Union of Equality: Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030 aligns with the European Green Deal, acknowledging the unique challenges climate change poses to persons with disabilities and the need for an inclusive green transition.

## Key Findings

Overall, the cross-referencing in legislation and foreseen initiatives regarding disability-inclusive climate action is poor in the 13 countries reviewed.

In regards to disability, climate change and DRR/DRM cross-referencing in national legislation, DRR/DRM is much more cross-referenced between disability and/or DRR/DRM national legislation, over climate change. Climate change legislation poorly addresses persons with disabilities, and disability legislation overlooks climate action completely.

In regards to disability in climate mitigation and adaptation initiatives, the situation is poor as well. Except for a couple of generic provisions in Slovenia and Sweden, no countries have specific disability-inclusive climate action initiatives in the field of accessible infrastructures, accessible public transportation, work, livelihoods, education and skills acquisition, and social protection. Almost all countries overlook disability inclusion in climate change adaptation and mitigation measures. When such initiatives are taken (Slovenia, Sweden), they target accessibility of public transportation only.

In regards to transversal aspects, the situation is as poor as previously documented:

- **Gender and women with disabilities:** There are no references to the intersectional risks and combined effects of climate change that girls and women with disabilities will face. Their specific situation is not even acknowledged.
- **Data:** Only 3 countries out of 13 reported collecting data on disability, climate change and/or DRR/DRM (Albania, Lithuania and Switzerland).
- **Participation:** Persons with disabilities and their representative organisations are consulted to some extent in Lithuania and Sweden only.
- **Budget:** No specific budget lines targeting disability-inclusive climate change has been reported on, except for Lithuania's national budget providing funding for disability-inclusive DRR and DRM, including training for humanitarian workers and improving information accessibility.

- **International cooperation:** 8 countries out of 13 reported that disability in relation to DRR/DRM and/or climate action is included in international cooperation aid (Albania, Armenia, Belgium, Denmark, Italy, Slovenia, Sweden and Ukraine). The expectations placed on the Global South are significantly higher than what countries in the WHO Europe Region are meeting themselves.

These findings are coherent with those of the Global Action on Disability (GLAD) Network survey and CBM report on the Assessment of Disability Inclusion in National Climate, Humanitarian, and Disaster Risk Reduction Plans.

Conclusively, persons with disabilities and their representative organisations are not consulted, hence their situations, requirements and voices not taken into account at all across climate action. Without any legislative or policy framework embedding the rights to persons with disabilities in climate change, no programmes are implemented or budget allocated. In the field of international cooperation, attention to DRR/DRM and climate adaptation and mitigation seem to be somewhat existing. The real impact would need to be evaluated.

## Recommendations

### Recommendations to Decision-Makers

These recommendations target duty bearers, and especially the decision makers in multilateral organisations such as the UN and alike bodies, in EU institutions as well as in national and subnational Government, administration, Parliament and any other similar bodies.

### Get persons with disabilities at the climate action table!

**Listen to the voices and recognise the values of the lived experiences brought by persons with disabilities in all their diversity:** Recognizing and including the unique experiences of persons with disabilities in all their diversity, particularly girls and women with disabilities as well as Indigenous persons with disabilities living in European overseas territories, in climate discussions is essential for developing inclusive climate solutions, which requires adequate resources and accessible consultation processes.

- Allocate funding to support OPD involvement in climate policy consultations and ensure all processes are accessible, in line with CRPD Article 4(3).

**Closely consult and actively involve persons with disabilities and their representative organisations within disaster risk**

**management and climate-related decision-making at the local, national, European and international levels:** Ensuring the participation of persons with disabilities in climate decision-making is a right under the CRPD and should be fully integrated into UNFCCC processes, with necessary accessibility measures and formal recognition of the Disability Constituency.

- Establish a formal Disability Constituency within the UNFCCC and ensure all climate-related meetings, materials, and information are accessible to persons with disabilities, including formats like Easy-to-Read and Sign Language interpretation
- Establish a formal recognition of the EDF and its membership within European decision-making fora on climate action

### **Mainstream the rights of persons with disabilities in climate action**

**Research and document the situation of all persons with disabilities across sectors:** Understanding the full impact of climate change on persons with disabilities requires comprehensive data and analysis, focusing on diverse disability groups and including intersectional factors like age, gender, race, ethnicity, indigeneity and migration status, to improve inclusive climate action and societal resilience.

- Conduct detailed, disaggregated research on the diverse impacts of climate change on persons with disabilities across demographics
- Document how disability inclusion can enhance overall climate resilience and effectiveness.

**Mainstream the rights of persons with disabilities in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC), its workstreams and funding mechanisms:** Including disability rights into climate policies across all UNFCCC workstreams—like Nationally Determined Contribution (NDCs), New Collective Quantified Goals (NCQGs), Global Goals on Adaptation (GGAs), Gender Action Plans (GAP), Just Transition Work Programmes (JTWP), and Loss and Damage—ensures inclusive climate resilience, fair recovery efforts and equal participation in climate action for persons with disabilities. Future climate frameworks should reference the CRPD and disability-inclusive approaches should be funded, accessible and participatory of the primarily concerned people, including persons with disabilities in all their diversity.

- Ensure disability inclusion across climate policies by mainstreaming CRPD standards.
- Fund disability inclusive climate adaptation and recovery by earmarking disability and accessibility.

- Actively involve persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in planning, implementation and evaluation of inclusive climate action legislation, projects and initiatives at large.

**Mainstream the rights of persons with disabilities in the EU's policies and programmes related to climate action:** At the EU level, climate policies and initiatives must include the rights of persons with disabilities, guided by the CRPD, across decision-making and in implementing accessible green and sustainable practices. The EU should ensure that all climate actions, both within and outside Europe, prioritize disability rights, including in funding, green economic transitions, consumer access, education and international aid.

- Enforce and expand disability-inclusive provisions in EU climate policies, initiatives and funds, mainstreaming inclusion and accessibility in the green transition, like already done in the like in the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Charging Regulation (AFIR) and the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD) or taking a comprehensive approach as done for the Structural Funds.
- Allocate EU funds to inclusive green economy projects, supporting accessible products, services, technologies, transport, infrastructure, education and lifelong learning.
- Embed disability inclusion in EU's international climate actions to set a global standard and enhance project reach and effectiveness.

**Financing disability-inclusive climate action at international and European levels:** Ensuring direct access to dedicated climate finance for persons with disabilities and their organizations is essential to build inclusive resilient futures with new funds invested without drawing from existing resources.

- Ensure that disability inclusion and accessibility are core principles to climate funding allocation, while also addressing climate change within disability funding, investing new resources without diverting from existing ones.

## **Recommendations to the Disability Movement and its allyship**

### **Strengthen the Disability Movement advocacy on climate action**

**Building the capacities of persons with disabilities and their representative organisations on disability-inclusive climate action** is crucial for meaningful participation and active involvement in climate actions at local, national, European and international levels, particularly under initiatives such as UN-led Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE).

- Develop and disseminate sensitisation and training materials for grassroots climate campaigning, emphasizing disability inclusion and organizing forums for discussion.

**Prioritizing climate action within the Disability Movement is vital,** as climate change threatens progress made in advocacy.

- Take the conscious decision in prioritising climate action, since climate change threatens hard-won progress made in human and disability rights.
- Encourage the development of frontline disability and climate justice activists, emphasizing the role of the next generation with disabilities.

### Partnerships and solidarity

**Search for “cross-movement solidarity”<sup>3</sup> and partner with the climate justice movement:** The Disability Movement should pursue cross-movement solidarity by collaborating with disability-friendly organisations and the climate justice movement to enhance advocacy for inclusive climate action.

- Establish partnerships between the disability movement and climate justice organizations to ensure disability-inclusive climate actions that benefit all communities, including persons with disabilities and their families.
- Improve disability inclusion and accessibility in the climate movement.

**Get climate action prioritised in the global and European disability agenda:** Prioritizing climate change in disability legislation and initiatives is crucial for addressing the unique challenges faced by persons with disabilities in climate policies.

- Include climate action into the global and European disability agenda, such as prioritizing it at the 2025 Global Disability Summit or in the upcoming mid-term review of the EU's Union of Equality: Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030.

**Stand in solidarity with persons with disabilities in all their diversity of the Global South:** Acknowledging the historical responsibility of industrialised nations for greenhouse gas emissions is vital for supporting persons with disabilities in the Global South and amplifying their voices in climate discussions.

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<sup>3</sup> Sins Invalid, 10 Principles of Disability Justice, 2015

- Advocate for the mainstreaming of disability inclusion in international and European legislation, initiatives and funding mechanisms of international cooperation and aid.

### Explore new narratives

Advancing climate and social justice requires a fresh perspective that emphasizes interdependence, intersectionality, drawing inspiration from the ecofeminism principles to address interconnected issues effectively.

- Research and document emerging practices exploring interdependence and intersectionality between climate change and rights of persons with disabilities on the climate and social justice nexus.

## Conclusions

Persons with disabilities are profoundly affected by climate change, often facing eco-ableist responses that marginalize their experiences and threaten hard-won rights. This intensifies even more for people facing intersectional discrimination such as girls, women, children and older persons with disabilities, but also gender identity non-conforming, Indigenous, racialised and of colour persons with disabilities. Among the diversity of disability, this implies looking at the situations of under-represented groups such as persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities, Deaf blind and persons with Albinism.

The lack of disability inclusion in national, European and international climate legislation and initiatives highlights the need for urgent action from all stakeholders, and especially of decision makers in multilateral organisations such as the UN and alike bodies, in EU institutions as well as in national and subnational Government, administration, Parliament and any other similar bodies, to include disability rights into climate strategies. As the impacts of climate change grow, responding to climate change with inclusive and green solutions is an opportunity to build new economic models and societies. The climate revolution must be inclusive!

## Acronyms

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Signification</b>
AFIR	Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Charging Regulation
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
COP	Conference of the Parties (to the UN FCCC)
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EDF	European Disability Forum
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
EPBD	Energy Performance of Buildings Directive
ETS 2	Emissions Trading System II
EU	European Union
FCCC	Framework Convention on Climate Change
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GGA	Global Goal on Adaptation
HA	Humanitarian Action
IDA	International Disability Alliance
JTF	Just Transition Fund
JTWP	Just Transition Work Programme
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NCCP	National Climate Change Plan
NCQG	New Collective Quantified Goal
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NMP	National Mitigation Plan
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OPD	Organisation of Persons with Disabilities
SCF	Social Climate Fund
UN	United Nations
UNDIS	United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy
WHO	World Health Organisation

## Introduction

Climate change is under way faster than ever according to the recently published Indicators of Global Climate Change 2023<sup>4</sup>. Laying the grounds of resilience, adapting societies and placing people most impacted first, including persons with disabilities, ought to be at the forefront of our concerns to build an inclusive future.

The effects of climate change on persons with disabilities is well documented by now. Persons with disabilities are disproportionately impacted by climate change, which exacerbates the preexisting inequalities of our ableist societies. In situations of climate change generated hazards, “persons with disabilities are often among those most adversely affected in an emergency, sustaining disproportionately higher rates of morbidity and mortality, and at the same time being among those least able to have access to emergency support.”<sup>5</sup> This is due to lack of combining factors such as, among others, inaccessible evacuation systems and procedure, pre-existing health conditions, lack of access to education on climate action<sup>6</sup>. Poverty situations elevate risks even further<sup>7</sup>. At all costs, persons with disabilities shall not be viewed as expected losses<sup>8</sup>. On a more daily basis, climate change poses challenges to the ways of life, livelihoods, health, social protection, safety and security of us all, and to those socially disadvantaged such as persons with disabilities even further.

Climate change effects are even more severe for persons with disabilities experiencing intersectional discrimination. This includes girls, women,

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<sup>4</sup> Forster and all, Indicators of Global Climate Change 2023: annual update of key indicators of the state of the climate system and human influence, 2023, <https://essd.copernicus.org/articles/16/2625/2024/essd-16-2625-2024-discussion.html>, [Accessed on 7 June 2023]

<sup>5</sup> Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR), The impact of climate change on the rights of persons with disabilities, 2024, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/climate-change/impact-climate-change-rights-persons-disabilities>, [Accessed on 4 October 2024]

<sup>6</sup> United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), How climate change disproportionately impacts those with disabilities, 2019, <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/how-climate-change-disproportionately-impacts-those-disabilities>, [Accessed on 4 October 2024]

<sup>7</sup> Disability and Philanthropy Forum, Connections Between Climate Change and Disability, 2024, <https://disabilityphilanthropy.org/resource/connections-between-climate-change-and-disability/?ref=disabilitydebrief.org>, [Accessed on 4 October 2024]

<sup>8</sup> Kelly-Costello, Aine, Where disability and climate meet - Disabled wisdom and an invitation to community, 2023, <https://www.disabilitydebrief.org/debrief/climate-invitation/>, [Accessed on 4 October 2024]

children and older people with disabilities, but also gender identity non-conforming, Indigenous, racialised and of colour persons with disabilities. Among the diversity of disability, this implies looking at the situations of under-represented groups such as persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities, Deaf blind and persons with Albinism.

In this context, understanding how national climate policies include the rights, requirements and voices of persons with disabilities in Europe and Central Asia is a foundation for future advocacy at national, continental and international levels. This study explores the nexus of social and climate justice with a focus on the human rights of persons with disabilities and climate action.

Persons with disabilities and their communities not only fight global warming as an environmental necessity, but also consider it as a call for inclusive action of any human being. By ensuring accessible climate solutions, we not only protect the planet but also safeguard the rights and resilience of all communities, including those most impacted by climate change such as persons with disabilities in their diversity. Going a step further, incorporating disability inclusion will enhance climate action and promote sustainable resilience across society as a whole. When disability inclusion takes precedence, systems and processes become more efficient and effective for everyone, not just for persons with disabilities.

## About this Report

### Scope

#### Objective

This study collected data about national disability inclusive climate change legislation and plans to compare them and identify trends and gaps. Subsequently recommendations for improved disability inclusive climate action are provided. By engaging and actively seeking support from national OPDs, EDF sought to sensitise on climate action among its membership.

#### Geographical coverage

This report aimed to gather data from all countries of the WHO European Region. Those of 53 member states are Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and Uzbekistan.

#### Programme areas

Climate change mitigation, adaptation as well as disaster preparedness, response and recovery are cross-sectoral in nature and impact all areas of life. This being comprehensive, the below elements were prioritised:

- How disability rights and inclusion are considered in climate change legislation and policies (ex: twin-track approach, rights-based, funding/ financing) (CRPD Article 4.1 and 2)
- How persons with disabilities and organisations representing them (OPDs) are closely consulted and have opportunities to participate (CRPD Article 4.3)
- How data relating to persons with disabilities are considered and collected (CRPD Article 31)
- How livelihoods, the world of work and acquisition of new skills to adapt to changes brought by climate change is considered in those legislation (CRPD Articles 24 and 27)
- How accessibility of infrastructures and transportation is considered as it adapts to a sustainable and low-carbon economy in those legislation (CRPD Articles 3(f), 9 and 19(c))

## **Assessment of climate action legislation against rights of persons with disabilities and country scoring**

The assessment of national climate action legislation against the rights of persons with disabilities is based on two main criteria. First, it takes into account the variety of contexts among the 53 countries in the WHO Europe region. These countries have significantly different resources and constraints. Second, decision was made to focus on the opportunities that climate action can bring to persons with disabilities and how it relates to their everyday life. This refers, for instance, to how infrastructures and transportation are made accessible as part of climate change mitigation or adaptation measures. This is also looking at how the opportunities brought by climate change to the world of work are inclusive of persons with disabilities.

Besides, the report is also designed to be comparable to the widest extent possible to the CBM assessment of Disability Inclusion in National Climate, Humanitarian, and Disaster Risk Reduction Plans<sup>9</sup>. This exercise conducted a similar assessment in countries of the global South. Having comparable data made sense to see emerging trends and gaps in relation to disability inclusive climate action across the world.

The criteria against which legislation and plans were assessed are listed below:

- Integrating disability inclusion in national climate/ humanitarian/ DRR strategy
- Setting actions that are specific to the climate/ humanitarian/ DRR sector in national disability strategies and plans
- Gender-sensitive actions that target persons with disabilities
- Establishing a committee or a focal point in the respective Ministry for disability inclusion
- Integrating disability inclusion in the accountability mechanism of the climate/ humanitarian/ DRR sector
- Creating a monitoring and evaluation plan for disability inclusion
- Dedicated funding or financing budget or scheme for disability-inclusive climate action
- Making international cooperation more effective by increasing funding to address inequalities for persons with disabilities arising from climate change effects
- Social protection for persons with disabilities in relation to climate change originated events and crisis

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<sup>9</sup> CBM, Report on the Assessment of Disability Inclusion in National Climate, Humanitarian, and Disaster Risk Reduction Plans, 2024

- Livelihood protection for persons with disabilities to anticipate climate change effects
- Measures to support access to the world of work for persons with disabilities, especially in sectors where climate change is bringing opportunities (ex: circular economy, relocalisation of factories)
- Measures to support access to climate action related skills (ex: TVET, green skills)
- Making infrastructure accessible for persons with disabilities while adapting to climate action
- Making transportation accessible for persons with disabilities while adapting to climate action
- Engaging with persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, especially involving persons with disabilities in the creation of the climate change/ climate action plan
- Engaging persons with disabilities in research and including them in the climate/ humanitarian/ DRR research workforce

Against each of this criterium, a score was attributed according to the following:

- Whenever a country answered "Yes" or "Sometimes", it was attributed 1.
- Whenever a country answered "No", "I do not know", "Maybe", it was attributed 0.

Out of the 16 intermediary scoring, a final score was calculated and a traffic light system could be applied in the following way:

<b>Green</b>	<b>Disability is mentioned systematically or often</b>
<b>Orange</b>	<b>Disability is mentioned sometimes</b>
<b>Red</b>	<b>Disability is rarely or not mentioned</b>

## Methodology

This section explains how the report was developed including data collection and limitations.

### Data collection

From mid-July to mid-September 2024, an online survey was developed and shared widely to EDF membership and various disability mailing lists covering Europe and central Asia. It required national OPDs, disability allies for information about how national climate change legislation have included the rights of persons with disabilities. Refer to Annex 1: EDF Online Survey for further details.

Out of this survey:

- 19 answers were received
- 3 answers were disregarded for quality reason (ex: incomplete; countries outside of the WHO Europe region)
- 16 answers only were useable as 3 countries were done twice (Belgium, Belarus and Switzerland)
- In total, 13 countries are covered out of which:
  - 8 EU-EFTA countries (Belgium, Denmark, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland)
  - 3 Eastern and Central European countries (Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine)
  - 2 Central Asian countries (Albania, Armenia)

## Limitations

There are two main limitations to this report.

First, the scope of the assessment was broad, but the feedback received was relatively limited. Out of 53 countries, only 16 provided responses, representing 30% of the expected total input. Therefore, the report should not be viewed as providing quantitative evidence or being a comprehensive regional representation. It is rather as an in-depth exploration of current developments in some European and central Asian countries.

Second, the primary data for this study was provided by staff and volunteers from OPDs and their allies. Due to limited human resources, the data could not be thoroughly verified. The study's resources did not allow for extensive fact-checking or translation services which may affect the accuracy and completeness of the data used in the study. While some responses were excluded due to clear issues with quality, the accepted responses are assumed to be accurate and reliable without comprehensive validation.

## A Review of Disability-Inclusive Climate Change Related Provisions in International and European Frameworks

These sections rapidly review existing disability inclusive climate action provisions in international frameworks.

### Disability in Climate Action International Frameworks

#### The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

In 1992, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the United Nations (UN) Conference on Environment and Development (CED) often called the Earth Summit took place. Three major international environmental treaties were signed: the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the UNFCCC. This report focuses on the latter only.

The UNFCCC is the key international treaty for coordinating efforts to stabilize greenhouse gas levels and prevent catastrophic human impact on the climate: "the ultimate objective of the Convention is to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations "at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic (human induced) interference with the climate system."

The UNFCCC entered into force on 21 March 1994. To date, it has 198 States Parties, or almost all UN recognised countries and territories. Its main governing body is the Conference of the Parties (COP). It meets every year to negotiate and oversee global climate change initiatives.

Under the UNFCCC, industrialised countries, known as Annex I countries and belonging to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), are expected to lead climate change efforts due to their historical responsibility for greenhouse gas emissions. They commit to provide additional financial support to developing nations for climate action, beyond their existing aid commitments.

The UNFCCC has no references to socially disadvantaged people or persons with disabilities.

#### Implementing the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change: The Kyoto Protocol, Cancun and Paris Agreements

Enforced since 2005, the Kyoto Protocol legally binds developed countries (Annex I countries) to specific greenhouse gas emission reduction targets and introduces market-based mechanisms to achieve these reductions. As with the UNFCCC, the Kyoto Protocol has no references to at-risk people.

In 2020, the Cancun agreements established commitments on mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology and transparency, providing a foundation for future climate actions. For the first time, at-risk group and persons with disabilities are mentioned.

Adopted at COP21 in 2015, the Paris Agreement replaces the Kyoto Protocol as the main framework for global climate action. The goal is to keep global warming well below 2°C, aiming for 1.5°C, compared to pre-industrial levels. A distinct feature is the production of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs): they are country-specific plans outlining efforts to reduce emissions and adapt to climate change, submitted every five years based on national conditions. At-risks groups and/or persons with disabilities are referred to in the Preamble, Articles 7 and 12. The Preamble states that “Parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights”, including the rights of persons with disabilities as enshrined in the UN CRPD. Climate action should also be gender-responsive, participatory and representative Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) consulted (Article 7).

In this respect, a study demonstrated that States are falling far short of their obligations. 80% percent of Parties to the Paris Agreement do not mention persons with disabilities in their NDCs, and 67% fail to include them in their climate adaptation policies. “In cases where disability has been included, it is largely to indicate the vulnerability of persons with disabilities to climate change impacts or to signal the need for their inclusion, without providing concrete measures to protect their rights or enhance their resilience and adaptive capacity.”<sup>10</sup> Under this study, the countries of the WHO Europe region are scored (out of 13) as reported below:

\* EU Member states

<b>Country</b>	<b>Score</b>
Georgia	4
Turkey, Uzbekistan	3
Czechia*, Slovakia*, Spain*	2
Germany*, Moldova	1,5
Austria*, Azerbaijan, Latvia*, Poland*	1

<sup>10</sup> Sébastien Jodoin, Katherine Lofts, Amanda Bowie-Edwards, Laurence Leblanc, & Chloe Rourke, Disability Rights in National Climate Policies: Status Report (Centre for Human Rights & Legal Pluralism & International Disability Alliance), 2022

Country	Score
Bosnia and Herzegovina, Estonia*, Finland*, Greece*, Hungary*, Ireland*, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg*, Slovenia*, Tajikistan	0.5
Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Belarus, Belgium*, Bulgaria*, Croatia*, Cyprus*, Denmark*, EU*, France*, Iceland*, Israel, Italy*, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania*, Malta*, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands*, North Macedonia, Norway, Portugal*, Romania*, Russia, San Marino, Serbia, Sweden*, Switzerland, Turkmenistan	0

Worth noting though, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is using intersectionality as an analysis framework<sup>11</sup>. It is however unclear as to how this translates into practical actions.

### Disability References in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

UN instruments	References to persons with disabilities	References to socially disadvantaged groups
<b>1992 UNFCC</b>	-	-
<b>Kyoto Protocol</b>	-	-
<b>2010 Cancun agreement (COP16)</b>	The Parties identified persons with disabilities as one of the segments of the population whose human rights are acutely affected by the impacts of climate change (Preamble).	The Preamble recognises that some population segments will be more acutely affected by climate change, persons with disabilities being one of them. Combating climate change should be conducted inclusively of all at-risk group ("Shared vision for long-term cooperative action"; Chapter II When addressing adaptation). Gender must be mainstreamed in support and aid provided to developing countries (Chapter IV Finance, technology and capacity-building).
<b>2015 Paris Agreement (COP21)</b>	Parties should respect their human rights obligations, including the "rights of persons with	Adaptation measures "should follow a country-driven, gender-responsive, participatory and transparent approach (Article 7).

<sup>11</sup> Giaccone, Loïc, Climat, GIEC et intersectionnalité : un cadre d'analyse indispensable, 2022, <https://climatanthropocene.com/2022/01/25/climat-giec-intersectionnalite/>, [Accessed on 19 July 2024]

	disabilities and people in vulnerable situations” (Preamble)	Participation of a broad range of stakeholders (such as CSOs, NGOs and OPDs) is encouraged (but not mandatory) (Article 12). Emphasis is made on “a just transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality jobs in accordance with nationally defined development priorities”.
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## Disability and Climate Change Cross-Referencing in Other United Nations Frameworks

This section reviews disability-inclusive climate change provisions in international standards and commitments by listing them.

<b>UN instruments</b>	<b>References to disability-inclusive climate action</b>
<b>Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goal 1: Target 1.5</li> <li>• Goal 9: Targets 9.4 and 9.a</li> <li>• Goal 11: Targets 11.5, 11.b and 11.c</li> <li>• Goal 12: Target 12.8</li> <li>• Goal 13: Targets 13.1, 13.3, 13.a and 13.b</li> <li>• Goal 16: Targets 16.7, 16.10 and 16.b</li> </ul>
<b>Commitments of the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit</b>	States and stakeholders committed to “strive to ensure that services and humanitarian assistance are equally available for and accessible to all persons with disabilities, and guarantee the availability, affordability and access to specialized services, including assistive technology in the short, medium and long term.”
<b>Sendai Framework for DRR 2015-30</b>	<p>Across the Sendai Framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persons with disabilities are explicitly identified.</li> <li>• Accessibility, inclusion and universal design principles are core to implementation.</li> <li>• A disability perspective should be applied in all planning and policy-making concerning risk management.</li> <li>• States should disaggregate data by disability when reporting on key indicators, especially those related to disaster mortality, economic losses, and health impacts, to strengthen the evidence base and inform inclusive policies.</li> <li>• Priorities 1 and 4 cover issues related to accessibility and universal design: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Understanding disaster risk.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk.</li> <li>○ Investing in DRR for resilience.</li> <li>○ Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to 'build back better' in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)</b></p>	<p>“The CRPD represents a benchmark treaty to promote the rights of persons with disabilities and was adopted prior to the evolvement of climate change being framed as a human rights issue. As a result, there is no direct reference in the CRPD to climate change or its impact, but it does address a vast array of areas directly or indirectly related to climate change, such as migration, mobility, access to basic services like food and water, health, education, and employment opportunities. (CBM, 2019)</p> <p>CRPD Articles 8, 11, 13, 16, 19, 26, 27, 28, 31 and 33.</p> <p>The CRPD Committee is currently drafting a General Comment on CRPD Article 11 'Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies'.</p>
<p><b>2019 Human Rights Commission Resolution 41/21 on Human Rights and Climate Change</b></p>	<p>The Resolution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourages States to ensure participation of people who are most affected by environmental changes (Preamble)</li> <li>• Calls States to adopt a comprehensive, integrated, gender-responsive and disability-inclusive approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation policies to ensure human rights enjoyment (5)</li> <li>• Calls to “support the resilience and adaptive capacities of persons with disabilities in both rural and urban areas to respond to the adverse impacts of climate change”</li> <li>• Calls for a multi-stakeholder analytical study on the promotion and the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities in the context of climate change to be undertaken.</li> </ul>

### The Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the EU Green Deal

The primary EU framework addressing climate change is the European Green Deal adopted in 2019<sup>12</sup>. It aims to make Europe the first climate-neutral continent in the world. The European Commission has introduced a series of proposals aimed at aligning the EU's climate, energy, transport, and taxation legislation to achieve a minimum 55% reduction in net greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, relative to 1990 levels. The 'Fit for 55' legislation<sup>13</sup> steers the EU actions toward achieving its 2030 climate goals, focusing on fairness, cost efficiency, and competitiveness.

Within the Green Deal, some initiatives are more relevant to persons with disabilities. Published in 2020, **the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy** outlines 82 legislative and non-legislative measures, grouped under 10 key "flagship" initiatives. This comprehensive strategy aims to accelerate the adoption of zero-emission vehicles, promote sustainable alternatives accessible to the public and businesses, support digitalisation and automation within the transport sector, and enhance connectivity and access. A significant focus, highlighted in Flagship 9, is on ensuring that mobility solutions are fair and inclusive for everyone, aligning with broader goals for a just transition to sustainable transport across Europe.

- Adopted in 2023, the **Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Charging Regulation (AFIR)**<sup>14</sup> establishes targets to increase the availability of electric recharging and hydrogen refuelling infrastructure throughout the EU. Accessibility for charging stations is a mandatory requirement, ensuring these facilities are inclusive for persons with disabilities. Guidelines to support the implementation of accessible infrastructure are being developed within a Commission working group under the Sustainable Mobility Forum, with plans to also create a new European Standard to guide accessibility in alternative fuel infrastructure.

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<sup>12</sup> European Commission, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, 2019

<sup>13</sup> European Commission, Fit for 55: Delivering on the proposals, 2024, [https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal/delivering-european-green-deal/fit-55-delivering-proposals\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal/delivering-european-green-deal/fit-55-delivering-proposals_en), [Accessed on 24 October 2024]

<sup>14</sup> European Commission, Alternative Fuels Infrastructure, [https://transport.ec.europa.eu/transport-themes/clean-transport/alternative-fuels-sustainable-mobility-europe/alternative-fuels-infrastructure\\_en](https://transport.ec.europa.eu/transport-themes/clean-transport/alternative-fuels-sustainable-mobility-europe/alternative-fuels-infrastructure_en), 2023, [Accessed on 24 October 2024]

- Adopted earlier in 2024, the **Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD)**<sup>15</sup> aims to enhance energy efficiency in both new and renovated buildings across Europe. Accessibility for persons with disabilities is a mandatory obligation for all building projects. Additionally, the directive includes providing inclusive and accessible information, guidance and training related to energy performance. Member States are required to develop National Renovation Plans setting concrete targets for energy efficiency improvements, in consultation with NGOs such as OPDs<sup>16</sup>.
- In 2023, the **Social Climate Fund (SCF)** was created alongside the Emissions Trading System II (ETS 2) to address the financial needs of at-risks groups during the green transition. With a mandatory 25% contribution from Member States to their Social Climate Plans, the SCF aims to mobilize at least EUR 86.7 billion between 2026 and 2032. This dedicated funding will ensure that those most affected by the transition are supported and not left behind, with specific definitions established for "energy poverty" and "transport poverty." Member States are required to publish their Social Climate Plans by June 2025, incorporating national consultations to gather input. Additionally, the European Development Fund has responded to the consultation regarding the "Do No Significant Harm" principle of the SCF, ensuring alignment with broader sustainability goals.
- The **Just Transition Fund (JTF)** is a crucial financial instrument within the Cohesion Policy, with an overall budget of EUR 17.5 billion allocated for the 2021 to 2027 period. Of this, EUR 7.5 billion is financed under the multiannual financial framework, while an additional EUR 10 billion comes from the Next Generation EU initiative. The JTF focuses on the economic diversification of territories most affected by climate transition, emphasizing the importance of reskilling and active inclusion for impacted communities.
- Adopted in 2023, **the Green Deal Industrial Plan** aims to "enhance the competitiveness of Europe's net-zero industry, and

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<sup>15</sup> European Union, Directive (EU) 2024/1275 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 April 2024 on the energy performance of buildings, 2024, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32024L1275>, [Accessed on 24 October 2024]

<sup>16</sup> European Disability Forum (EDF), Energy Performance of Buildings Directive – first EU legislation to address accessibility of buildings, 2024, <https://www.edf-feph.org/energy-performance-of-buildings-directive-first-eu-legislation-to-address-accessibility-of-buildings/>, [Accessed on 24 October 2024]

accelerate the transition to climate neutrality.”<sup>17</sup> Among the 4 pillars of the plan, one is dedicated to enhancing green skills of the labour force. As part of this plan, the Net-Zero Industry Act<sup>18</sup> provides an opportunity to focus on inclusive lifelong learning through the Net-Zero Europe Platform, which will supervise Net-Zero Industry Academies.

### **Climate References in the EU Disability Rights Strategy**

The EU's Union of Equality: Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030<sup>19</sup>, adopted in 2021, serves as the primary framework for progressively implementing the CRPD across member states. This Strategy aligns with the European Green Deal, acknowledging the unique challenges climate change poses to persons with disabilities and the need for an inclusive green transition. Specifically, the Strategy emphasizes that the transition to a climate-neutral and resilient society must be just and inclusive ((5) Equal Access and non-discrimination/ (5.6) Ensuring safety and protection), actively involving persons with disabilities and their representative organisations to ensure their protection and participation.

### **Climate References in the European Court of Human Rights' case law**

The European Convention on Human Rights does not contain any direct link between disability and climate. However, it is worth noting that the Convention has been used by individuals to protect their right of life, health, wellbeing, and fight against the failure of their countries to reduce emissions or to respect the Paris agreement. There are a couple of cases

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<sup>17</sup> European Commission, The Green Deal Industrial Plan - Putting Europe's net-zero industry in the lead, 2024, [https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal/green-deal-industrial-plan\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal/green-deal-industrial-plan_en), [Accessed on 24 October 2024]

<sup>18</sup> European Commission, Net-Zero Industry Act - Making the EU the home of clean technologies manufacturing and green jobs, 2024, [https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal/green-deal-industrial-plan/net-zero-industry-act\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal/green-deal-industrial-plan/net-zero-industry-act_en), [Accessed on 24 October 2024]

<sup>19</sup> European Commission, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Union of Equality: Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030, 2021

where people went to the Court. The Court condemned Switzerland<sup>20</sup> and an Austrian case<sup>21</sup> is still ongoing.

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<sup>20</sup> More information about the Swiss case is available online at: <https://climatecasechart.com/non-us-case/union-of-swiss-senior-women-for-climate-protection-v-swiss-federal-council-and-others/>

<sup>21</sup> More information about the Swiss case is available online at: After Switzerland Comes Austria – Verfassungsblog

## Key Findings

This section presents disability, climate change and DRR/DRM cross-referencing in national legislation. Specific disability-inclusive climate actions in the field of accessible infrastructures, accessible public transportation, work, livelihoods, education and skills acquisition, and social protection are then explored. A focus on the transversal aspects of gender, data, participation, budget and international cooperation in relation to disability-inclusive climate action is finally provided.

### Disability, Climate Change and DRR/DRM Cross-Referencing in National Legislation

Disability is mentioned in climate change legislation of Albania, Armenia, Belgium, Italy and Lithuania. Only Hungary has a reference to climate change in its disability legislation.

DRR/DRM is much better cross-referenced. Disability is mentioned in DRR/DRM legislation of Albania, Armenia, Belarus, Belgium, Italy, Lithuania, Sweden, Switzerland and Ukraine. Conversely, DRR/DRM is referred to in disability legislation of Armenia, Belarus, Belgium, Italy, Hungary and Sweden.

	<b>Disability in climate change legislation</b>	<b>Climate change in disability legislation</b>	<b>Disability in DRR/DRM legislation</b>	<b>DRR/DRM in disability legislation</b>
<b>Albania</b>	Yes	-	Yes	-
<b>Armenia</b>	Yes	-	Yes	Yes
<b>Belarus</b>	-	-	Yes	Yes
<b>Belgium</b>	Yes	-	Yes	Yes
<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Denmark</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Hungary</b>	-	Yes	-	Yes
<b>Italy</b>	Yes	-	Yes	Yes
<b>Lithuania</b>	Yes	-	Yes	-
<b>Slovenia</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Sweden</b>	-	-	Yes	Yes
<b>Switzerland</b>	-	-	Yes	-
<b>Ukraine</b>	-	-	Yes	-

DRR/DRM is much more cross-referenced between disability and/or DRR/DRM national legislation, over climate change. Climate change

legislation poorly addresses persons with disabilities, and disability legislation overlooks climate action completely.

## **Disability in Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Initiatives**

Except for a couple of generic provisions in Slovenia and Sweden, no countries have specific disability-inclusive climate action initiatives in the field of accessible infrastructures, accessible public transportation, work, livelihoods, education and skills acquisition, and social protection.

In Slovenia, the national Act on Equalizing Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities includes provisions to ensure that public transportation boosted by climate change-related measures is also made accessible to persons with disabilities.

Sweden has strong existing frameworks in both the sectors of public transportation and work:

- The Discrimination Act and Planning and Building Act mandates accessibility in all public transportation systems, including those boosted by climate change-related measures.
- While specific provisions to ensure access for persons with disabilities to employment in the green and sustainability-related sectors are not explicitly developed, the principles of non-discrimination and equal opportunity provide a foundation that can be applied to these emerging sectors as well.

Almost all countries overlook disability inclusion in climate change adaptation and mitigation measures. When such initiatives are taken (Slovenia, Sweden), they target accessibility of public transportation only.

## **Transversal Aspects: Gender, Data, Participation, Budget and International Cooperation**

On transversal aspects, the situation is just as poor.

### **Gender equality and rights of girls and women with disabilities**

No country reported on any provisions on gender equality and disability inclusion. In other words, there are no references to the intersectional risks and combined effects of climate change that girls and women with disabilities will face. Their specific situation is not even acknowledged.

### **Data**

Only three countries reported collecting data on disability, climate change and/or DRR/DRM.

- Albania has limited data collection efforts.

- Lithuania collects disability data to prepare for humanitarian events and evacuations. However, there is none on climate change and disability.
- Switzerland collects information according to the recommendations of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Assistance Committee (OED-DAC) on disability-inclusive climate change, DRR and DRM.

### **Consultation and participation in climate change or DRR/DRM decision-making processes**

Persons with disabilities and their representative organisations are consulted to some extent in Lithuania and Sweden.

In Sweden, while OPDs have opportunities to be involved in decision-making related to climate action and climate change policy processes, their participation is not yet consistently formalized. The principles of inclusion in Swedish governance provide a foundation for this involvement, but there is room for greater recognition and integration of OPDs in these processes. Strengthening the formal involvement of OPDs in climate policy decision-making would help ensure that the specific needs and perspectives of persons with disabilities are fully considered in Sweden's climate strategies.

In Slovenia, consultation happens in the DRR/DRM area only. The Fire and Rescue Department has established a workgroup on civil protection and disaster risk management which includes representatives from the Lithuanian Disability Forum. Persons with disabilities and OPDs are increasingly included in working groups and decision-making processes related to civil security and disaster risk reduction. As for climate change, the Lithuanian Disability Forum works on advocacy and participates in various national and municipal-level decision-making processes but rarely participates in national-level climate change decisions.

### **Budget**

Lithuania's national budget provides funding for disability-inclusive DRR and DRM, including training for humanitarian workers and improving information accessibility.

No specific budget lines targeting disability-inclusive climate change has been reported on.

### **International cooperation**

Albania, Armenia, Belgium, Denmark, Italy, Slovenia, Sweden and Ukraine reported disability being included in international cooperation aid.

Italy, Slovenia and Sweden reported that there is existing humanitarian and/or development aid to support mitigation, adaptation as well as disaster preparedness, response, and recovery in developing countries. However, no practices of such could be identified in the framework of this data collection exercise. There were no further details.

This is coherent with other findings. A survey by the Global Action on Disability (GLAD) Network found that while most members have climate change action plans, few address disability inclusion, with minimal funding and limited accessibility in events and materials for persons with disabilities<sup>22</sup>.

This is further evidenced with the recent CBM report on the Assessment of Disability Inclusion in National Climate, Humanitarian, and Disaster Risk Reduction Plans. "Overall, the results showed that across all countries many areas need to be improved on to ensure complete and equitable inclusion of persons with disabilities in climate, humanitarian action, and disaster risk reduction."<sup>23</sup> References to CRPD and persons with disabilities in national plans are low and by decreasing order as follows: DRR plans, National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), Humanitarian Action Plans (HA plans), National Climate Change Plan (NCCPs), NDCs and National Mitigation Plan (NMPs).

## **Conclusion**

As for measures in specific sectors, transversal aspects are poorly included in climate change legislation and decision-making processes. Persons with disabilities and their representative organisations are not consulted, hence their situations, needs and voices not taken into account at all across the line. Without any legislative or policy framework embedding the rights to persons with disabilities in climate action, no programmes are implemented or budget allocated.

In the field of international cooperation, attention to DRR/DRM and climate adaptation and mitigation seem to be somewhat existing. The real impact would need to be checked upon.

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<sup>22</sup> Secretariat of the Global Action on Disability (GLAD) Network, Promoting Disability-Inclusive Climate Change Action, 2021, p. 3.

<sup>23</sup> CBM, on the Assessment of Disability Inclusion in National Climate, Humanitarian, and Disaster Risk Reduction Plans, 2024, p. 6.

## Recommendations

Given the dramatic state of play presented in the previous section, urgent and comprehensive actions are needed from all sides to limit the impact of climate change on persons with disabilities in all their diversity. This is all the more important that disability inclusion will strengthen climate action and sustainable resilience for all of society. Physical infrastructure, mass transportation, information systems or DRR mechanisms are more efficient and effective for everyone, not just for persons with disabilities, when disability inclusion is the driver.

### Recommendations to Decision-Makers

These recommendations target duty bearers, and especially the decision makers in multilateral organisations such as the UN and alike bodies, in EU institutions as well as in national and subnational Government, administration, Parliament and any other similar bodies.

#### **Get persons with disabilities at the climate action table!**

#### **Listen to the voices and recognise the values of the lived experiences brought by all persons with disabilities, especially girls and women with disabilities**

Listen to the voices and recognize the value of lived experiences brought by all persons with disabilities, particularly girls and women with disabilities as well as Indigenous persons with disabilities living in European overseas territories. Persons with disabilities, particularly those affected by climate change, bring valuable insights and knowledge to climate negotiations that can help shape more inclusive and effective solutions. It is important to learn from their knowledge and wisdom<sup>24</sup>. Indeed, when disability inclusion takes precedence, systems and processes become more efficient and effective for everyone, not just for persons with disabilities.

To ensure their voices are truly heard, it is essential to provide the necessary resources for effective representation, participation and consultation and to make all consultation processes inclusive and accessible. In line with CRPD Article 4, funding must be directed to OPDs to support their meaningful involvement in shaping climate policies.

#### **Recommendations:**

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<sup>24</sup> Disability Caucus to the Conference of the Parties, COP 26 Statement on Behalf of the Disability Caucus, 2021

- Allocate funding to support OPD involvement in climate policy consultations and ensure all processes are accessible, in line with CRPD Article 4(3).

### **Closely consult and actively involve persons with disabilities and their representative organisations within disaster risk management and climate-related decision-making at the local, national, European and global levels**

Participation of persons with disabilities to decision-making processes is a human right under CRPD Article 4(3), de facto applicable to climate action. It is also indirectly pointed out by Paris Agreement Article 7(5) referring to participatory approach taking into consideration at-risks groups.

This could practically translate into several actions:

- Parties to the Paris Agreement and the UNFCCC Secretariat shall guarantee full and effective participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organisations in UNFCCC processes and decisions. Providing space to the informal Disability Caucus was a necessary first step. But a formal Disability Constituency is essential, in the form that it exists for other constituencies such as women, indigenous people and youth. This would allow the Disability Movement to access support to participate equally within the international climate mechanism.
- Accessibility and reasonable accommodation shall be provided by Parties to the Paris Agreement and the UNFCCC Secretariat for persons with disabilities to access information, communication and meetings at the same level as their non-disabled peers. This includes providing content and material in accessible and/or alternative formats such as Easy-to-Read. COPs and other related - preparatory- meetings should include Sign Language interpretation and captioning, as well as multiple formats for navigation signage and information (as requested by the Disability Caucus at COP27 and 28).

#### **Recommendations:**

- Establish a formal Disability Constituency within the UNFCCC and ensure all climate-related meetings, materials, and information are accessible to persons with disabilities, including formats like Easy-to-Read and Sign Language interpretation.
- Establish a formal recognition of EDF and its membership within European decision making foras on climate action.

## **Mainstream the rights of persons with disabilities in climate action**

### **Research and document the situation of all persons with disabilities across sectors**

Assessing situations ought to go beyond the current state of play, whereby only climate change health related impact on persons with disabilities is captured.

It is essential to explore how climate change affects all segments of the population with disabilities. This implies findings out exactly how climate change will completely change the ways of living of girls, women, children and older people with disabilities, as well as gender identity non-conforming, Indigenous, racialised and of colour persons with disabilities, including those in European overseas territories. Among the diversity of disability, this implies looking at the situations of under-represented groups such as persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities, Deaf blind and persons with albinism.

This process should capture the specific impacts of climate change on their lives and explore areas such as sensitisation, capacity building, access to healthcare and social protection, transformation of the world of work as well as accessibility of infrastructures and transportation.

As for statistics and data, they ought to be collected and disaggregated by sex, gender identity, age, ethnicity, indigeneity, migration status, and disability using the Washington Group questions<sup>25</sup>.

Finally, it would be worth documenting how integrating disability inclusion will improve climate action and foster sustainable resilience throughout society. In other sectors, it has been proven that, when disability inclusion is prioritized, transportation or information systems become more efficient and beneficial for all individuals, not solely persons with disabilities. This is true of disability inclusive climate action and would be worth being underlined with action-oriented research studies and/or case studies.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Conduct detailed, disaggregated research on the diverse impacts of climate change on persons with disabilities across demographics.
- Document how disability inclusion can enhance overall climate resilience and effectiveness.

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<sup>25</sup> Global Action on Disability (GLAD) Network, Infographic: 3 Steps Toward Disability-Inclusive Climate Action

## Mainstream the rights of persons with disabilities in the UNFCCC, its workstreams and funding mechanisms

This is about ensuring that “the rights of persons with disabilities are respected, promoted, and fulfilled in the design, development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all climate policies”<sup>26</sup>. This is about getting programmes and initiatives enhancing the resilience of persons with disabilities to different climate impacts and ensuring that they benefit from activities aiming to decarbonise our societies.

The rights of persons with disabilities are enshrined in the CRPD. Any future amendment to the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement ought to be reviewed in the light of other human rights conventions, including the CRPD which 188 states have ratified. Climate and social justice are two sides of the same coin.

This is especially true of the UNFCCC workstreams:

- **NDCs:** Mainstreaming disability inclusion into NDCs would ensure that climate policies address the needs of all communities, and especially of persons with disabilities in all their diversity. Disability-specific measures in NDCs enhance equitable climate resilience, preventing exclusion of already marginalised persons with disabilities. It is recommended to involve persons with disabilities and their representative organisation in NDC planning, as well as systematically assess impacts on marginalized groups, and secure funding for inclusion and accessibility.
- **New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG):** Disability inclusion in NCQG climate finance ensures fair and effective climate action for all. Allocating funds for disability-inclusive climate strategies promotes accessibility in adaptation and mitigation efforts. Representation of persons with disabilities in NCQG decision-making is essential for inclusivity. Transparency and accountability are crucial to track NCQG resources benefiting disability-inclusive projects.
- **Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA):** Disability-inclusive GGA would ensure that adaptation strategies are accessible and effective for everyone affected by climate change, including persons with disabilities in all their diversity. Involving disability leadership and OPDs in adaptation planning would enhance impact and awareness of disability inclusive approaches. It would be crucial to ensure

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<sup>26</sup> Sébastien Jodoin, Katherine Lofts, Amanda Bowie-Edwards, Laurence Leblanc, & Chloe Rourke, Disability Rights in National Climate Policies: Status Report (Centre for Human Rights & Legal Pluralism & International Disability Alliance), 2022

physical, informational and communication accessibility in all adaptation initiatives. Additionally, funding should support meaningful participation and active involvement of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in adaptation efforts.

- **Gender Action Plan (GAP):** Including disability in COP29's Gender Action Plan, and any future COP's GAPs, would ensure that climate policies are fair for all women, including for girls, women and older women with disabilities in all their diversity. Marginalized groups face higher climate risks and are often excluded from policy decisions. Disability-inclusive strategies lead to more effective, equitable climate solutions for everyone, including persons with disabilities and other discriminated groups. It would be key to include references to the rights of girls and women with disabilities as enshrined in the CRPD as well as ensure resource access. Decision makers and the women's movement should raise awareness on intersectional discrimination based on gender and disability.
- **Just Transition Work Programme (JTWP):** Disability inclusion in JTWP would ensure that everyone benefits from the transition to a greener economy. Equal access to green jobs and training would empower workers with disabilities, especially women and young women with disabilities, in emerging industries. Removing barriers would foster a fairer process, enhancing future opportunities for all workers. In this respect, policies should support workers with disabilities making their way through the transition to green economy.
- **Loss and Damage:** Disability inclusion in the Loss and Damage Fund would ensure fair support after climate disasters. Persons with disabilities face higher risks, requiring tailored resources and accessible assistance. Prioritizing inclusion would promote fair, effective recovery efforts for all people impacted, including persons with disabilities. This would be about ensuring that disability inclusion and accessibility are core principles to funding and other resources opportunities. Persons with disabilities and their representative organisations should be involved in recovery planning.

Furthermore, existing equality and inclusion provisions must be included in decisions and other policies agreed at international level, especially education, capacity building and other Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) activities as well as budget and funding. Disability rights should be mainstreamed in any guidance provided to Parties by the UNFCCC Secretariat. This would push for references to disability inclusion in NDCs

as well as for participation of persons with disabilities and organisation representing them in NDC formulation and climate change action plan.

**Recommendations:**

- Ensure disability inclusion across climate policies by mainstreaming CRPD standards.
- Fund disability inclusive climate adaptation and recovery by earmarking disability and accessibility.
- Actively involve persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in planning, implementation and evaluation of inclusive climate action legislation, projects and initiatives at large.

**Mainstream the rights of persons with disabilities in the EU’s policies and programmes related to climate action**

Similar to the international level recommendations above, the EU level actions should equally mainstream the rights of persons with disabilities. Both in the decision-making process as well as in the content of adopted legislation, programmes and initiatives, the CRPD should be the cornerstone to guarantee an inclusive approach and outcome to EU’s policies and programmes related to climate action.

There are 2 aspects to this. First, it is essential to enforce existing provisions like those in the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Charging Regulation (AFIR) and the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD), ensuring that accessibility for persons with disabilities is included into the EU’s green transition. Second, the rights of persons with disabilities must continue to be mainstreamed across other binding and non-binding policies, funding mechanisms and any initiatives at large. As the EU’s climate targets include legal commitments not only to reduce carbon emissions but also to provide social support for all citizens, including those with disabilities, it is crucial that climate policies prioritize inclusivity as well as sustainability. In practice, this could take the form of a comparative study of climate action and disability rights in EU legislation as a comprehensive yet evidenced based starting point.

**Create a sustainable European economy rooted in a green and inclusive revolution**

The transition to clean energy and sustainable economies presents significant opportunities for innovation, investment and job creation in the green sector. Disability inclusion should be integral to these new avenues. By prioritizing accessibility and inclusivity within the green economy, Europe can boost the competitiveness of its industries while ensuring that no one is left behind. This green industrial revolution aims to develop viable markets for sustainable, inclusive products, services, and

technologies. Key strategies like relocalisation, upcycling, recycling, and fostering a circular economy will be crucial to achieving these goals. For example, integrating disability inclusion into assistive device production could reduce waste by enabling better reuse of materials, contributing to a more sustainable and circular economy.

EU funding for climate and green initiatives must prioritize disability inclusion, especially in key areas like transport, infrastructure, energy, education, and lifelong learning for green skills, as well as adaptation and mitigation efforts. This inclusive approach should mirror successful models, such as those adopted for the European Structural and Investment Funds or in regards to public procurement. Support for the private sector and small businesses should also incorporate accessibility and inclusion principles. EU-backed innovation and the development of clean-energy and sustainable products must be designed for persons with disabilities, particularly considering children, women and older persons with disabilities. Inclusive and sustainable design not only promotes equality but also fuels innovation, creating products and technologies that strengthen resilience and build a sustainable future for all.

Finally, European consumers with disabilities deserve the same freedom to choose green products, services and technologies as their non-disabled counterparts, empowering them to be active actors in sustainable consumption. Currently, however, accessibility barriers often restrict this choice—whether it's using public transport, purchasing sustainable goods, or accessing recycling and repair services. Additionally, the higher cost of living and affordability challenges faced by many persons with disabilities further limit their options, underscoring the need for inclusive design and affordability in green products, services and technologies to ensure no one is left behind in the shift toward sustainability.

### **Education and skills acquisition for the green economy**

Education and skills development are crucial for ensuring that persons with disabilities can fully participate in the green transition. This ought to be adequately reflected in several EU instruments dedicated to equipping the European labour force to these new skills.

The Green Deal Industrial Plan must prioritize funding for education, lifelong learning and job training that prepares students and workers with disabilities for roles in the sustainable, green and circular economies. The Net-Zero Industry Act, in particular, provides an opportunity to focus on inclusive lifelong learning through the Net-Zero Europe Platform, which will establish Net-Zero Industry Academies. These academies should prioritize training on net-zero technologies for workers with disabilities, with special attention to young women and women with disabilities. Such an approach should also be adopted within the Social Climate Fund.

## **EU international action**

The EU, as one of the world's leading aid donors, has the responsibility to ensure that its international actions, including those addressing climate change, are inclusive of persons with disabilities. By applying existing disability inclusion principles to its international legislation, funding, and initiatives, the EU can set a global standard for disability-inclusive climate action. This means integrating accessibility and inclusivity into all stages of climate projects—from planning and funding to implementation and evaluation. Such an approach will not only empower persons with disabilities living in the Global South to participate in and benefit from climate solutions but will also enhance the overall effectiveness and reach of EU-funded projects in addressing the global climate crisis.

### **Recommendations:**

- Enforce and expand disability-inclusive provisions in EU climate policies, initiatives and funds, mainstreaming inclusion and accessibility in the green transition, like already done in the like in the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Charging Regulation (AFIR) and the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD) or taking a comprehensive approach as done for the Structural Funds.
- Allocate EU funds to inclusive green economy projects, supporting accessible products, services, technologies, transport, infrastructure, education and lifelong learning.
- Embed disability inclusion in EU's international climate actions to set a global standard and enhance project reach and effectiveness.

## **Financing disability-inclusive climate action at international and European levels**

Ensuring that persons with disabilities and their representative organisations can directly access dedicated climate finance is a pre-condition to building inclusive futures. It should go both ways: climate funding should be disability-inclusive, and disability funding should address climate change. It is vital to secure climate funding that includes disability rights and secure participation of OPDs. New funds must be invested without drawing from existing resources, guaranteeing targeted and specific funding for persons with disabilities.

Finally, it must be stressed again that integrating disability inclusion will improve climate action and foster sustainable resilience throughout society. When disability inclusion is prioritized, systems and processes become more efficient and beneficial for all individuals, not solely those with disabilities. Investing in disability-inclusive climate action represents a judicious use of taxpayer money.

### **Recommendations:**

- Ensure that disability inclusion and accessibility are core principles to climate funding allocation, while also addressing climate change within disability funding, investing new resources without diverting from existing ones.

## Recommendations to the Disability Movement and its allyship

A few sectors are ahead of mainstreaming disability inclusion and the rights of persons with disabilities. The adopted approach and existing tools should be taken as good practice for inspiration, if not taken on board as directly relevant. For instance, in the DRM/DRR sector, the Sendai Framework is already disability inclusive and the ideal tool that should be applied for much of climate adaptation. Existing initiatives, such as the Executive Action Plan 2023-2027 for early warnings for all<sup>27</sup> and the Making Cities Resilient 2030 Initiative<sup>28</sup>, should be promoted to climate action stakeholders. The purpose is to use what already exist and not reinvent the wheel.

### Strengthen the Disability Movement advocacy on climate action

#### Building the capacities of persons with disabilities and their representative organisations on disability-inclusive climate action

Building the capacities of persons with disabilities and their representative collectives and organisations is essential to ensuring meaningful participation in climate efforts. This is about getting the most of initiatives such as the Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) and alike at European levels, which aims to empower all members of society to engage in climate action. This includes six key elements: climate change education, public awareness, training, public participation, public access to information and international cooperation.

This should also take the form of designing and publicising sensitisation and training materials to make grassroots climate campaigning more accessible and inclusive of persons with disabilities a priority. Additionally, drafting and publishing engaging documentation on disability inclusion and climate change, along with organizing local, national and European discussion forums, will further support these efforts. For instance, a picture competition showcasing the impact of climate change on persons

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<sup>27</sup> United Nations, Early Warnings for All, 2024, <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/early-warnings-for-all>, [Accessed on 29 October 2024]

<sup>28</sup> United Nations Disaster Risk Reduction, Making Cities Resilient 2030 - My city is getting ready. Is yours?, 2024, <https://mcr2030.undrr.org/>, [Accessed on 29 October 2024]

with disabilities aims to visually convey the movement's message and go beyond mere words.

**Recommendations:**

- Develop and disseminate sensitisation and training materials for grassroots climate campaigning, emphasizing disability inclusion and organizing forums for discussion.

**Making climate action a priority in the work of the Disability Movement**

Although the disability movement faces numerous competing advocacy priorities and limited resources, it is important to remember that all of these priorities are deeply connected to climate action. Climate change threatens to undo the hard-earned progress made over the past decades.

To advocate for inclusive futures, it is crucial to have frontline disability and climate justice activists, with a focus on prioritising youth with disabilities, as they will be the generation facing the consequences of climate change. Also, leadership must come from those most impacted, ensuring their voices and experiences guide the way forward.

This is about enhancing the leadership of the Disability Movement on climate action, as much as prioritising climate change in OPDs initiatives and work plans, while promoting resources to be allocated to OPDs to work on this topic.

**Recommendations:**

- Take the conscious decision in prioritising climate action, since climate change threatens hard-won progress made in human and disability rights.
- Encourage the development of frontline disability and climate justice activists, emphasizing the role of the next generation with disabilities.

**Partnerships and solidarity**

**Search for “cross-movement solidarity”<sup>29</sup> and partner with the climate justice movement**

The disability movement should seek opportunities for “cross-movement solidarity” by partnering with its ecosystem of disability-friendly organisations. At all governance levels, the disability movement should establish partnerships with other civil society and non-governmental organisations working for and with persons with disabilities and OPDs.

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<sup>29</sup> Sins Invalid, 10 Principles of Disability Justice, 2015

This would leverage the disability movement call for disability inclusive climate action and bring in additional resources.

Especially, the disability movement should partner with the climate justice movement. Since it is the main civil society-based counterpart of climate decision makers, the call for inclusive climate action will be amplified. This would also create space to explore how climate and social justice can be practically intertwined with one another. OPDs and other civil society and non-governmental organisations working for and with persons with disabilities should support the climate justice movement in becoming more accessible and inclusive for everyone's benefit. This should also be about advocating for the development of a people's social justice and human right based climate action agenda.

Conversely, the climate movement should strengthen and deepen its partnership with the disability movement, recognizing that climate and social justice are two sides of the same coin and must be addressed together. Genuine collaboration between these movements can help ensure that climate actions are inclusive and truly representative of all communities, including of persons with disabilities and their families. To achieve this, the climate movement needs to actively improve accessibility and inclusion for activists with disabilities, creating spaces where they can fully participate, contribute, and lead.

Working together, the climate and disability movements can drive a more just, resilient, and equitable approach to tackling climate change that leaves no one behind.

### **Recommendations:**

- Establish partnerships between the disability movement and climate justice organizations to ensure disability-inclusive climate actions that benefit all communities, including persons with disabilities and their families.
- Improve disability inclusion and accessibility in the climate movement.

### **Get climate action prioritised in the global disability agenda**

Prioritising climate change within disability legislation and initiatives is essential to ensure that the unique needs and challenges faced by persons with disabilities are adequately addressed in climate policies and actions. This is a two-way approach: including climate action in disability legislation, and conversely, mainstreaming the rights of persons with disabilities in climate action initiatives. This would support efforts of OPDs and other disability allied organisations to promote inclusive strategies that safeguard the rights of persons with disabilities in the face of environmental challenges. This may for instance be about putting climate

action as a priority topic at the agenda of the upcoming 2025 Global Disability Summit (GDS) or in the upcoming mid-term review of the EU's Union of Equality: Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030.

**Recommendations:**

- Include climate action into the global and European disability agenda, such as prioritizing it at the 2025 Global Disability Summit or in the upcoming mid-term review of the EU's Union of Equality: Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030.

**Solidarity with persons with disabilities of the Global South**

Recalling the historical responsibility for greenhouse gas emissions of industrialised countries, standing in solidarity with persons with disabilities and their representative organisations in the Global South is levelling up this moment. It is crucial to amplify their voices and address the specific challenges they face in relation to climate change and social inequality. This support fosters a collaborative approach that ensures their rights are included in international discussions and policies, ultimately promoting equity and justice for all persons with disabilities.

**Recommendations:**

- Advocate for the mainstreaming of disability inclusion in international and European legislation, initiatives and funding mechanisms of international cooperation and aid.

**Explore new narratives**

“The root causes of oppression [of human beings and persons with disabilities], and the root causes of climate breakdown, have a lot [in common](#).”<sup>30</sup> This fight for climate and social justice is too big to be won over the same old arguments. Creating new narratives for what comes next is just crucial. Adopting an approach that prioritises interdependence and intersectionality, while drawing inspiration from ecofeminism, encourages a more inclusive and holistic understanding of the interconnected issues facing our society composed of various persons with disabilities and the environment. Exploring the unique experience and perspectives of persons with disabilities, especially of girls, women and

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<sup>30</sup> Kelly-Costello, Aine, Where disability and climate meet - Disabled wisdom and an invitation to community, In: Disability Debrief, 2023, <https://www.disabilitydebrief.org/debrief/climate-invitation/>, [Accessed on 3 October 2024]

care takers, have on the care sector would probably bring wisdom to fuel change. The future of climate action shall not be eco-ableist<sup>31</sup>.

**Recommendations:**

- Research and document emerging practices exploring interdependence and intersectionality between climate change and rights of persons with disabilities on the climate and social justice nexus.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, persons with disabilities in their diversity are significantly impacted by climate change, often facing eco-ableist responses that further marginalise their experiences and threatens the hard-earned progress made on the human and disability rights front over the past decades. The absence of disability inclusion at the national level reflects a similar neglect at the European and international stages, where bilateral and multilateral climate initiatives have failed to adequately address the rights of persons with disabilities. As the adverse effects of climate change intensify, all stakeholders, especially governments and other decision makers, civil society, NGOs and donors, must level up to include disability rights in climate action. Now is the time for urgent and inclusive efforts, ensuring that the climate revolution encompasses all voices, particularly those of persons with disabilities facing intersectional discrimination. Responding to climate change with inclusive and green solutions is an opportunity to build new economic models and societies. The climate revolution must be inclusive!

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<sup>31</sup> Friends of the Earth Scotland, Eco Ableism and the Climate Movement, 2024 <https://foe.scot/eco-ableism-and-the-climate-movement/?ref=disabilitydebrief.org>, [Accessed on 6 October 2024]

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## Annex 1: EDF online survey

### Introduction to the survey

Climate change is one of the most significant threats to development and quality of living today. Persons with disabilities are at particular risk, representing the most vulnerable minority group impacted by climate change. To advocate for more effective and inclusive climate action, we need to understand what is happening at the national level. Your participation in this survey is crucial. By taking part, you will not only contribute valuable insights but also gain awareness about your country's stance on disability-inclusive climate action and discover ways to start making a difference!

### About the survey

#### **What? A review covering 53 European and Central Asian countries**

A review to find out how the rights of persons with disabilities have been included in climate change, humanitarian and disaster risk reduction (DRR) related legislation and plans in the 53 European and Central Asian countries of the WHO European region.

#### **Why? Evidence gaps to advocate policy markers at national, European and international levels**

The review findings will be used for advocating for disability inclusive climate action in the region. They will also be shared during the upcoming United Nations Climate Change Conference, also called COP 29, taking place in Baku on 11-22 November 2024.

The findings will be compiled in a set of deliverables consisting of:

- Country Profile with gathered information about disability-inclusive climate action
- A Policy Paper and Brief summarising key findings, priority gaps and recommendations for the region
- A toolkit collecting tools, guidance and resources to be used by practitioners and policy-makers – you!

#### **By whom? IDA and EDF are joining forces!**

The International Disability Alliance (IDA) and the European Disability Forum (EDF) launched this survey.

#### **For whom? OPD, national focal points and anyone interested!**

Respondents may be representatives of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), Sendai Framework National Focal Points, climate change activists, disability rights advocates, and anyone interesting to contribute.

## How? An online survey to complete by 3 September COB

- Filling in this survey should take 1,5 hours maximum.
- MS forms is an accessible tool. In case you face accessibility issues, alternative formats are nonetheless available upon request to Consultant Nadège Riche.
- All answers will be treated anonymously.

## Instructions to fill in the survey

### STEP 1: Sources to download legislations:

- National legislations:
  - Are usually available on a dedicated Government or Parliament websites.
  - This registry is dedicated to climate change legislations:  
<https://climate-laws.org/search?q=belgium>
- Additional but fragmented information can be found in:
  - The **State Parties Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)** show each country's efforts to reduce national emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change against the United Nations Framework on Climate Change. A country registry is available online here: <https://unfccc.int/NDCREG>.
  - **SDG 13 dedicated section in the State's Voluntary National Review (VNR)** to Agenda 2023 and SDGs. A country registry is available online here:  
<https://hlpf.un.org/countries>
  - **Article 11 dedicated section in CRPD State and Alternative Reports.** A country registry is available online here:  
[https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/TreatyBodyExternal/Countries.aspx](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/TreatyBodyExternal/Countries.aspx)
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may be available online here:

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## **STEP 2: Download your national legislation**

- **Find out, download and have at hands your national laws, policies, strategies and actions plans related to:**
- Climate change:
  - Ex: the French law no. 2021-1104 of 22 August 2021 on combating climate change and building resilience to its effects
  - Ex: The Bosnia and Herzegovina National Adaptation Plan (NAP)
  - Ex: some countries call them the National Mitigation Plan (NMP) or National Climate Change Plan (NCCP)
- Disaster risk management and reduction (DRM/DRR):
  - Ex: the Swiss Federal Law 520.1 on Civil Protection System and Protection & Support Service dated 4th October 2002 (as of 2nd December 2003)
- Disability:
  - Ex: The Belgian Federal Disability Action Plan (2021-2024)

## **STEP 3: Scan your national legislations to answer each question**

- Scan the document using the search option
- Use key words such as "disability", "vulnerable" or "human rights", or any others that you find relevant
- Identify and translate the relevant provisions into English using free online tools such as DeepL or Google Translate
- Examples of contributions:
  - In its 2021 NDC, Switzerland affirms its commitment to human rights in climate action. There are however no references to persons with disabilities and vulnerable groups in Acts, strategies and action plans.

- In the Belgian national plan for resilience and recovery (June 2021) for example, that was adopted after the COVID 19 pandemic, there are multiple references to persons with disabilities, in the sections regarding employment, education, transport, housing, reception structures. There is also a reference to women with disabilities and employment. In the other more general DRM and DRR laws and policies, disability is not specifically mentioned.
- You are likely to spend time in questions 1 to 12, while going much faster until the end.

## Survey

### Respondent Information

Name (optional, if you would like to be contacted in case your country is selected as a potential good practice):

E-mail (optional, if you would like to be contacted in case your country is selected as a potential good practice):

Country (mandatory): Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and Uzbekistan.

### Questionnaire

- 1) Are there references to disability in your country's national laws, policies, strategies or plans related to climate change?
  - a) Yes - Please specify in which documents and translate into English and paste the disability references: \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) No
  - c) I do not know

- 2) Are there references to disability in your country's national laws, policies, strategies or plans related to humanitarian action, and/or disaster risk management (DRM) and disaster risk reduction (DRR)?
- a) Yes - Please specify in which documents and translate into English and paste the disability references: \_\_\_\_\_
- b) No
- c) I do not know
- 3) Are there references to climate change in your country's national disability laws, policies, strategies or plans?
- a) Yes - Please specify in which documents and translate into English and paste the disability references: \_\_\_\_\_
- b) No
- c) I do not know
- 4) Are there references to humanitarian action, and/or disaster risk management (DRM) and reduction (DRR) in your country's national disability laws, policies, strategies or plans?
- a) Yes - Please specify in which documents and translate into English and paste the disability references: \_\_\_\_\_
- b) No
- c) I do not know
- 5) In your country's laws, policies, strategies and plans, are there any provisions to ensure that infrastructures construction or renovation boosted by climate change related measures are made accessible to persons with disabilities?
- a) Yes (please specify in which documents and translate into English and paste the disability references: \_\_\_\_\_)
- b) No
- c) I do not know
- 6) In your country's laws, policies, strategies and plans, are there any provisions to ensure that public transportation boosted by climate change related measures are made accessible to persons with disabilities?

- a) Yes (please specify in which documents and translate into English and paste the disability references: \_\_\_\_\_)
  - b) No
  - c) I do not know
- 7) In your country's laws, policies, strategies and plans, are there any provisions to ensure access for workers with disabilities to green, sustainability and alike sectors created by climate change?
- a) Yes (please specify in which documents and translate into English and paste the disability references: \_\_\_\_\_)
  - b) No
  - c) I do not know
- 8) In your country's laws, policies, strategies and plans, are there any provisions to ensure for learners with disabilities to acquire climate action related skills? This is for instance accessing technical and vocation education and training on local and circular economy, recycling, etc.
- a) Yes (please specify in which documents and translate into English and paste the disability references: \_\_\_\_\_)
  - b) No
  - c) I do not know
- 9) In your country's laws, policies, strategies and plans, are there any provisions to ensure social protection of persons with disabilities and their families and care takers in case of climate change related disasters?
- a) Yes (please specify in which documents and translate into English and paste the disability references: \_\_\_\_\_)
  - b) No
  - c) I do not know
- 10) In your country's laws, policies, strategies and plans, are there any provisions to mitigate or adapt livelihoods of persons with disabilities and their families and care takers due to climate change effects or disasters?

- a) Yes (please specify in which documents and translate into English and paste the disability references: \_\_\_\_\_)
  - b) No
  - c) I do not know
- 11) In your country's laws, policies, strategies and plans, are there any provisions specifically relating to how climate change specifically affects women and girls with disabilities?
- a) Yes (please specify in which documents and translate into English and paste the disability references: \_\_\_\_\_)
  - b) No
  - c) I do not know
- 12) Are Organizations of Persons with Disabilities involved in decision-making related to climate action and change related policy processes?
- a) Always (please provide specific examples: \_\_\_\_\_)
  - b) Sometimes (please provide specific examples: \_\_\_\_\_)
  - c) Never
- 13) Are agencies in your country collecting disability data for climate change, humanitarian action or disaster risk reduction, response and recovery interventions?
- a) Yes (if collected, please provide specific examples and explain how the data is used:  
\_\_\_\_\_)
  - b) No
  - c) I do not know
- 14) Has your country established a committee or a focal point for disability inclusion in the Ministry responsible for climate change, humanitarian action and/or disaster risk management and reduction (DRM/DRR)?
- a) Yes (please provide specific examples: \_\_\_\_\_)
  - b) No (please provide specific examples: \_\_\_\_\_)
  - c) I do not know

- 15) Has your country included persons with disabilities and organisations representing them in the accountability mechanisms of the climate change, humanitarian and/or DRM/DRR areas?
- a) Yes (please provide specific examples: \_\_\_\_\_)
  - b) No (please provide specific examples: \_\_\_\_\_)
  - c) I do not know
- 16) Has your country dedicated funding budget of scheme to implement disability-inclusive climate change programmes or actions?
- a) Yes (please provide specific examples: \_\_\_\_\_)
  - b) No (please provide specific examples: \_\_\_\_\_)
  - c) I do not know
- 17) Has your country established humanitarian and/or development aid to support mitigation, adaptation as well as disaster preparedness, response and recovery in developing countries?
- a) Yes (please provide specific examples: \_\_\_\_\_)
  - b) No (please provide specific examples: \_\_\_\_\_)
  - c) I do not know
- 18) Do you know of any tools and guidance available for disability-inclusive climate action?
- a) Yes (please provide information and link where we can download the documents: \_\_\_\_\_)
  - b) No
  - c) I do not know
- 19) Would you like to share anything else with us?
- a) Yes (please write here: \_\_\_\_\_)
  - b) No

### **Conclusion**

Thank you for valuable time and participation in this survey.

For further information or if you would like to suggest any resource or including anyone else from your country in this survey, please contact Consultant Nadège Riche.

## Annex 2: Linkages between this EDF report and CBM assessment

<b>This EDF report</b>	<b>Linkages with CBM assessment/ WHO health equity report target action points</b>
Integrating disability inclusion in national climate/ humanitarian/ DRR strategy	6
Setting actions that are specific to the climate/ humanitarian/ DRR sector in national disability strategies and plans	7
Gender-sensitive actions that target persons with disabilities	15
Establishing a committee or a focal point in the respective Ministry for disability inclusion	8
Integrating disability inclusion in the accountability mechanism of the climate/ humanitarian/ DRR sector	9
Creating a monitoring and evaluation plan for disability inclusion	18
Dedicated funding or financing budget or scheme for disability-inclusive climate action	New
Making international cooperation more effective by increasing funding to address inequalities for persons with disabilities	5
Social protection for persons with disabilities	11
Livelihood protection for persons with disabilities	22
Measures to support access to the world of work for persons with disabilities	New
Measures to support access to climate action related skills (ex: TVET, green skills)	New
Making infrastructures accessible for persons with disabilities	New
Making transportation accessible for persons with disabilities	New
Engaging with persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, especially involving	14 and 1

<b>This EDF report</b>	<b>Linkages with CBM assessment/ WHO health equity report target action points</b>
persons with disabilities in the creation of the climate change/ climate action plan	
Engaging persons with disabilities in research and including them in the climate/ humanitarian/ DRR research workforce	16



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