

FROM WORDS TO ACTIONS

SHEDDING LIGHT ON THE S.H.I.F.T.
TOWARDS MEANINGFUL INCLUSION IN EUROPE



Date of publication: December 2021
© COFACE Families Europe

Graphic design: 3milesup.org
Cover page illustration: Dagmar Cohnen



COFACE Families Europe is supported by the EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation "EaSI" (2014-2020). This document is produced with the support of the European Commission but does not necessarily express its views. For further information, please consult: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/easi>

Table of contents

S.H.I.F.T. objectives - setting our vision for the future	5
Forewords	6
What is S.H.I.F.T.?	8
Why do it now?	9
Where is the SHIFT happening?	10
How did we select the 45 practices?	10
What is in the report?	11
What did we find out?	12
S•UPPORT	13
H•UMAN RIGHTS	23
I•NDEPENDENCE	33
F•AMILIES	43
T•RANSITION	53
Conclusion	63
Annex: United Nations CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES	64



COFACE Families Europe is a pluralistic network of civil society associations representing the interests of all families without discrimination. With 50+ member organisations in 23 countries, COFACE Families Europe represents more than 25 million families in Europe. It advocates at the European level for policies of non-discrimination and equal opportunities between persons and between family forms, and specifically supports policies aimed at increasing equality between women and men, with a special focus on reconciliation between work, care and family life. COFACE is supported under the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI).



The COFACE Disability platform for the rights of persons with disabilities and their families was founded in 1998 to improve the representativeness of people with disabilities and their families at national and European level. Its mandate is to help persons with disabilities to enjoy their rights throughout the life cycle and in particular within their family context. COFACE Disability fights for sufficient, appropriate care provision and community-based services (close-to-home, in-home help services) for people with support needs in all Member States, as well as for resources, assistance and provision to be harmonised within the EU.

More information please contact:

Camille Roux,
Policy and Advocacy Officer:
croux@coface-eu.org

S.H.I.F.T. objectives - setting our vision for the future



SUPPORT

The disability sector is structured in order to achieve the full inclusion of persons with disabilities in society, avoiding segregated settings in all areas of life and offering needs-based and evidence based options



HUMAN RIGHTS

Persons with disabilities are aware of their rights and they exercise them, by deciding for themselves in every area of life.



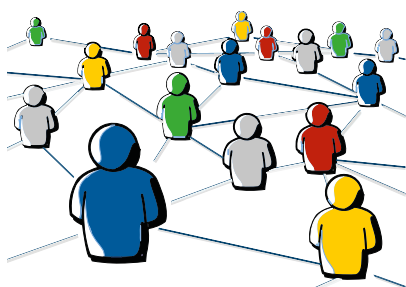
INDEPENDENCE

The mainstream sector is re-shaped to be inclusive in all its services that are available to the general public, the persons with disabilities can choose between different options, according to their needs and wishes.



FAMILIES

Families where a member has disabilities are empowered, enjoy a stronger social protection, and are fully included in society. Persons with disabilities enjoy their right to found their own family.



TRANSITION

The whole society embraces the value of inclusion, persons with disabilities and their families participate actively in every area of life as their equal opportunities are promoted and respected.

Forewords

A strong Social Europe is about people and their well-being. In the European Union we are committed to build equal societies where all are valued and free from discrimination; and where the highest standards in working conditions and broad social protection are the norm.

In many respects, we already have a unique social and economic model which aims to bring opportunities for all, regardless of their sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. Indeed the Union's ambition is to achieve a Union of Equality and we have developed a series of equality strategies to achieve this goal.

This is also the promise of the European Pillar of Social Rights proclaimed by the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission in 2017. The 20 principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights are the compass guiding us towards a strong Social Europe and set the vision for our new 'social rulebook'. The Action Plan launched in 2021 includes key initiatives to implement the Social Pillar principles, including the Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030 adopted in March 2021.

The S.H.I.F.T. report presents examples of how to contribute to the equality and inclusion of persons with disabilities and their families. With our Disability Rights Strategy we want precisely to support the policy and legislative developments that are needed so that persons with disabilities and their families can fully and equally participate in all areas of life, focusing on key dimensions of choice, participation and equality, encompassing: accessibility; independent living, community and family-based services; inclusive education; access to quality jobs; and adequate social protection.

EU funds, notably under the Cohesion Policy and the Recovery and Resilience Facility, also have a crucial role to play in supporting Member States' action in these areas and help achieve a more equal and inclusive Europe. This is evident from some of the practices in this S.H.I.F.T. report, which already use these funds.



Helena Dalli
European Commissioner for Equality



Nicolas Schmit
European Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights

We know that every human being has fundamental rights and freedoms and must be able to enjoy them, whether they are young or old, regardless of their gender, their health and their possible need for assistance to exercise their rights.

However, as we also know, and as the **COFACE Disability Platform for the rights of persons with disabilities and their families** has witnessed, too many forms of discrimination persist here and there, including against people with disabilities or people with an illness, older persons, their families and their carers.

Nonetheless, at the same time, movements towards inclusion are emerging. Places are adapting to the differences of all people, specific answers are brought to those who need them. Places exist where rights and freedoms are conjugated in the present, for all. It is important to make them known; they can be a source of inspiration. COFACE's Disability Platform has selected 45 initiatives among many others, based on the words: **S**upport, **H**uman rights, **I**ndependence, **F**amilies, societal **T**ransition. Words that fit together to form the word **S.H.I.F.T.**, named as the key on our computer keyboards to switch from lower case to upper case, and which illustrates for us the transition to "upper case lives" – *des vies majuscules* – for all those who have been excluded for too long.

So, S.H.I.F.T. is like a song whose words would pass from one ear to another, from one person to another, from one society to another.

S, H, I, F, T, like a song to chant all in chorus these important words: Support, Human Rights, Independence, Families, Transition.... A song for the **Support** adapted whenever necessary, the guarantee of the exercise of **Human Rights**, the **Independence** that allows people to choose, the possibility of founding a **Family**, of self-determination and of participating with equal opportunities in a society in **Transition**.

We all have the same rights.

People with disabilities and their families have the same rights as other people.

People with disabilities and their families must live with others.

This is not done everywhere.

But there are places where people with disabilities live with others.

S.H.I.F.T. shows examples.

S.H.I.F.T. is like an easy-to-read-and-understand song to say the important words:

Support: means to help someone who needs help
Human Rights: means that all people are free and equal throughout their lives.
Independence: means that the person does things alone. And also when they decide alone.
Families: means that the families of people with disabilities may have needs, questions.
Transition: means when life or society changes.



Chantal Bruno
COFACE Disability Platform Co-president

What is S.H.I.F.T.?

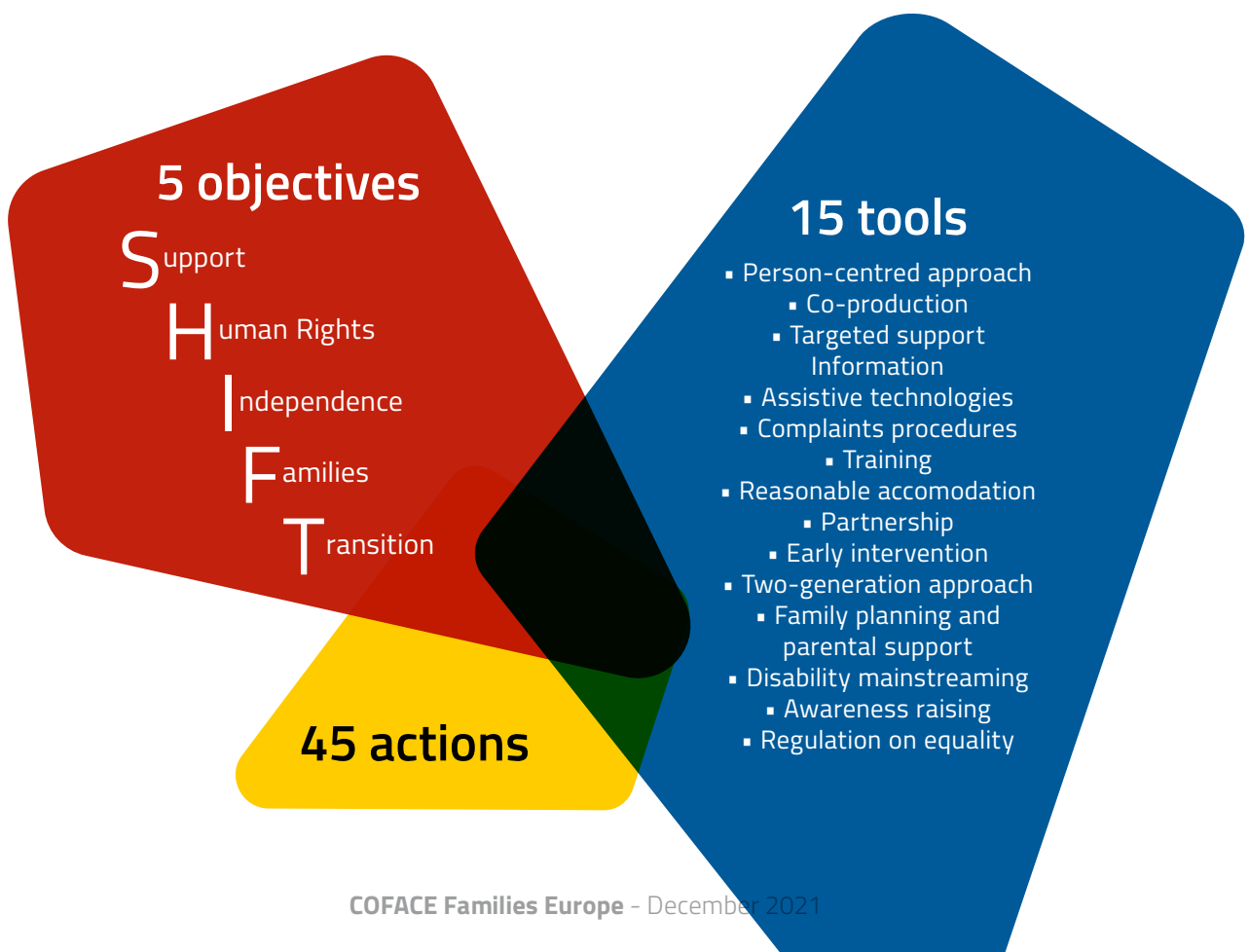
The S.H.I.F.T. guide was co-produced by the COFACE Secretariat and the members of the COFACE Disability Platform in 2019 to put into words our common vision of the path towards the meaningful inclusion of persons with disabilities and their families. Thanks to the first-hand expertise of our members, the 5 objectives, 15 tools and 45 actions of S.H.I.F.T. were from the outset enshrined in the experience of persons with disabilities and their families in Europe, represented in the discussion by our specialised members and grounded in the COFACE whole-family, whole-society vision of the transition towards inclusive societies.

The guide is available in 5 languages (English, French, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish), and in French and English Easy-To-Read on the COFACE website (www.coface-eu.org).

For the last two years, S.H.I.F.T. has guided the work of the COFACE Disability Platform and served as compass to mainstream disability rights in all COFACE's work. This mainstreaming is the internal

implementation of our belief that the transition requires actions from every part of society at every level, questioning the values and stereotypes, preconceptions from the policy field to the way we consume and spend our leisure time... and it can be daunting, there is no point in denying this. However, daunting does not mean impossible. COFACE and its members know this, since we have seen the shift towards inclusive societies for persons with disabilities and their families happening in practice across Europe in different communities.

Hence, members of the COFACE Disability Platform decided to organise this reality-check by launching a public collection of practices to give examples of S.H.I.F.T. actions currently underway in different EU countries. Over the last months, we have collected and analysed practices, comparing them with the actions and tools in the S.H.I.F.T. guide, and we are happy to present to you the result of this work. But first, some background is needed to understand the purpose and remit of this report.



Why do it now?



Political momentum

The internal impulse and request for this report is also the result of a willingness to take S.H.I.F.T. to the next level and to strengthen its relevance regarding the broader disability rights agenda.

S.H.I.F.T. has been created to be fully in line with COFACE's values, international and European standards. The guide is **fully compliant with the objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** that have now entered in the final decade of their implementation. It made sense then to check again the relevance of the actions in this context, **highlighting practices carried out on the ground to advance this collective global agenda in a fully inclusive way.**

While the SDGs are framing S.H.I.F.T., **the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) is guiding it.** 2021 marked the 10-year anniversary of the ratification of the Convention by the EU and 2022 will be the year of the second review of the EU by the UNCRPD Committee. **The S.H.I.F.T. report, coming in the middle of this process, applies the family lens to this agenda.**

At the EU level, both the disability rights and the social inclusion agendas have taken important steps forward. The **new European Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030 (the Strategy) published in March 2021 has created a new framework for the implementation of the UNCRPD in Europe** by aiming to reflect and advance all the aspects of the Convention within the remaining years of the Sustainable Development agenda. The new Strategy has influenced the drafting of this report since COFACE wanted to integrate the findings and S.H.I.F.T. actions within the broader European policy agenda – the intention is to apply the S.H.I.F.T. lens to this unfolding Strategy and contribute to its implementation, by **highlighting how the different practices collected could fit under the areas of action that the Strategy is aiming to influence.**

In addition to the impetus given by the EU and global policy agenda, this report also builds on the impetus at the level of communities, trying to make their work visible and encourage people across Europe to connect, find common ground, and inspire each other.

Social relevance

The COVID-19 crisis that is still shaking up the world has shaken our societies to the core and has had an influence on the way we envision our life in society. While this report is not trying to address the special challenges that arose from the crisis, the reality of this period needs to be taken into account. Persons with disabilities and their families have been disproportionately hit by the events - and the consequences will be felt for years to come. We want to use this opportunity to acknowledge the work and commitment of all those who have been working prior, during and after the crisis to make **sure that persons with disabilities and their families are not forgotten and left behind in the above-mentioned agendas** and to mitigate, sometimes at personal costs, the effect that this crisis has had on all.

The situation can no longer be ignored and this report aims **to give concrete elements to boost policies and practices which can inspire knowledge transfer across countries, as well as disability mainstreaming across all areas of policy for the advancement of a fully inclusive Europe.**

The combined S.H.I.F.T. actions and tools have the potential to contribute to catalysing this movement by supporting the development of a society that provides for everyone the right amount of **Support**, fully based on **Human Rights**, strengthening **Independence**, providing and including all **Families** and boosting the societal **Transition**.

Taking this S.H.I.F.T. lens as a starting point, the report looks at some building blocks for inclusive societies through practices and projects in order to raise awareness, strengthen the discussion and collaboration between the different practitioners bringing about the shift towards inclusive societies through their daily work.

Where is the SHIFT happening?

We knew that the S.H.I.F.T. was already on the move throughout Europe, as we are working on a daily basis with COFACE members and partners implementing it. For the purpose of this stock-taking exercise, we needed to go further and consult local communities on their actions for inclusive societies, and therefore decided to launch a European survey from May to July 2021. The survey was launched during a public webinar organised by COFACE Families Europe in the presence of the UN Special Rapporteur for the Rights of Persons with disabilities, Gerard Quinn, Fundamental Rights Agency specialist Robert-Jan Uhl, EU-Representative and self-advocate for Nous Aussi, Florence Jablonsky and Ulrike Neufang, Vice-chair of the EU Social Protection Committee. Since the S.H.I.F.T. can (and should) be implemented by everyone, the survey was a means for COFACE to help disseminate the principles of S.H.I.F.T. more widely and to **give the opportunity to everyone to submit practices that they think contribute to**

inclusive societies for persons with disabilities. In other words, the S.H.I.F.T. can be anywhere and the survey was the tool we chose to reach out to families and professionals on existing dynamics of inclusion and disability rights. Additionally, to the survey, **we activated our networks across Europe to help identify practices, counting on the support of our members and partners.**

Over the summer months we conducted these two streams of work in parallel, **gathering practices from all over Europe and reviewing them against our S.H.I.F.T. lens and COFACE values.** Through this exercise, we gathered responses from 20+ European countries, and from a wide range of stakeholders from local to international level. The contacts and engagement through our network was equally fruitful. The two approaches combined allowed us to select 45 practices representing the concrete application of the 45 actions of the S.H.I.F.T. guide.

How did we select the 45 practices?

The first criterion was that the practices selected **should be fully in line with the values of COFACE and the specific values of the S.H.I.F.T. guide**, meaning that they all aim at shifting society towards the meaningful inclusion of persons with disabilities, their families and their carers. The practices and projects in this report **come from a great variety of stakeholders, following the core value of S.H.I.F.T. that the transition is a whole-family, whole-society process** where everyone has the potential to join the movement and #BeTheSHIFT. Hence, it was important to have this variety represented in the final selection of practices, with a real mix of practitioners including families, NGOs, public authorities, municipalities, researchers, international agencies and projects, companies and more.

Secondly, **we wanted to highlight practices that were shareable, scalable so that they could inspire others**

to join the S.H.I.F.T. movement whether they concern a new technique or approach to service provision, a new law or law-making process, a new construction or adaptation of a mainstream service. If it is fostering the meaningful and sustainable inclusion of persons with disabilities and their families it is S.H.I.F.T.-worthy.

Thirdly, we wanted to respect **European geographical diversity**, to stress that the S.H.I.F.T. is happening all across Europe. Some countries are more represented as we also balanced this diversity goal with the reality of the answers received through the survey and our networks.

Last, but not least, we decided to only select practices and projects that were in the **implementation phase or already implemented.** We received many ideas, practices, projects via the survey which were in pre-

implementation phase and very inspirational, and look forward to connecting with them in the near future to support their upscaling and transfer across countries.

Based on these criteria, we used the content of the responses received to evaluate them and see

how and if they corresponded to a S.H.I.F.T. action. **We selected 45 practices from 20+ countries, that were the closest to the S.H.I.F.T. action as possible, sometimes focusing on a specific sub-area of the S.H.I.F.T. action.** Of course, some S.H.I.F.T. actions are complex and multi-layered, and so were some of the practices collected.

What is in the report?

In this report you will find the result of this stocktaking exercise aiming at **showcasing how and where the S.H.I.F.T. is underway at this precise point in time from the perspective of a Civil Society network of family organisations across the EU.**

The selected practices have been matched with the relevant S.H.I.F.T. actions and have all been translated into **individual factsheets presenting a snapshot description** with links to go further (and we strongly encourage you to explore all of them!) as well as an **explanation of how the practice contributes to the S.H.I.F.T.** All factsheets have been thought to reflect the political and societal relevance of the S.H.I.F.T. movement. For the policy side, we have **matched all the practices with the most relevant articles of the UNCRPD and with the areas and sub-areas of**

action put forward by the European Commission in the European Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. For each practice, we **drafted a short tip section, addressed to everyone wanting to explore the content of the S.H.I.F.T. action further** and #BeTheSHIFT.

Hence, every person reading this report should find something inspirational on how to join, lead, and set up practices to foster the meaningful inclusion of persons with disabilities and their families. Some of the practices and approaches might be well-known, and some less known, but we hope that they will all inspire you as they have inspired us over the past months and that you will help us in spreading them broadly to advance the S.H.I.F.T. movement.

What did we find out?

More than the inspiration, this exercise helped us to identify trends and gaps in the path towards inclusion. First, we were delighted to be **reassured of the relevance of the S.H.I.F.T. actions** as they all found a match in the practices we received. However, for some of them the choices were plenty, **mostly concerning the actions on employment support**, while for other actions the search has been harder, which forced us to take another look at the S.H.I.F.T. actions and interpret them under the light of some existing practices. Internally, it broadened our understanding of all the steps that will be needed for inclusion, pushing us to consider the 45 actions under a new light.

Among the actions that were particularly difficult were concerning **legislations, such as the inclusion of Human Rights Education in the school curricula and the need to adopt and implement strong anti-discrimination legislation**. For both these actions we have found beginning of answers that we have decided to highlight as this report is as much about the journey as about the results.

The answers to the survey also highlighted the **different perceptions of what constitutes meaningful inclusion in Europe, as the understanding of the human rights model of disability still needs to be strengthened** and disseminated, hence our decision

to have the UNCRPD as an annex of this report.

Lastly, the **role and integration of families in the independent living agenda came strongly through in a number of practices**. This whole-family vision is the DNA of COFACE Families Europe and our advocacy call for years. Although we were not doubting its relevance, it is also inspiring to see that this approach implemented throughout Europe is yielding good results.

Of course, this is not meant to be a holistic exercise as it is based mainly on the survey responses we have received. So if by reading the report you think that one practice you know would have fit the action better, reach out to COFACE, we are always happy to hear about practices at the grassroots level!

Last, but not least, we want to thank all the people who took the time to answer the survey and to reach out to us about practices, policies and projects; thank everyone for the collaboration during the drafting phase of the factsheets and of course for all their work to achieve the meaningful inclusion of persons with disabilities and their families. We thank also all the survey respondents for submitting practices which have not been selected for the report, and we hope to find ways to link up in the future and collaborate to advance this agenda together.

SUPPORT
HUMAN RIGHTS
INDEPENDENCE
FAMILIES
TRANSITION



The disability sector is structured in order to achieve the full inclusion of persons with disabilities in society, avoiding segregated settings in all areas of life and offering needs-based and evidence-based options.



Designing and implementing a national deinstitutionalisation strategy – Greece



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Reform the disability sector, providing a spectrum of inclusion-oriented and community-based support services looking at the specific needs of persons with disabilities (including physical, sensorial, intellectual, psychosocial and severe disabilities) and of their families.



Description of the practice

Greece applied for European Commission Technical Assistance funding to support the government and stakeholders to complete a national Deinstitutionalisation (DI) reform. This included the development of a DI Strategy, Roadmap, and Action Plan; processes and methodologies to run and manage the DI programme; a communication and outreach plan for receiving communities; and trainings to support the DI process. The project received funding by DG REFORM. The European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD) and DG REFORM implemented it with the active collaboration of the Greek Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, public authorities, NGOs, service providers, experts and stakeholders representing different sectors in society including the three target groups of the reform: children (including children with disabilities), adults with disabilities, and older persons with support needs.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

This has provided a plan and tools for DI reforms to create support systems in the community for persons with disabilities. Its mix of tools (national policy objectives, plan and monitoring framework, methodologies, training materials and plans) will support the implementation of a country-wide deinstitutionalisation reform in Greece, under the leadership of the central government and in co-production. This will impact the way social support will be delivered to persons (children and adults) with disabilities. The project also developed communication actions and materials directed at different stakeholders that support awareness-raising on the rights of persons with disabilities to be included in the community.



Practitioner

European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD-European NGO) in cooperation with the European Commission (EU institution) working with the Greek Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (Public authority).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

Your country could also benefit from this technical assistance from the European Commission to develop a national strategic DI framework to be implemented country-wide – invite your members of parliament to ask your government if they plan any DI strategy with the support of the European Commission.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

This practice supports Article 8 “Awareness-raising”, Article 19 “Living independently and being included in the community”, Article 25 “Health”, and Article 28 “Adequate standard of living and social protection”.



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the sub-objectives “Developing independent living and reinforcing community-based services” and “Consolidating social protection systems” of the Strategy.



Supporting material

- [National DI strategy](#)
- [Roadmap for the implementation of the DI strategy](#)
- [Action plan accompanying the DI strategy](#)
- & more supporting documents are available on the [project webpage](#)



European standards to ensure the quality of social services for persons with disabilities – Lithuania



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Use the “European Quality Framework for Social Services” in the development and evaluation of services, including the respect of the users’ rights, participation and empowerment.



Description of the practice

The Valakupiai Rehabilitation Centre (VRC) in Lithuania offers medical and vocational rehabilitation, social services, and a driving school to persons with moderate and severe disabilities. The centre focuses on providing quality services which continuously evolve to better fit the needs of persons with disabilities. Community integration and independence are at the core of every service provided. A holistic approach is taken to care, with the mental and physical health, employment and education included. The VRC acts as a national coordinator of EQUASS (European Quality in Social Services) in Lithuania, broadening the assurance of quality services across the country, and is leading an ESF-funded project to implement the “European Quality Framework for Social Services” in 120 service providers over 5 years. It does so through supporting providers to achieve the EQUASS Assurance certification. EQUASS is an initiative of the European Platform for Rehabilitation (EPR) and service providers are audited according to the principles of Leadership, Staff, Rights, Ethics, Partnership, Participation, Person-centred approach, Comprehensiveness, Result-Oriented and Continuous improvement.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

The involvement of service providers is essential to the S.H.I.F.T. towards inclusive societies, to rethink the way we provide services to persons with disabilities and their families. The services of tomorrow must take a user centred approach, be community or family based, accessible, affordable and of quality. The harmonisation of the quality of services is also crucial, but it is unfortunately not a reality across the EU. By committing to implement the EQUASS, the social service providers commit to deliver services that correspond to standards agreed upon at the European Level. Using this model, organisations are able to provide quality services which support the inclusion of persons with disabilities in society.



Practitioner

The Valakupiai Rehabilitation Centre is a public body, member of the European Platform for Rehabilitation (EPR- European NGO).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

What is a quality service for you? Having services available in the community to support persons with disabilities and their families is important, but they must be of high quality and can be ensured through a number of criteria highlighted in the European Quality Framework for Social Services.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

The practice supports Article 26 “Habilitation and rehabilitation” and Article 28 “Adequate standard of living and social protection”.



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the sub-objectives “Developing independent living and reinforcing community-based services” and “Sustainable and equal access to healthcare” of the Strategy.



Supporting material

- [VRC website](#)
- [EPR website page on VRC](#)
- [EQUASS](#)
- [European Quality Framework for Social Services \(direct download\)](#)



Incubator to boost co-production and start-ups by persons with intellectual disabilities – Europe



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Invest in services innovation fostering a person-centred approach, and the co-production methodology involving persons with disabilities and their families as experts by experience.



Description of the practice

IN-CUBA is a cross-country collaboration aiming to create an incubator. An incubator is an organisation that helps new and start-up companies to develop by providing support services and enabling access to the resources they need. IN-CUBA offers support to adults with intellectual disabilities following a methodology based on co-production that boosts the development of ideas and projects to transform them into enterprises (considered in its widest sense).



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

IN-CUBA fosters social inclusion by developing an incubation methodology based on co-production addressed to people with intellectual disabilities. Working on co-productive approaches has highlighted the capacity of service users to become protagonists and have an active role, opening the doors to new possibilities and further developments. This opens up new opportunities for the development of people's employability and social inclusion, in the open job market, boosting their potential as (self-) entrepreneurs.



Practitioner

This Erasmus + project is coordinated by APEMH (NGO and COFACE Disability member) in Luxembourg with the support of ARFIE and it involves 6 other partners AMPANS (Spain), CADIAL (Italy); DeLork – HUBBIE (Belgium); FENACERCI (Portugal); Fondazione San Sebastiano Onlus (Italy); OpenGroup (Italy).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

Do you know what co-production is and how to include it your work? Go and check the IN-CUBA website to find out about the co-production method that can be implemented in the workplace and what are the benefits of it!



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

The practice supports Article 27 "Work and employment".



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the objective "Decent quality of life and living independently" especially the sub-objectives "Developing new skills for new jobs" and "Fostering access to quality and sustainable jobs" of the Strategy.



Supporting material

- [In-Cuba Project Webpage](#)
- [IN-CUBA Outputs](#)
- [IN-CUBA Learning Materials](#)



Putting agency at the core of a day centre's activities – Bulgaria



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Require day care centres to structure their activities in inclusive community settings.



Description of the practice

The Maria's World Foundation Day care centre, is a day centre for persons with disabilities aiming at promoting independent living through the provision of targeted training and support. Situated in Sofia (Bulgaria), the centre provides an inclusive, receptive and stimulating environment and daily activities for people with intellectual disabilities, aimed at improving their quality of life and building skills that help participation in the community. It encourages and supports the social, economic, emotional, educational and cultural development of each client so each person can be fully included in the community. In 2019, the users of the center created a self-advocacy charter laying out their wishes and ideas on fostering societal inclusion of persons with intellectual disabilities and empowering them to assert what their own needs are and state the areas where they need support and is a tool for self –advocacy.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

The centre is taking a user centred approach, tailoring activities to the needs and wishes of each user so that they can fully benefit from the services offered to build up their skills and confidence. Community settings are not only defined by a geographical reality. By working with the users to build up empowerment tools such as the self-advocacy charter, Maria's World Foundation Day Centre supports meaningful participation in the community by co-producing the necessary tool for self-advocacy that allows the day care centre and the community to provide rights-respecting support targeted to these individuals' specific needs.



Practitioner

The World's Day Centre at the Maria's World Foundation (NGO) with support from Sofia municipality (local authority).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

When decisions are being made about what persons with disabilities in your community need, are they leading that conversation? Would the same happen for other groups of people such as children, women, or people of colour? Rights holders should be at the centre of conversations concerning their rights.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

The practice supports Article 19 "Living independently and being included in the community", Article 26 "Habilitation and rehabilitation" and Article 29 "Participation in political and public life".



Supporting material

[Website Of Maria's World Centre](#)



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the objective "Enjoying EU Rights" and the sub-objective "Developing independent living and reinforcing community based services" of the Strategy.



Housing supports tailored to the needs of persons with disabilities – Denmark



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Deliver housing services according to the persons' needs and wishes, with specific schemes to provide adequate housing support for persons with severe disabilities.



Description of the practice

According to the Danish Act on Social Services, persons - who due to a disability has the need - can receive a wide range of supports, which is implemented across all Danish local authorities. This includes social pedagogical assistance, contact persons, support and care of close relatives. This also includes housing support programmes for adults with disabilities offering tailored support in people's private homes adapted to different degrees of disabilities. The support is intended to increase the possibility for independent living. For instance, in the municipality of Frederikshavn, they have developed this housing support service centred on the needs of individual users with tailored support that fosters independence and a better inclusion in the community, through personal assessment of the person's support and guidance needs. The housing support officers are available by phone, home visits, via video chat and in the daycentres, where people with disabilities can take part in creative activities, sports, learning facilities and more.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

By developing housing services adapted to several types and degrees of disabilities, the Danish government supports the independent living agenda, which is at the heart of the S.H.I.F.T. guide. It supports inclusion in the community as the support given encourages participation in public life. The availability of the housing case officers also offers a continuity in the service that can be very useful in dealing with the challenges of everyday life.



Practitioner

Ministry of Social Affairs and Senior Citizens of Denmark (public authority).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

Have you ever checked if such support services exist in your city and to whom they are accessible? Check out the approach of the municipality of Frederikshavn and compare it with your local authority.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

It supports Article 19 "Independent living and being included in the community", Article 26 "Habilitation and rehabilitation" and Article 29 "Participation in the political and public life".



Supporting material

- [Information about the housing support in Denmark](#)
- [Adult housing support in Frederikshavn Municipality](#)



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the objective "Equal Access and non-discrimination" and the sub-objective "Developing independent living and reinforcing community-based services" of the Strategy.



Service for persons with disabilities to match skills with employment opportunities – Portugal



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Create employment support services for persons with disabilities recognising and enhancing their skills, and based on their choice and wishes.



Description of the practice

Operação de Emprego para Pessoas com Deficiência (OED) works directly with persons with disabilities to provide meaningful opportunities for employment. It works with persons with disabilities to find employment that fits their skills and needs, whilst also providing follow-up support and training to ensure successful workplace integration. It also interacts directly with employers to ensure that workplaces and recruitment processes are accessible.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

OED provides individualised support to persons with disabilities to be able to match them with employment opportunities that fit their skillsets and wishes. This approach allows OED to support sustainable employment for persons with disabilities since they are invested in and supported before and after recruitment. Direct engagement with employers promotes a more diverse and inclusive workforce, providing positive representations of persons with disabilities.



Practitioner

This initiative is a partnership between Fundação LIGA (NGO and COFACE Disability member), Câmara Municipal de Lisboa (Lisbon Municipality) and Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional (Institute of Employment and Vocational Training).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

Think about your workplace, is it inclusive? Did you know that the UNCRPD creates an obligation for employers to provide persons with disabilities with reasonable accommodations? A better implementation of the UNCRPD will lead to more inclusive and diverse workplaces.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

The practice supports Article 27 “Work and employment”.



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the sub-objective: “Fostering access to quality and sustainable jobs” of the Strategy.



Supporting material

[OED website](#)



Inclusive Playground and changing room to improve accessibility for all – France



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Give persons with severe disabilities the opportunity to take part in meaningful activities outside the home, including work, education and leisure.



Description of the practice

The local authority of Arras is working on improving its accessibility by building a changing room for adults and children with disabilities in the city hall. They will be the first city in France to have such facilities. This project was put forward by a mother and family carer of a child with multiple disabilities, and won the city co-financing award for the year 2020. The city has also built over the years 5 accessible playgrounds, two of which are in the vicinity of the city hall and the new facilities. It now systematically includes accessible swings in renovation and new construction of playgrounds.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

Changing rooms greatly improve the accessibility of public spaces for person with disabilities. They preserve dignity by giving privacy for persons who need assistance going to the facilities and for whom accessible toilets are not enough. It also supports family carers and personal assistants who can access there the necessary technical equipment to properly cater for the persons' need in a safe and dignified manner for both. It makes community life and mainstream services more accessible for persons with multiple and severe disabilities and for their carers.



Practitioner

The building of the changing room is a result of a sustained advocacy by a mother and family carer for her son with multiple disabilities. She successfully pleaded her case and won financing from the city of Arras in France.



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

Next time you take a walk in the park, green areas or playground of your city, try to look at it from another angle, can all the children access them and play there? Look up your local authority website, do they fund accessibility actions?



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

The practice supports Article 9 "Accessibility", Article 7 "Children with disabilities", Article 30 "Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport" and Article 19 "Living independently and being included in the community".



Supporting material

- [Website of handiroom – the service provider working on the construction](#)
- [Video interview of Sonia the mother of Liam](#)



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the objective "Accessibility –an enabler of rights, autonomy and equality " and the sub-objective "Improving access to art and culture, recreation, leisure, sport, and tourism" of the Strategy.



Training on independent living for young people with autism – Denmark



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Support the transition out of care by offering special trainings on independent living and autonomy to adults, and youngsters reaching 18 years of age.



Description of the practice

In 2019, two social programmes covering 6 Danish local authorities to support the transition towards independent living for young people on the autism spectrum were developed. Programme 1 is for young people living with their parents and programme 2 for young people living on their own. They consist of five core elements: ensuring adequate coordination within the municipality, co-production with the young person and their parents (programme 1), creating a clear plan in co-operation with the young person, extensive individual support by a professional and a series of group sessions focusing on different life skills ranging from interpersonal communication and conflict management, to participating in different networks in the community. Group sessions are also facilitated for the parents in programme 1 to enable them in supporting their youngster and as a space for sharing experiences. The programmes are presented in a trainer's kit that includes a programme description, programme guidebook, supplementary material, participants' log book, and a diploma.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

Independent living requires a set of skills that children usually develop over the years, to different extents. For example, children with disabilities living in institutions often do not have the opportunity to develop these skills. Sometimes families of children and adolescents with disabilities do not have the skills to accompany their relative towards independent living or are reticent and fearful to see their relative living on their own. Programmes to support the transition to independent living are therefore useful in both cases. These programmes contribute to the S.H.I.F.T. as they empower young people with autism to live an independent life and be included in the community. By also taking the point of view of the transition out of family care, it sets an example on how to communicate with families and integrate them in the transition so that they can accompany their relative in a way that is also empowering them. The group course allows young people to create connections and build peer support.



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the objective "Decent quality of life and independent living" of the Strategy.



Practitioner

The National Board of Social Services of Denmark (public authority).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

Living independently does mean living alone and doing everything by yourself. It means being able to make your own choices: where to live, with whom, what to wear, eat... this is something that is not accessible to all persons with disabilities. Imagine having your life decided for you without taking your preferences and choices into account.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

The practice supports Article 19 "Independent living and being included in the community" and Article 24 "Participation in political and public life".



Supporting material

[Project webpage](#)



Cross-party parliamentarians and countries working together for the rights of persons with disabilities – Europe



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Establish and support national and international partnerships to innovate the sector.



Description of the practice

The European Parliament Disability Intergroup brings together Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) to promote legislation and initiatives supporting persons with disabilities. The members are sitting in different parliamentary committees, allowing them to apply a disability rights angle across the policy field. The group spans across the political spectrum and includes members from across the EU. The intergroup was formed in 1980 making it one of the oldest intergroups in the European Parliament.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

The Intergroup allows MEPs to share expertise and initiatives from the national level and come together to advocate at the European level. Therefore, good practice can be shared across Europe. This practice promotes a rights-based model, grounding itself in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). There is an emphasis on raising the concerns and experiences of persons with disabilities in the work of the European Parliament. The Intergroup can also coordinate initiatives concerning policy files affecting the rights of persons with disabilities.



Practitioner

Members of the European Parliament, and the group is coordinated by the European Disability Forum (European NGO) as its secretariat since 1999.



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

Does your country also have a cross-party working structure in the parliament that works on the rights of persons with disabilities? If yes, check out their work! If not, why not ask your member of parliament to set one up?



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

The EP Intergroup works on all areas of the UNCRPD which correspond to EU competences. More specifically through its building of partnerships from local to international level on disability rights, it supports Article 8 “Awareness-raising” and Article 32 “International Cooperation”.



Supporting material

- [EP Intergroup webpage.](#)
- [EP Intergroup current work programme](#)
- [Members of the EP Intergroup](#)
- [Link to newsletter](#)



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

The EP Intergroup aims to boost the EDRS in all elements of its mandated work, and in relation to this action more specifically the objective of “Enjoying EU Rights” and the sub-objectives “Better regulation-UNCRPD compliance in policymaking” and “Strengthening the EU Framework under the UNCRPD” of the Strategy.

SUPPORT
HUMAN RIGHTS
INDEPENDENCE
FFAMILIES
TTRANSITION



Persons with disabilities are aware of their rights and they exercise them, by deciding for themselves in every area of life.



Jönköping: 2021 Winner of the EU Access City Award – Sweden



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Adopt a definition of disability in line with the human rights model, as a function of the interaction of the person with the social and physical environments and work on its harmonisation at international level.



Description of the practice

Every year the European Commission holds the 'Access City Awards' to celebrate efforts made by European cities in becoming accessible and inclusive for all. The 2021 winner of the 'Access City Awards' was Jönköping, Sweden. Jönköping used the expertise of local disability organisations to redevelop both older and newer parts of the city, no matter the constraints of the natural terrain. They have also applauded local accessibility initiatives taken by local businesses through their very own 'Jönköping for everyone' award. The €150,000 European prize money helps the winning city to continue to invest in inclusive accessibility initiatives.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

Jönköping works directly with local disability organisations following a co-production principle to ensure that accessibility initiatives are consistent with the needs of persons with disabilities. This is achieved through the city's 'Funktionsrätt' (Functional Law) organisation. The organisation brings together persons with disabilities and their families to make decisions, such as developing Jönköping's disability policy. The Access City Awards themselves are an EU-wide initiative. This means that a rights-based approach to the physical environment is standardised at the European level. The annual 'Access City Awards' report is also published in an Easy-to-Read format. Thereby, promoting good practice across the EU.



Practitioner

This initiative is coordinated by the European Commission Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, with support from the European Disability Forum.



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

The Access City Awards began in 2011. Check out the Access City Award Website to see which cities near you have been recognised. What initiatives are in place in these cities which could also be implemented in your country?



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

The practice supports Article 9 "Accessibility".



Supporting material

[Access City Award website](#)



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the objectives "Moving and residing freely" and "Equal access and non-discrimination" and the sub-objectives "Accessibility of buildings and communication" and "Supporting implementation through EU funding" of the Strategy.



European Union Strategy for the rights of persons with disabilities 2021-2030 – Europe



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Establish the respect of human rights and the well-being of people as policy objectives.



Description of the practice

In March 2021, the European Commission released the Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030. It aims to progress on all areas of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, both at EU and Member State level. Among the main goals is to ensure that persons with disabilities in Europe, regardless of their sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, age or sexual orientation: enjoy their human rights; have equal opportunities; have equal access to participate in society and economy; are able to decide where, how and with whom they live; can move freely in the EU regardless of their support needs; no longer experience discrimination. The respect of human rights and wellbeing are clearly stated as objectives of this new European policy framework.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

This Strategy aims at advancing the rights of persons with disabilities in Europe. Most of the several follow-up actions are still in the pipeline but according to the strategy they must all have the respect of human rights and more specifically, the UNCRPD, as objectives. As one of the actions under the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan, the Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030 sits along other initiatives aiming to make Europe a fairer, more equal and inclusive society for all its citizens, in line with the whole society vision of the guide S.H.I.F.T.



Practitioner

European Commission, under the leadership of the European Commissioner for Equality, Ms. Helena Dalli.



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

Have a look at the fact sheet accompanying the Strategy to check some facts on the 85+ million persons with disabilities living in the European Union.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

The Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities aims to boost the implementation of all UNCRPD dimensions.



Supporting material

[European Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030. \(including easy to read version\)](#)



Permanent committee on quality of life – monthly consultations of persons with disabilities and their families - Italy



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Ensure a meaningful involvement of persons with disabilities, their representatives and their families in all decision-making processes.



Description of the practice

In Rome, a permanent local committee on quality of life of persons with disabilities and their families is consulted every first Monday of the month. It brings together persons with disabilities, their families and the presidents of the 6 Rome local health authorities to meet online or offline the managers, doctors, health care workers, social workers and other key professionals from the health sector. The aim of the meeting is to plan together the development of activities, assess the needs of persons with disabilities regarding rehabilitation, day centres, family supports, the need of persons with multiple disabilities and more.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

This is a permanent committee embedded in the decision-making process of the health authorities of the city of Rome. Its regularity ensures a continuous review and needs-based assessment of the development of health and support services for persons with disabilities. The variety of stakeholders it involves allows to raise awareness of the needs and wishes in terms of health and support of the persons with disabilities at several levels of health and service provisions.



Practitioner

Municipality of Rome (local authority), and key stakeholders including CO.FA.AS Clelia (COFACE Disability member).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

Does your city have such a committee which regularly consults persons with disabilities and their families about the development and implementation of health and support services? Go forth and explore!



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

This practice supports Article 25 "Health" and Article 29 "Participation in political and public life".



Supporting material

[Consulta permanente per la qualità della vita delle persone con disabilità \(aslroma1.it\)](https://www.aslroma1.it/consulte-permanente-per-la-qualita-della-vita-delle-persone-con-disabilita)



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the sub-objectives "Fostering participation in the democratic process" and "Sustainable and equal access to healthcare" of the Strategy.



Personal support plan for children with disabilities and their families – Latvia



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Ensure the right to live and grow up in a family for children with special needs (providing adequate family support) and that children without parental care can grow up in a family setting (providing extended kinship care, foster care, or adoption).



Description of the practice

SOS Children’s Villages defends the rights for each child to grow up in a family. In the framework of the Deinstitutionalisation process launched in 2015 in Latvia, they offer specialist consultations in their Family Support centre in Valmiera for families with children living in the region of Vidzeme. Every child with special needs can access an individual needs assessment that will serve as a basis for the development of a personal support plan. The plan suggests support activities that would be beneficial for the child development, such as music therapy, speech therapy, canistherapy, and more. The municipality signs an agreement with different community-based service providers and the implementation of the support plan can begin. The access to these services are free of charge for the families as they are directly financed by the municipality via resources of a European Social Fund co-financed project. Children with disabilities without parental care who are living in the SOS village and in the foster and guardian families supported by SOS Children’s Villages Latvia can also receive support based on their needs and wishes.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

The right to grow up in a family or family-like settings is for every child, regardless of the disability status. However, the reality is that children with disabilities, with or without parental care are more exposed to being separated from their family and being institutionalised. Any deinstitutionalisation strategy has to look at the specific challenges that children with disabilities and their families face and put forward appropriate measures to support children and their families, adopting a whole-family approach and assessing the needs of all family members. Financial support to cope with the disability-related expenses is also crucial, as quality community-based care (when accessible) is not always affordable or fully covered by social protection schemes. By offering subsidised specialist services to support families of children with disabilities, programmes can contribute to lessen the risk of family separation and ensure that the children are not missing out on essential support for their development based on the family’s financial situation.



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the sub-objective “Developing independent living and reinforcing community-based services” of the Strategy.



Practitioner

SOS Children’s Villages Latvia and the Region of Vidzeme.



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

Did you know about these different kinds of therapies and tools that can support children’s development? Have a look at the different supports that can be offered to children, regardless of their disability, to boost their inherent skills and talents.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

The practice supports Article 7 “Children with Disabilities”, Article 23 “Respect or home and the family” and Article 26 “Habilitation and rehabilitation”.



Supporting material

- [List of activities proposed](#)
- [Vidzeme Includes project page](#)



Training and resource centre for professional staff in education and non-formal education – Luxembourg



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Include the principles of the UNCPRD in the curricula of professional and retraining of staff providing services to persons with disabilities.



Description of the practice

The Incluso resource centre in Luxembourg offers advice and support on inclusion to non-formal education professionals and parents, as well as to anyone interested in the subject, in order to promote and develop inclusive early childhood education and child care services. The UNCPRD principles are fully embedded in Incluso's everyday work in so far as they consider them to be universal pedagogical/educational principles for professionals when working with children/families (with or without disabilities). Hence, they are fully integrated in the wide range of services they offer such as trainings, workshops, evaluations, coaching, meeting spaces.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

The goal of Incluso is to encourage the development of inclusive approaches and practices to increase the number of childcare services implementing such an approach. It aims to raise awareness of education professionals about the subject of including children with special needs in mainstream childcare services, supporting them in working out projects for children with special needs, and finally developing the professional skills of childcare providers to meet the individual needs of every child (with or without disabilities) in an inclusive setting. The UNCPRD is one of the guiding documents for these trainings. For Incluso, the basic principles of an inclusive approach to education are the following: the child as actor of their own competences, the environment adapting to the needs of the child, and finally equality of opportunity and equity of means, in line with the objectives of the UNCPRD as specified in the General Comment number 4.



Practitioner

APEMH (NGO and COFACE Disability member).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

If you are an education professional (manager or teacher) wishing to make your settings more inclusive, start a conversation about this with your managers and peers to see if a training can be organized to boost your skills to help make the educational environment fully inclusive for all children, including those with special needs.



Supporting material

- [Incluso webpage](#)
- [Inclusive early childhood education and care – a great start for children with disabilities](#)
- [APEMH Newsletter](#)
- [Koffer N°2: Wahrnehmung und Inklusion](#)



How does it boost the UNCPRD?

This practice supports Article 24 "Education".



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the sub-objectives "Developing new skills for new jobs" and "Inclusive and accessible education" of the Strategy.



UNCRPD and UNCRC Training for families of deaf persons – Spain



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Provide training on the UNCRPD to persons with disabilities and their families.



Description of the practice

Every year FIAPAS – The Spanish Confederation of Families of Deaf Persons - organises trainings for families and for professionals working for the local associations of families of deaf people in Spain, where they can meet and learn on diverse topics relating to family life and disability. Last year, the training focused on the rights of children with disabilities. The training combined the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Understanding and navigating the rights of children with a hearing disability and the different ways to channel complaint procedures in case of rights' violation was one of the central themes of the training. It was followed by 108 participants.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

Family carers often lack opportunities to access training to support them in their care duties. By offering them knowledge on the UNCRPD, the training programme supports a better understanding of the rights of their child and how to defend them if they are not respected, knowledge that they can after pass on to their child. Awareness of one's right is often the first steps to claim it. By organising these yearly trainings, FIAPAS is contributing to this awareness-raising and a better dissemination of the UNCRPD towards deaf persons and their families. By training professionals working with deaf persons and their families, they also improve their capacities to offer proper support to these families.



Practitioner

FIAPAS – The Spanish Confederation of Families of Deaf Persons- Confederación Española de Familias de Personas Sordas (COFACE Disability member).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

Are you aware of the rights covered in the UNCRPD and the UNCRC? If not, why not attend a training to fully understand them or if you know them, why not spread the word by organising an information session or training in your community.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

The practice supports Article 7 "Children with disabilities", Article 8 "Awareness-raising" and Article 23 "Respect for home and the family".



Supporting material

- [FIAPAS' online library](#)
- [Decalogue of the rights of children with hearing impairments](#)



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the objective "Enjoying EU Rights" and the sub-objective "Developing independent living and reinforcing community-based services" of the Strategy.



Self-advocacy movement of persons with intellectual disabilities - France



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Support and establish self-advocacy movement.



Description of the practice

Nous Aussi (Us Too) is a French association of persons with intellectual and learning disabilities focusing on self-advocacy and empowerment. Organized nationally and locally, Nous Aussi offers a space for dialogue and advocacy action for its members. They are active on topics that affect the daily life of persons with disabilities and have for example campaigned on the right to vote or the right to family life. They organize conferences and a general assembly to consult their members and have in-depth discussions about selected topics to draft common positions to use in their advocacy work. Their documents, manifesto and newsletter are written in Easy-to-Read so they are accessible to all their members. They also collaborate with other organizations such as the discussion table of UNAPEI on independent living, the European Platform of Self-Advocates (part of Inclusion Europe), contributing to bring the voices of the experts by experience to political debates at the national and international stage and raising awareness on the barriers faced by persons with disabilities in their daily life.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

Persons with disabilities are experts by experience and central actors to the transition towards the meaningful inclusion of persons with disabilities and their families. Associations like Nous Aussi demonstrate how this expertise can be self-organised to raise awareness on the value of working together on the inclusive transition. This offers concrete solutions that work for persons with disabilities as they have been developed directly based on their expertise. Moreover, Nous Aussi directly contributed to the S.H.I.F.T. as COFACE had the pleasure to have their European Representative speaking at the May 2021 launch event of the survey that served as basis to this report.



Practitioner

Nous Aussi (NGO).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

“Nothing about us without us” is a well-known principle of the Human Rights Agenda. In a democratic country, this can be implemented to some extent by the right to vote. However, some persons are denied this right - children for example and it is also still true for many persons with disabilities all over Europe. Have you ever thought about how accessible your country voting system is? Are their legal exclusions? What about the accessibility of the voting place?



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

This practice supports Article 8 “Awareness-raising”, Article 19 “Living independently and being included in the community”, Article 21 “Freedom of expression, opinion and access to information” and Article 29 “Participation in political and public life”.



Supporting material

[Nous aussi website](#)



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the objective “Equal Access and non-discrimination” and the sub-objectives “Fostering participation in the democratic process” and “Developing independent living and reinforcing community-based services” of the Strategy.



Local accessibility committee to channel complaints and recommendations – France



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Monitor the respect of human rights in services for persons with disabilities, create user councils to give a voice to persons with disabilities, ensure that complaint procedures are provided, and complaints are responded to appropriately.



Description of the practice

The permanent committee on accessibility for all (“Commission communale Accessibilité Pour Tous – CAPT”) of the city of Toulouse was created in 2006. Initially composed of representatives of the local authority, disability organisations, self-advocates with different types of disabilities, family organisations, it later brought on board the voices of older persons and broader economic stakeholders. It meets once a year to take stock of the accessibility initiatives taken for the built environment, public spaces and transport: to produce an annual report; make recommendations to improve accessibility, and collect data on accessible housing in the city. Recently added missions also include monitoring the accessibility strategies of public and private stakeholders receiving public funds.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

This action ensures that persons with disabilities are empowered to bring their voice to discussions on accessibility, including through official channels and procedures where they can monitor the situation in partnership with elected representatives; as well as highlight failings in the system and insufficient accessibility in different parts of the city.



Practitioner

The municipality of Toulouse (local authority) in partnership with a wide range of citizens, public, non-profit and private stakeholders (including the family voices of UDAF31, COFACE member).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

Look around your city – the parks, the buildings, the roads, public transport: do you think persons in wheelchairs could use and enjoy these freely and independently? If not, tell your local politicians and encourage them to set up a permanent committee as a space where complaints can be made, and accessibility flaws can be detected and addressed.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

This practice supports Article 5 “Equality and non-discrimination”, Article 9 “Accessibility”, Article 19 “Living independently and being included in the community”, and Article 29 “Participation in political and public life”.



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the objective “Accessibility – an enabler of rights, autonomy and equality” and the sub-objectives “Fostering participation in the democratic process” and “Developing independent living and reinforcing community-based services” of the Strategy.



Supporting material

[Commission communale Accessibilité Pour Tous - Toulouse.fr](https://www.commission-communale-accessibilite-pour-tous-toulouse.fr)



A global network centralising information on available assistive technology products – Global



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Promote and fund the use of technology to increase the choice and control by the persons with disabilities, including of those with severe and multiple disabilities.



Description of the practice

EASTIN (The Global Assistive Technology Information Network) is a network of national information providers in the field of assistive technologies. The network provides a free internet service and a search engine publishing information on thousands of assistive products available on the European and global market. The product information is aggregated through web services from 8 national databases all structured according to a common classification. The interface of the search engine supports 22 languages. It is independent from any commercial company.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

It gives access to information on available assistive technology products on a national, regional and global level. The information is accessible in multiple languages and can empower persons with disabilities and their family by providing information on products and technical solutions with the potential of optimizing functioning and improve autonomy. It allows persons with disabilities to have better choice and control by giving them an easy way to compare the options available and choose the one that best fits their needs and wishes. It adopts a user-centred approach and has an easy navigable interface for every user to find information on the solution that meets their individual needs.



Practitioner

EASTIN Network: Transnational Network with members from the United Kingdom, Italy, Germany, Denmark, Australia, France, Israel, Lithuania, Cyprus, Thailand, Latvia, Taiwan, Slovenia, The Netherlands, Luxembourg, Palestine, Bulgaria, Portugal, Spain, New Zealand, Romania, Papua New Guinea, Norway, Estonia, Singapore, Greece, Belgium.



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

The range and opportunities that assistive technologies can offer is not enough known. Whether you might need it or not, go and browse around the EASTIN Network to scrape the surface of how assistive technologies can boost independence and participation for all.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

The practice supports Article 19 “Living independently and being included in the community”, Article 20 “Personal mobility” and Article 32 “International cooperation”.



Supporting material

- [EASIN Network website](#)
- [Presentation Video: EASTIN: the Global Assistive Technology Information Network](#)



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the objectives “Accessibility – an enabler of rights, autonomy and equality” and “Equal Access and non-discrimination” of the Strategy.

SUPPORT
HUMAN RIGHTS
INDPENDENCE
FAMILIES
TRANSITION



The mainstream sector is re-shaped to be inclusive in all its services that are available to the general public, the persons with disabilities can choose between different options, according to their needs and wishes



Platform for artistic creation involving people with and without disabilities – Portugal



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Improve the accessibility of the built environment and mainstream services such as schooling, health care, social housing, public transport, leisure and sport.



Description of the practice

“Plural” is an inclusive dance company with a pioneering path of more than 26 years investing in the creation, research, training, awareness and production of choreographic projects, nationally and internationally, resulting from the encounter and artistic collaboration between performers with and without disabilities, professionals, students and the dance community. The challenge posed by each of its shows is to think and reinvent human diversity through the body and contemporary dance, creating opportunities for an increasingly pluralistic world and stage. This artistic representation of diversity is promoted by this inclusive company managed by Fundação LIGA since 1995, with presentations in Portugal, Spain, Italy, United Kingdom and United States.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

Plural is a platform for awareness-raising, training and artistic creation involving people with and without disabilities, young people in regular education, students in higher artistic education, professionals in the areas of dance, rehabilitation and social intervention and the general public. On a larger scale, Plural aims at a wider public, promoting a growing transformation of society where the realization of the rights of persons with disabilities takes new forms through dance and the challenge of art as a questioning of the reality, in favour of a more plural world. In this sense, Plural has been implementing since its foundation an innovative methodology for the development of its choreographic projects where the promotion of an active network of partnerships assumes a special role (with schools, higher education, dance companies, and more).



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the objective “Decent quality of life and living independently”, especially sub-objective “Developing new skills for new jobs” and sub-objective “Improving access to art and culture, recreation and leisure” of the Strategy.



Practitioner

Fundação LIGA (NGO and COFACE Disability member).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

If you are a dancer, musician or artist (professional or amateur), try to connect with diverse art communities. Build creative partnerships beyond your comfort zone to bring in new perspectives, both for children and adults.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

This practice supports Article 8 “Awareness-raising”, 19 “Living independently and being included in the community”, and Article 30 “Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sports”.



Supporting material

[In The Silence Of The First Wave No Silêncio Da Primeira Onda by/de Rafael Alvarez / bodybuilders & Plural Companhia de Dança](#)



Resource centre to support inclusion of children with disabilities in kindergarten and school systems – Slovenia



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Ensure the availability and reasonable accommodation of mainstream day-care, early childhood education and care, schools, out-of-school care and after-school activities for children with disabilities.



Description of the practice

In 2019, a national Act regulating the Integrated Early Treatment of Preschool Children with Special Needs was adopted in Slovenia. In order to achieve a higher quality of support for children with special needs in Ljubljana, the city founded the PIKA Education Centre. Since 2013, the centre supports the education/ meaningful inclusion of children with special needs in public kindergartens and schools in Ljubljana. It focuses on on-going professional education of special and social pedagogues; individual counselling; telephone and e-counselling for educators, teachers and families; aiming to connect all effective practices in early childhood care facilities and schools.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

With this PIKA centre, the municipality of Ljubljana has successfully filled a gap in educational programmes for professionals in education, which does not always include specific trainings of educators and teachers to work with children with special needs. Thus, in the 2019/2020 school year, the second generation of professional staff of kindergartens and schools completed the two-year PIKA training. Through different publications, the PIKA Educational Centre presents the experience of children with special needs in various situations and offers a systematic overview and presentation of evidence-based methods of behaviour and teaching in order to create inclusive education models.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

This practice supports Article 5 “Equality and non-discrimination”, Article 7 “Rights of children with disabilities”, Article 19 “Living independently and being included in the community”, Article 24 “Education”, and Article 28 “Adequate standard of living and social protection”.



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the sub-objectives “Inclusive and accessible education” and “Consolidating social protection systems” of the Strategy.



Practitioner

Municipality of Ljubljana (local authority), member of Eurocities.



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

If you are a local authority representative trying to promote inclusive education, check out the resources offered by the PIKA Centre and get the conversation going on inclusive education models in your community.



Supporting material

[PIKA Centre Website](#)



European higher education alliance of universities with mobility and inclusivity at its core – Europe



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Support to the transition of students with special educational needs towards the labour market or towards higher education.



Description of the practice

CHARM-EU is a Challenge-Driven, Accessible, Research-based and Mobile University. It works to design and create a new university model aiming to become a world example of good practice to increase the quality, international competitiveness and attractiveness of the European Higher Education landscape. CHARM-EU's ambitious mission and vision are to be a pioneer and model in the European Higher Education Area and beyond, offering a plural, inclusive, flexible, student-centred learning experience. CHARM-EU is committed to promoting inclusive teaching and learning environments, access and participation of students and staff with various backgrounds, own lived experiences, and access needs in all aspects of higher education. Inclusion and diversity have been profoundly interwoven into the DNA of CHARM-EU. In the context of CHARM-EU, inclusion is both about reducing barriers to access and addressing disadvantage, as well as for the programme to reflect the diversity of Europe's populations.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

Being inclusive is at the core of CHARM-EU, they are committed to providing the best learning experience and the appropriate structure and services that cater to students' access and participation needs. The Inclusivity tips for CHARM-EU educators is a checklist to support academic staff in creating an inclusive teaching and learning environment. The checklist provides questions for reflection and simple, tangible actions to foster an inclusive environment. The CHARM-EU Inclusiveness Team provide further resources, such as a chapter about practical tools in the Hybrid Classroom Handbook; a chapter about inclusivity and accessibility in the CHARM-EU Branding Guidelines and contributed to the Digital Accessibility chapter at their Technology-enhanced learning workshop. A chapter on Inclusive Education is available in the CHARM-EU Pedagogical Guidelines.



Practitioner

CHARM-EU, is a European University Alliance, co-funded by the Erasmus + Programme, between the University of Barcelona – coordinator- (Spain), Trinity College Dublin (Ireland), Utrecht University (Netherlands), the University of Montpellier (France) and Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest (Hungary).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

Inclusive education applies to all stages of education and learning, including higher education and life-long learning. If you are a higher education professional, go and check the multiple resources that have been created by CHARM-EU, including the inclusivity tips provided.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

This practice supports Article 5 "Equality and non-discrimination", Article 8 "Awareness-raising", Article 9 "accessibility", Article 19 "Living independently and being included in the community", and Article 24 "Education".



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the sub-objectives "Inclusive and accessible education" and "Fostering access to quality and sustainable jobs" of the Strategy.



Supporting material

- [One of the core values: Inclusive](#)
- [Inclusivity tips for CHARM-EU educators | CHARM-EU](#)
- [Inclusive Education Chapter in CHARM-EU Pedagogical Guidelines](#)
- [Inclusion and Diversity Chapter in Hybrid Classroom Handbook](#)
- [Introducing the CHARM-EU new podcast series on the topic of inclusivity!](#)



Coaching companies to build inclusive workplaces – Belgium



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Foster the participation of persons with disabilities in the open labour market, including instruments such as quotas in the public sector, and incentives or awareness raising in the private sector.



Description of the practice

Konekt organises different types of activities and workshops, which includes a wide range of tools and coaching for companies on building inclusive workplaces for persons with disabilities. For instance, Konekt organises an immersion course where people experience physically and mentally what it is like to have a disability, followed by a discussion and tips on how to make the company more accessible to workers with disabilities and remove barriers for volunteers or employees with disabilities. They also have a free toolkit to help you make your company or organisation more inclusive.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

People with disabilities face numerous barriers, whether they are physical, digital, or even discriminatory and are very often - unconsciously - excluded in many situations. Konekt supports the shift towards a more inclusive society through inspiring actions and collaborative processes between persons with disabilities and key players in the employment and education fields. Konekt is committed to a world in which people with and without disabilities have equal opportunities to contribute based on their talent. They aspire to build a society where inclusive learning, living and working is the norm.



Practitioner

Konekt (NGO).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

Does your organisation or company want to give people with disabilities the opportunity to take an active role? Do you need advice to develop an inclusive employee policy? Check out the various Konekt tools and coaching formulas to help you with this.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

This practice supports Article 5 “Equality and non-discrimination”, Article 8 “Awareness-raising”, Article 9 “Accessibility”, Article 19 “Living independently and being included in the community”, Article 27 “Work and employment”.



Supporting material

- [Coaching for inclusive workplaces](#)
- [Courses and coaching for organisations and companies](#)
- [The free toolbox ‘Make your organisation inclusive’ \(in Dutch\)](#)



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the objective “Accessibility – an enabler of rights, autonomy, and equality” and sub-objective “Developing new skills for new jobs” of the Strategy.



Healthcare passport for persons with intellectual disabilities- fostering communication between patients and hospital staff- Ireland



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Ensure the implementation of correct procedures in the health and hospital sector to respond to the needs of persons with disabilities and of those with high support needs including cooperation with their families to facilitate communication and identification of needs.



Description of the practice

The Health Passport was introduced in Ireland in 2019 and currently available across the country. It is a document to assist people with intellectual disabilities accessing the care they need in any healthcare setting. This Health Passport is a communication tool designed to support people with intellectual disabilities express their needs when in a healthcare setting. It contains five sections: All about me, Communication, Medical History, Looking after me & Keeping me safe and happy with just the information they need to know. Additionally, the Health Passport for people with intellectual disabilities assists healthcare staff to get to know all about the abilities and needs of people with an intellectual disability who come into contact with a healthcare setting enabling them to provide better safer care by providing reasonable adjustments before undertaking any assessment, examination or treatment of people with intellectual disabilities. It also supports the families or family carers of the person who when attending a hospital may due to stress forget to mention some information and allow them to share their knowledge which is crucial for the patients well-being and improves the outcome for the person in a more efficient way. The Health Passport has been developed into an app downloadable for free.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

Everyone has the right to access to high quality health services respecting their dignity and rights. The Health Passport supports persons with disabilities to access these rights and receive the support they need as an individual rather than being looked at as part of a wider intellectual disabilities group. The Health care passport allows persons with intellectual disabilities to communicate information about themselves in an understandable manner. It allows them to make choices rather than have choices made for them without any consultation. The passport can be drafted in advance, with the support of carers and support services. In times of crisis and stress, the guidelines given in this document can support the provision of health care services in line with the wishes of the patient.



Practitioner

Ireland Health Service (public health authority).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

Check some examples of the Health Passport and have a think about the information you would like the medical staff to have about you, think about all the aspects that are important to you and how you would like these to be integrated in your approach to health.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

The practice supports Article 25 "Health" and Article 17: "Protecting the integrity of the person".



Supporting material

- [Interviews from Launch of HSE Health Passport and "Mission Possible" Short film](#)
- [HSE Health Passport PDF format](#)
- [Health Passport app on Google Play](#)
- [Health Passport app on Apple Store](#)



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the sub-objectives "Equal access to social protection, healthcare, education and goods and services including housing" and "Sustainable and equal access to healthcare" of the Strategy.



Tailor-made personal assistance for persons with disabilities – Croatia



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Create legislative frameworks to provide personal assistance to persons with disabilities.



Description of the practice

Co-funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) and the government of Croatia, the number of personal assistance (PA) users increased in Croatia from 500 in 2016 to 1,550 in 2018. ESF support was used to expand eligibility to people with intellectual disabilities and people with mental health problems. One call included sign language interpreters and seeing guides for persons with visual impairments. Organisations of persons with disabilities were funded to administer PA services through 3-year programmes (in 2018, 72 NGOs were contracted to organise PA services, providing 895 personal assistants; additional ones were contracted in 2019).



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

Personal assistants are persons who support persons with disabilities in their everyday life. The personal assistance is provided via specific organisations of persons with disabilities who receive funding for managing certain numbers of personal assistants. Persons with disabilities can go to these organisations in order to custom-design their service and choose by whom, where, when and how to be provided, although only to some extent (with the number of hours limited to 20 per week). Control over assistance can also be exercised through supported decision-making. To make this scheme more sustainable and accessible to persons with disabilities, the next important step will be to adopt a law on Personal Assistance and ensure that adequate funding is available to ensure that each person gets as many hours as they need.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

This practice supports Article 19 “Living independently and being included in the community”, Article 20 “Personal mobility”, Article 25 “Health” and Article 28 “Adequate standard of living and social protection”.



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the sub-objectives “Developing independent living and reinforcing community-based services” and “Consolidating social protection systems” of the Strategy.



Practitioner

ESF Managing authority (funding authority) and government of Croatia (public authority).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

Does your local authority offer personal assistance for independent living? Put the question to local politicians or NGOs in your community, or raise it in a conversation with your friends, family or colleagues.



Supporting material

[Government of the Republic of Croatia - Agreements for personal assistance services for disabled presented](#)



Promoting user-centered funding models in long-term care and support – Europe



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Develop personal care budget schemes.



Description of the practice

The UNIC project aims at developing tools to help service users, service providers and public authorities to implement a user-centred funding model in long-term care and support, including personal care budgets. By implementing this model, persons with long-term care and support needs, including persons with disabilities, will actively participate in organising their own support, based on their will, preferences and individual needs. Additionally, service providers will have to adapt and personalize their services to meet the individual needs of service users and public authorities will implement a radical funding model which will respond to the evolving needs and challenges in long-term care and support. The project’s first output takes stock of the different models in place in the EU, and across the world, encourages awareness raising and knowledge sharing about different funding models. Also, a guidance has been published offering public authorities a framework to design, develop, implement, and evaluate a user-centred funding model.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

Rethinking funding models is an important part of the deinstitutionalisation agenda and of the S.H.I.F.T. This project is contributing to this mentality shift and to promote funding streams that support the independent living agenda instead of institutions, by involving all the stakeholders. A user-centred funding model as such stipulates a shift in power, where power is placed in the hands of each individual, giving users more choice and control over the care and support they receive, allowing them to meet their individualised needs, wishes and preferences and to live their lives as they want. This shift towards user-centred funding was started by the Independent Living Movement 50 years ago, as a way to empower persons with long-term care and support needs to have more freedom, citizenship and access to their human rights.



Practitioner

European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD); European Ageing Network; Centre for Welfare Reform (United-Kingdom); Disability Federation Ireland (Ireland); Flemish Agency for Persons with Disabilities (Belgium); Association of Service Providers, Czech Republic (Czech Republic); Support-Girona (Spain); Service Foundation for People with an Intellectual Disability (Finland); Lebenshilfe Salzburg (Austria).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

Have you ever heard of personal care budgets or personal budgeting? It can be defined as budgets which are allocated to an individual by a State body so that the individual can make their own personal care and support arrangements to meet their specified needs. User-centred funding models include personal care budgets.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

The practice supports the Article 12 “Equal recognition before the law”, 19 “Living independently and being included in the community”, Article 26 “Habilitation and rehabilitation” and Article 32 “International Cooperation”.



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the sub-objectives “Developing independent living and reinforcing community-based services” and “Equal access to social protection, healthcare, education and goods and services including housing” of the Strategy.



Supporting material

- [UNIC Project Webpage](#)
- [Models of Promising Practices Report on Personal Budgets](#)
- [Challenges-responsive Guidelines: European roadmap for user-centred funding for Long-Term Care and Support](#)



Guide on inclusive communication in all EU languages – Belgium



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Include disability awareness in the trainings of public sector workers.



Description of the practice

The Council of the EU has developed a guide in all languages of the EU with tips for more inclusive communication. The purpose of this guide is to provide guidance on language use and visuals, and give examples which are relevant to the working environment of the Council of the EU General Secretariat in Brussels. It is intended to help frame a coherent inclusive communication policy across all departments when drafting and illustrating documents and preparing audio-visual material for internal and external use. It states that the UNCRPD calls for measures to combat stereotypes related to disability, so it is important to be aware of and avoid negative stereotypes or stigmatising language. It provides pointers of language to use when writing or speaking about persons with disabilities.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

Communication is a powerful tool. It is a vehicle for moulding our attitudes, perceptions and behaviour. Words and pictures therefore matter, because communication can become discriminatory if we fail to consider the assumptions which influence the language and visuals we use. Individuals can flourish only in an inclusive environment where diversity is accepted, respected and valued. A healthy, inclusive work environment needs to adopt the use of inclusive language and visuals which recognise and reflect diversity and which avoid unconscious bias. Through the language and visuals we produce, we can help to make sure that no groups of people feel excluded, unwelcome or discriminated against.



Practitioner

Council of the EU (public body and EU institution).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

Take a look at the guide in English and in your own language to get some tips on inclusive communication, and try it out in your own personal and professional communications. Maybe your own organisation or community hubs could develop such a guide?



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

This practice supports Article 5 "Equality and non-discrimination" and Article 8 "Awareness-raising".



Supporting material

[Website and report in all EU languages](#)



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the objectives "Equal access and non-discrimination" and "Leading by example" of the Strategy.



Collaboration models for social caseworkers – better integration of needs and wishes in a flexible service provision – Denmark



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Foster local partnerships of the different stakeholders working with persons with disabilities.



Description of the practice

The project launched in 2019 aims at creating better coordination between caseworkers working with children and adolescents with disabilities. Social workers in 12 Danish municipalities work with two collaboration models to create increased coherence, coordination, closer follow-up and flexibility in interventions for children with disabilities and their families. The goal is that parents of children with disabilities experience a simple contact with the municipality and characterized by trustful dialogues, and that the efforts for the family are coordinated, coherent and flexible. The more families with children with disabilities are involved and feel their experience is heard and their need for support understood, the more it increases the possibility of participation in society on equal terms with other families. In this way, the family experiences less stress and can cope more easily with everyday life.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

This project contributes to a better inclusion of persons with disabilities and their families, raising awareness of public sector workers on disability rights. The close collaboration between caseworkers within different municipalities and the proactive and interdisciplinary approach they take to reach out and support families and children reduce the administrative burden that is often higher for parents of children and adolescents with disabilities. They adopt a participatory method involving families of children with disabilities in order to develop person-centred services that can cater for the needs and wishes of families in all their diversity.



Practitioner

12 local authorities working under a Danish Government funded project.



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

Silo thinking in the provision of support is a problem that goes beyond the disability field - one cannot claim a right if one does not know about it. Information and procedures on available support are often difficult to navigate and can become a burden for families. Peer support and knowledge can help to deal with the situation. Think about your country, region, city... are you aware of such a collaboration across local authorities? Do you think you can easily access information about available social services?



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

The practice supports Article 19 "Living independently and being included in the community", Article 9 "Accessibility", and Article 7 "Children with disabilities".



Supporting material

[Project webpage](#)



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the objective "Accessibility –an enabler of rights, autonomy and equality" and sub-objective "Equal access to social protection, healthcare, education and goods and services including housing" of the Strategy.

SUPPORT
HUMAN RIGHTS
INDEPENDENCE
FAMILIES
TRANSITION



Families where a member has disabilities are empowered, enjoy a stronger social protection, and are fully included in society. Persons with disabilities enjoy their right to found their own family.



Regional guidelines for the recognition and social rights of family carers – Italy



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Create legislative frameworks to recognise and support family carers, inspired by the COFACE Disability “European Charter for Family Carers” in the areas of choice, peer support, respite services, reconciliation measures, counselling and psychological support.



Description of the practice

These guidelines, adopted by the Lazio Region in 2021, recognise the family carer as an informal and essential part of social and health infrastructure, and promote public policies which target family carers specifically. The guidelines highlight that health and social services of the region must provide detailed information directly to family carers. They also make recommendations for social and health authorities on how to carry out a multi-dimensional assessment of the needs of family carers, leading to floating and integrated supports. Family carers receive a specific card, co-signed with the person cared for as an expression of their own choice of carer, providing € 700 per month to the carer for providing care and paying for respite services.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

Support to family carers is an important step towards building community-based care infrastructure for children and persons with disabilities, as an additional stream of support to complement formal services for persons with disabilities. This considers the needs and wishes of the person with disabilities within their family context. These recent guidelines of the Lazio Region are a first important step to recognise the role of family carers, and cover many of the dimensions of the COFACE European Charter for Family Carers (providing financial resources, right to respite, information and training, giving a clear place for the family carer in the health system, quality of life) – the operationalisation (needs assessment and ensuring the supports reach all family carers) will be the next step.



Practitioner

Lazio Region (regional public authority).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

Are you a family carer or do you know a family carer? Their actions are invaluable for their family and society. Strike up a conversation with your friends, colleagues or family about caring for family members. Have a look at the COFACE Disability European Charter for Family Carers to see what can be done for family carers in Europe.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

This practice supports Article 19 “Living independently and being included in the community”, Article 7 “Rights of children with disabilities”, Article 23 “Respect for home and the family”, and Article 28 “Adequate standard of living and social protection”.



Supporting material

- [Lazio region website](#)
- [The full text of the guidelines in Italian](#)



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the sub-objectives “Developing independent living and reinforcing community-based services” and “Consolidating social protection systems” of the Strategy.



Training model for professional childminders to work with children on the Autism spectrum - Europe



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Ensure an early and transdisciplinary assessment of child conditions and of family needs, including siblings.



Description of the practice

Child-IN designed a pilot training programme for home-based childminders to support the inclusion of children with autism. Prior to this initiative, childminders did not have access to dedicated training modules focusing on the specific needs of children with autism and their families. This practice fills a gap by developing a series of resources, training materials, and a dedicated competence framework to ensure childminders have the relevant expertise to offer tailor-made services responding to the needs and wishes of children on the autism spectrum and their families.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

This initiative takes an inclusive approach to the provision of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services by making sure that children with autism and their families are not automatically excluded from these services. Child-IN adopts a whole-family approach as the training was developed with the involvement of parents/family carers as service users. This approach allows Child-IN practitioners to learn from the expertise of the family to build the assessment of the child's needs, to then integrate this into the plan of support for each child, ensuring the activities proposed will boost the child's development. ECEC is also of major importance for the work-life balance of the family and for the inclusion of women into the job market.



Practitioner

This Erasmus+ project is coordinated by the IPERIA Institut in France who coordinates with Le Conseil départemental de la Nièvre (France), Techpal Sp. z o.o. (Poland), Autism-Europe (Belgium), and Associação Portuguesa para as Perturbações do Desenvolvimento e Autismo de Coimbra (Portugal) as partners.



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

If you are a childminder, check out the CHILD-IN resources and training materials to further boost your knowledge and skills on early childhood education and care for children on the autism spectrum.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

The practice supports Article 23 "Respect for home and the family" and Article 24 "Education".



Supporting material

[Project Webpage](#)



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the sub-objectives "Supporting implementation through EU funding", "Inclusive and accessible education" and "Equal access to social protection, healthcare, education, goods and services including housing" of the Strategy.



Financial support for families caring for a child with disabilities – Hungary



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Support financially persons with disabilities and their families with all the disability-related expenses.



Description of the practice

In addition to the care allowance provided to family carers who care for relatives with severe disabilities (regardless of the age), the Hungarian government introduced a new Home Care Allowance for Children (GYOD) from 1 January 2019 to provide support for carers of children with support needs, on top of the classic child support scheme. The GYOD and the general care allowance (for all ages) are separate forms of support, but the criteria used to determine eligibility are almost identical (based on the level dependency of the relative).



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

This benefit is paid to parents looking after their children reliant on care, on top of family benefits and other care allowances. The aim of the measure is to recognise the work of parents and families who care for a close relative at home and give them extra financial means to include this support into their family budget. This may not always be enough to fully cover the costs of caring for a loved one with disabilities (e.g. especially if additional assistive technologies and adaptation of the home is needed), but providing financial benefits to prevent families falling into poverty as a result of the disability-related expenses is an important step.



Practitioner

Hungarian government (public authority).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

Taking care of a loved one with disabilities can take different forms depending on the situation – from very light support to resource and time-intensive expensive care. Care duties can also require family carers to reduce their paid working time or investments in equipment in the home to accommodate the needs of a family member with disabilities. Have a look at the COFACE Disability European Charter for Family Carers to see what can be done for family carers in Europe.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

This practice supports Article 7 “Children with disabilities”, Article 19 “Living independently and being included in the community”, Article 23 “Respect for home and the family”, and Article 28 “Adequate standard of living and social protection”.



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the objective “Decent quality of life and living independently”, especially the sub-objective “Consolidating social protection systems” of the Strategy.



Supporting material

- [Hungary - Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)
- [GOVERNMENT OFFICES - Budapest Metropolitan Government Office - Districts \(kormanyhivatal.hu\)](#)
- [Information about the GYOD on the The National Association for the Protection of the Interests of People with Intellectual Disabilities and Their Assistants \(ÉFOÉSZ\) website](#)



Baby-sitting services for every child – Belgium



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Commission a range of respite services that provide staff with sufficient skills, expertise, equipment and facilities to meet the needs of families supporting persons with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities.



Description of the practice

Since 2015, the Ligue des Familles has expanded its baby-sitting services to families with children with disabilities, giving parents access to a respite service. This service was developed in collaboration with expert stakeholders. It includes revised mechanisms and procedures and specialised training for the baby-sitters. This service is accessible through the French speaking region of Belgium on a home-based basis, affordable, flexible and centred around the needs of the family as it does not have fixed opening hours. It contributes to inclusion of the whole family by ensuring parents can access respite and children can benefit from a service that is adapted to their needs.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

Parents of children with disabilities are often more than parents, they are also the family carers of their children. Access to quality respite service is crucial for these parents who often struggle to balance out work and social life with their various care duties. The Baby-Sitting Pour Tous programme offers a complementary solution to parents to the various respite services that exist at the regional level in Belgium, by offering a flexible option for parents.



Practitioner

Ligue des Familles (NGO and COFACE member).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

Finding time and adjusting life to a child is often a challenging step for young parents and baby-sitting is a wide-spread option to access some respite time. However, it might be daunting to leave your children with someone, it requires trust, whether your child has special needs or not. Hence, knowing that the person has received special training is an added value. Look around, do such services exist in your region? If so are they accessible to children with special needs?



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

The practice supports the Article 5 “Equality and non-discrimination”, Article 7 “Children with disabilities”, Article 19 “Living independently and being included in the community”, and Article 23 “Respect for home and family life”.



Supporting material

[Baby-Sitting Pour Tous webpage](#)



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the objectives “Accessibility – an enabler of rights, autonomy and equality”, “Decent quality of life and living independently”, and “Equal Access and non-discrimination” of the Strategy.



Empowering families to find tailor-made and community-based solutions which work for all – Bulgaria



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Increase the use of participatory and empowering methodologies to solve family conflicts and plan support.



Description of the practice

Practised across many European countries, Family Group Conferencing (FGC) was introduced in Bulgaria a few years ago by the Tulip Foundation. It strictly follows the well described principles, values and processes of the Family group decision-making method. It is focused on empowering citizens through inclusion, participation, mutual self-reliance and staying in maximum control of one’s own life. It is based on five key elements - an independent coordinator; time and resources for network searching; private time for the family group; agreeing family group’s plan over other possible plans and services; agencies support for the implementation of the family plan. It brings people together in a way that everyone is part of society, participates, has a voice, receives support, is connected and ready to support others. It is a rights-based method in full compliance with the UNCRPD and UNCRC.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

The FGC method allows for well-balanced support that brings together the resources of the family, the wider social circle and the respective agencies and services (medical, social, educational, etc.). This approach provides maximal independence and prevents social exclusion. Persons with disabilities and their families can participate actively in the process on an equal basis. For example, the process supports persons with disabilities by giving them practical choices in defining the form of their independent living, rather than being dictated to. The process is a flexible instrument which allows the specific needs of persons with disabilities and their families to be taken into account. This flexibility means that the support adapts to the person, family, and situation with ease. As a result, numerous studies in different countries show the same consistent outcomes: people (with disabilities) and their families feel heard, stay connected, children and young people with disabilities have long term support from a family network, even in times of crisis or severe problems.



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the sub-objectives “Developing independent living and reinforcing community-based services”, and “Ensuring safety and protection” of the Strategy.



Practitioner

Tulip Foundation (NGO and COFACE member).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

In some cases, when families have experienced this way of coming together, they initiate a family group conference on their own, sometimes with multiple generations in their family. See if the FGC network has a contact point in your country, and connect with them to find out more.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

This practice supports Article 7 “Children with disabilities” and Article 19 “Living independently and being included in the community” and Article 23 “Respect for home and the family”.



Supporting material

- [Tulip Foundation](#)
- [Family Group Conferencing network](#)



Early intervention support for families of children with disabilities (0-3 years) – Bulgaria



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Offer subsidised or free training to family members providing care and/or support to persons with disabilities, especially to those with severe disabilities.



Description of the practice

The Karin Dom foundation provides an Early Intervention Programme which supports families with babies and young children (0-3 years old) with disabilities. Counsellors visit families' homes to raise awareness of the child's needs and then work together with the family to plan future support. This programme also provides services out of the home which allow families to form broader support networks.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

This programme adopts the whole society, whole family vision defended in S.H.I.F.T. It empowers the family to work alongside professionals to better understand and assess the needs of their child and plan together the most appropriate support. The programme focuses on interventions that highlight the child's strengths and build a positive home and community environment. The home visits allow the child and the family to hold the keys on how to best implement this support in their family and community environment, linking as well with the centre's team of specialists. Giving families and communities this support has significantly reduced child abandonment and institutionalisation.



Practitioner

This practice is operated by the Karin Dom Foundation (NGO).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

Does your local community also offer such in-house support to families of children with disabilities? If yes, please tell us more about it! If not, strike up a conversation with community leaders about setting up such a network.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

The practice supports Article 23 "Respect for home and the family", Article 8 "Awareness raising", Article 19 "Living independently and being included in the community", and Article 7 "Children with Disabilities".



Supporting material

[Early intervention programme webpage](#)

[Youtube video on the programme](#)



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the sub-objective "Developing independent living and reinforcing community-based services" of the Strategy.



A label for employers supporting family carers – France



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Strengthen work-life balance measures for parents or spouses of persons with disabilities, with special leaves and financial support in case of high support needs.



Description of the practice

The Cap'Handeo is a label for organisations/companies which recognise and offer support to their employees with caring responsibilities. To achieve this label, organisations must implement initiatives such as providing financial support, flexible working arrangements, leaves, and specialised mental health support. Attaining the label is a long-term commitment to supporting employees with caring responsibilities. The label embeds itself in a process of organisational change which allows family carers to balance their employment with their caring responsibilities. It also acknowledges the diversity of family carers by providing individualised support to fit their own needs.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

Reconciling work and care duties is often very complicated. For family carers of persons with disabilities, achieving work-life balance is still far from an easily attainable goal. These persons, women in the vast majority of the cases, are pushed out the employment market that does not acknowledge their reality, or have to reduce their working hours. This situation is a threat to family carers, and the persons they care for or support, often pushing them into poverty and social exclusion. As discrimination by association is not fully recognised, some avoid telling their employers about their caring duties. However, the number of family carers is rising every year. Labels such as Cap'Handeo raise awareness about their situation in the professional environment and support willing employers to cater for the needs of their employees with caring duties.



Practitioner

This practice is implemented by KLESIA (service provider) and Handéo Services (NGO).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

According to Eurostat, more than 12 million Europeans care for ill, elderly and/or disabled relatives, the majority of them are women, with the ageing population these numbers are likely to rise. Carer-friendly companies can help ensure that carers do not have to leave their work if they do not wish to.

Want to know more about what can be done for family carers? Check the COFACE Disability European Charter for Family Carers.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

The practice supports Article 27 "Work and employment" and Article 28 "Adequate standard of living and social protection".



Supporting material

[Cap'Handeo Website](#)



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the sub-objective "Consolidating social protection systems" of the Strategy if family carers are included in the follow-up actions.



Training manuals on sexual and reproductive health and rights for young people with learning disabilities - Europe



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Provide sexuality education and parenting support to persons with disabilities.



Description of the practice

The International Federation for Planned Parenthood has developed training manuals for organisations who wish to educate and sensitize staff, teachers and carers about the sexual and reproductive health and rights of young people with mild to moderate learning disabilities. From 2013-2015, they ran a project to empower young people with learning disabilities to protect themselves against sexual abuse and violence, harnessing best practice, expertise and proven strategies from IPPF members in Europe with extensive experience in this area. The project was called 'Keep Me Safe'. This work was co-funded by the European Commission (DG Justice - Daphne III Programme).



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

The training guides are human-rights based and define persons with learning disabilities as sexual beings with sexual rights (as well as the right to protection and the right to autonomy). Empowering young people who have a learning disability to protect themselves against sexual abuse and violence requires acknowledgement and respect of their sexuality from their carers alongside guidance on protection and appropriate behaviour.



Practitioner

International Planned Parenthood Federation (international NGO).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

Knowledge about your own body and how it works, including sexuality and reproduction, is essential for your health and well-being, it is a fundamental right. It is part of the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR). Do not be embarrassed to strike up a conversation about this with your friends, or consult a professional to get advice about this. Check out the training manuals of IPPF to get some inspiration.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

This practice supports Article 23 "Respect for home and the family", Article 6 "Women with disabilities", Article 7 "Children with disabilities", Article 24 "Education", and Article 25 "Health".



Supporting material

[Keep me Safe –Training Manuals](#)



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the sub-objectives "Equal access to social protection, healthcare, education" and "Ensuring safety and protection" of the Strategy.



Building peer support to family carers of persons with disabilities – France



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Strengthen family, parents' / family carers' networks, and foster peer support.



Description of the practice

Since 2017, APF France Handicap has been offering an awareness-raising/training action called "RePairs Aidants" to support family carers. It offers information and a peer sharing experience to support them in their care responsibilities (How to take care of their own health? Which financial support scheme can they access? How to work with service providers?) but also more specific "how-to" trainings. This programme has the particularity of adopting a co-production approach in both its conception and its management as family carers are closely involved in every step. The programme itself is carried out by family carers, called "peer trainers" and professionals, called "pro trainers". The peer trainers have themselves the opportunity to be trained before starting to conduct trainings with the pro trainers, as a pair, for groups of family carers on one or more of 10 proposed themes.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

Several million family carers in France regularly help, by default or by choice, one or more of their relatives who need support due to health, disability, or ageing reasons. Yet, little is done to grant them social rights and recognition and the situation can lead to isolation and exclusion. The support family carers provide may be on a permanent or temporary basis and may take various forms, including care, educational and social support, administrative formalities, travel, coordination, psychological support or domestic activities. This programme builds peer support to family carers of persons with disabilities, contributing to their health and well-being, and creating a favourable family and community environment for children and adults with disabilities.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

This practice supports Article 8 "Awareness-raising", Article 19 "Living independently and being included in the community", Article 23 "Respect for home and the family", and Article 28 "Adequate standard of living and social protection".



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the sub-objectives "Developing independent living and reinforcing community-based services" and "Consolidating social protection systems" of the Strategy.



Practitioner

APF France Handicap (NGO and COFACE Disability member).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

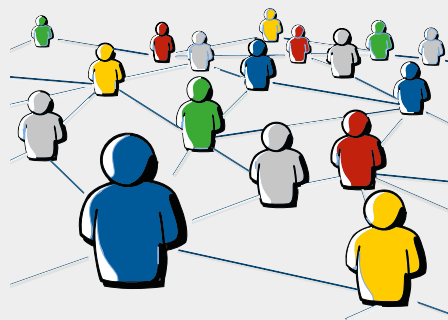
Are you a family carer or do you know a family carer? Their actions are invaluable for their family and society. Strike up a conversation with your friends, colleagues or family about caring for family members. Have a look at our COFACE Disability European Charter for Family Carers to see what can be done for family carers in Europe.



Supporting material

- [RePair Aidants webpage](#)
- [Testimony of a participant and family carers](#)
- [Webinar recording on RePair Aidants on COFACE TV](#)

SUPPORT HUMAN RIGHTS INDEPENDENCE FAMILIES TRANSITION



The whole society embraces the value of inclusion, persons with disabilities and their families participate actively in every area of life as their equal opportunities are promoted and respected.



A local policy approach to mainstreaming anti-discrimination and equal access for all - Denmark



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Mainstream disability across all policy areas and consolidate policy frameworks based on the promotion and protection of human rights, non-discrimination, tolerance, respect for diversity, equality of opportunity, solidarity, security, and participation of all.



Description of the practice

The local authority of Syddjurs in Denmark has adopted a holistic disability policy, based on the UNCRPD, aiming at ensuring that every local authority service is accessible to persons with disabilities, following a non-discrimination and equal opportunities approach. The policy aims at improving accessibility and fostering the meaningful inclusion in the community in all areas of public life, making mainstream services available from the built environment and transport to culture and leisure. All new projects will need to fit these requirements. Public servants working in the local authority receive training about the policy in order to implement it correctly in their daily work.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

This action puts S.H.I.F.T. into practice by offering a holistic, person-centred, whole family support to persons with disabilities in the local authority. The policy encompasses several areas and has specific actions targeting families of children with disabilities. By being proactive in the communication with the families they aim to support family carers and persons with disabilities to live independent lives and be included in the community. Additionally, public servants are trained on the human rights model and how to apply it in their daily work on general public life matters.



Practitioner

Municipality of Syddjurs (Local authority).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

If you are a citizen participating in local assemblies, ask your local politicians the question: are all local services accessible to persons with disabilities and their families? If you are a local civil servant, trigger a discussion internally about human rights training and the need to ensure local services fully reach out to all types of families without discrimination.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

The practice supports the Article 5 "Equality and non-discrimination", Article 19 "Living independently and being included in the community", Article 20 "Personal mobility", Article 23 "Respect for home and family life".



Supporting material

[Syddjurs Kommune Disability Policy](#)



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the objectives "Accessibility –an enabler of rights, autonomy and equality;" and "Decent quality of life and living independently" and "Equal Access and non-discrimination", especially sub-objective "Ensuring safety and protection" of the Strategy.



Awareness-raising campaign giving visibility to children with disabilities excluded from formal education - France



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Create awareness-raising campaigns and programmes promoting greater social awareness towards persons with disabilities, informing on their different needs and abilities in society, and affirming their dignity as human beings.



Description of the practice

#J'aipasécole (#NoSchoolForMe) is an awareness-raising campaign on the situation of the thousands of children with disabilities across France who are being denied their right to education. This initiative calls on the families of these children to send testimonies to highlight the experiences of children who are either provided with limited education which does not suit their needs or are unable to go to school at all. For three years in a row, this campaign has highlighted that the back-to-school season is not a reality for all children, despite their rights under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

#J'aipasécole gives visibility to the voices of children with disabilities and their families, who are seldom heard, through collating a database of their experiences. The information is provided directly by the persons whose rights are violated and also gives a space for their relatives to express how it affects them. Therefore, the policy recommendations and advocacy that comes out of this initiative are based on this collection of real-life experiences. The campaign uses a rights-based approach, linking children's experiences to their rights under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.



Practitioner

UNAPEI (NGO and COFACE Disability member).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

Check out the campaign webpage and think about your own country. Does the back-to-school season there really concern all children? Who is excluded from it? Education is a right for every child, inclusive education systems are crucial to create inclusive societies!



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

The practice supports Article 8 "Awareness raising" and Article 24 "Education".



Supporting material

[Marentée.com](https://marentee.com) -campaign website



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the sub-objectives "Equal access to social protection, healthcare, education and goods and services including housing" and "Inclusive and accessible education" of the Strategy.



Nest model- School for neuro-divergents and neuro-typical children - Denmark



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Foster an attitude of respect for the rights of persons with disabilities at all levels of the education system, including in all children from an early age.



Description of the practice

Nest is a pioneering school programme developed in New York where children with and without special needs are taught together the same programme using a pedagogy that caters for children on the autism spectrum disorder (ASD). It stands on human and educational values ensuring that all children learn and thrive and are given the same opportunities. Nest schools have Nest trained staff who use targeted co-teaching methods aiming to benefit and cater for the individual needs of each child. The classroom and school facilities are also equipped to adapt to sensory needs of children on the spectrum. Parents, teacher and children closely collaborate to create a learning community. The local authority of Aarhus has adopted the Nest approach after a study visit in New York. Since September 2015, there has been a close collaboration between New York University, PPR Aarhus and Katrinebjergskolen on competence development and start-up of the first Nest classes outside New York. Today they have 11 Nest classes, with trained teachers.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

The Nest programme puts in practice the principle of inclusive education by fully integrating children with ASD in the mainstream education system. The creation of new teaching models and techniques show that the practice is following the inclusion approach defended in S.H.I.F.T. integrating children centred adaptation to the school environment and teaching methods with well-trained staff. It does not simply integrate children on the autism spectrum in a system that was created for neuro-typical children and is not adapted to their capacities and needs. It is a learning environment with autism friendly approaches for all children allowing them to thrive in a structured and safe context. Children learning together help to foster a spirit of acceptance, non-discrimination and boost the social skills of all.



Practitioner

Municipality of Aarhus (Local Authority) and the Egmont Foundation



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

Think about your school or university – is it/was it inclusive? Inclusive education is a right and should be implemented in all the EU, no child should be left without education. However, in most countries it is not the case. Worldwide it is estimated that 50% of children with disabilities are excluded from the education system. Check out the practice “J’aiPasEcole” in this report highlighting the situation in France.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

The practice supports Article 24 “Education”, Article 7 “Children with disabilities” and Article 8 “Awareness-raising”.



Supporting material

- [Nest Support Website](#)
- [Webpage of the Aarhus Commune](#)
- [Evaluation of the Nest programme](#)



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the sub-objectives “Equal access to social protection, healthcare, education and goods and services including housing” and “Inclusive and accessible education” of the Strategy.



Boosting representation of persons with disabilities in advertising - Global



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Encourage the media to increase the representation of persons with disabilities, in movies, series, TV shows, and advertising, portraying them in a positive way.



Description of the practice

The recently published report 'Promoting diversity and inclusion in advertising: a UNICEF playbook' provides businesses with a clear strategic route to foster diverse representation and inclusion of persons with disabilities in their advertisements and products for children. The playbook presents tools, guidelines, and key examples of organisations already engaged in this shift. A crucial element is the 'transformative model' which aims to track businesses progress from discriminatory to aware to transformative practice. Beyond this, it lays out implementation measures to ensure that the ideas and inspiration found in the playbook can be put into action. For example, the introduction of qualitative and quantitative targets, diversifying workforces, and assigning clear budgets for inclusion and diversity work.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

The playbook is grounded in a rights-based approach, referring to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It challenges commonly-held stereotypes and emphasises how discrimination within advertising affects the realisation of persons with disabilities' rights. In boosting the representation of persons with disabilities, the playbook highlights the importance of authentic, intersectional representation of persons with disabilities. The report pushes marketers to create advertisements which highlight the diversity among persons with disabilities and defends their individual agency. The examples presented in the report make it clear that the shift is beginning to a certain extent and that with the guidance in the playbook further representation can be encouraged.



Practitioner

This initiative is from UNICEF (International Organisation) with support from the LEGO group (Industry).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

When next watching television, examine how persons with disabilities are represented. Are they represented at all? Is their representation grounded in harmful stereotypes? Do they emphasise intersectionality and diversity within characters with disabilities?



Supporting material

[UNICEF playbook](#)



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

The practice supports Article 8 "Awareness raising", Article 7 "Children with Disabilities", Article 5 "Equality and Non-discrimination".



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the objective "Leading by example" of the Strategy.



Creating inclusive and diverse toys which represent children with disabilities – Global



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Incentivise the toy industry to represent disability and to create toys adapted to children with different kinds of disabilities.



Description of the practice

Empowering children through purposeful play is at the core of Mattel’s mission. Today it is one of the most diverse and inclusive toy companies in the world, and its multiple brands contribute to this social mission. Barbie, for instance, continues to evolve and modernize the product line to maintain relevance with today’s parents and children, with a range of dolls with diverse and inclusive looks – with or without hair, using a wheelchair, with prosthetic limbs, with vitiligo. Barbie also has an international role models programme, with doll replicas of paralympian athletes. As part of Barbie’s Inspiring Women series, Mattel has also recently unveiled a doll based on Helen Keller, a deaf blind disability advocate and famous author and educator. Additionally, Mattel strives to make their other brands accessible such as Braille and Colourblind UNO card games, and diversifying its Hot Wheels toy cars to include models such as the Wheelie Chair, inspired by a wheelchair athlete. Other Mattel relevant brands like American Girl also continue to contribute to the visibility of children with disabilities and their inclusion by offering toy hearing aids. Fisher Price, another Mattel brand is working on awareness raising by having inclusive advertising campaigns.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

Children, parents, family members, education professionals, use toys in their everyday life – hence inclusive and diverse toys and play can help reach a non-discriminatory, tolerant and respectful society, and this education must start at the earliest ages. Mattel’s inclusivity efforts include the making of products and contents whereby all children can feel represented and can play with, and this of course comprises the representation of disabilities, which contributes to awareness and acceptance of children with disabilities.



Practitioner

Mattel (multinational toy company).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

When buying toys, explore the different sections and try to identify toys representing children in all their diversity, including with different abilities, or see if certain toys have special accessibility features.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

This practice supports Article 5 “Equality and non-discrimination”, Article 7 “Children with disabilities”, 8 “Awareness-raising” and Article 9 “Accessibility”.



Supporting material

[Barbie Diversity Collection](#)



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the objectives “Accessibility – enabler of rights, autonomy and equality” and “Promoting the rights of persons with disabilities globally” of the Strategy.



Human Rights Education making its way into school curriculum - Finland



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Include human rights education in school curricula.



Description of the practice

For several years, Finland has been taking steps to transform its approach to solidifying human rights education (HRE). This is a holistic approach to ensure that every child can know and claim their rights through embedding human rights values across the core national curriculum. In 2014, the Finnish National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) released a report detailing the state of play of Finnish human rights education. Advocacy from this NHRI led the Finnish Government to commit to further implementation of HRE into the curriculum. This is highlighted in the 2017-2019 'National Action Plan for Human Rights and Fundamental Rights' and will also play a large part in the 'National Democracy Programme 2025'. The aim is to establish a systematic, comprehensive approach to HRE, both in the curriculum itself and in teacher education.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

The systematic and comprehensive inclusion of human rights education in school curricula is key to developing a rights-based approach to supporting persons with disabilities and their families. This practice acknowledges shortcomings in State practice and sets out clear plans on tackling these gaps. Finland received several recommendations from the United Nations in its Universal Periodic Review in 2012 and 2017 to improve its HRE. For example, HRE must be implemented into teacher training programmes. This practice highlights how, with the support of NHRIs' human rights expertise, national departments for education can use international human rights monitoring processes to transform their societies.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

The practice supports the Article 4 "General Obligation", Article 33 "National implementation and monitoring", and Article 8 "Awareness Raising".



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the objective "Awareness, governance and measuring progress" of the Strategy.



Practitioner

The Finnish Government (Public authority) and the Finnish Human Rights Centre (NHRI).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

Take a look at how human rights education is being implemented in your country. The UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2011 lays out that every country must provide adequate human rights education. What are your National Human Rights Institutions doing to support your government in making this right a reality? You can use this webresource: [Human Rights Education State Monitoring Tool for State Parties or NHRIs](#)



Supporting material

- [Democracy and Human Rights Education in Finland](#)
- [Baseline study on Human Rights Education \(2014\)](#)



Accessible technology with built-in features that work the way you do - Global



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Implement Universal Design principles into new developments in the areas of ICT, transport, the built environment and product development.



Description of the practice

Apple devices come standard with built-in accessibility features that let people experience everything that the iPhone, iPad, Mac, Apple Watch, Apple TV, HomePod, and iPod touch have to offer. It makes Apple products more accessible to persons with different abilities and offers more possibility to use communication and ICT devices that cater for individual needs. Apple’s Human Interface Guidelines resemble the principle of Inclusive Design to make their products available to the maximum of users. Apple also encourages developers to use Inclusive Design and take advantage of the accessibility APIs available on all Apple platforms. Apple’s annual Worldwide Developers Conference (WWDC) provides a variety of sessions to developers, including those dedicated to raising awareness on the importance of accessibility. Apple’s efforts on inclusive design and accessibility have been recognised with a variety of awards around the globe.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

Building in accessible designs in product development should be a requirement for any product coming to the market. The adoption of this principle by a major industry player contributes to a better inclusion of persons with disabilities in the ICT world as the most commonly used products are available to all. It also works as awareness raising as most of the accessibility features are available on every apple product, whether the user needs them at the moment or not. Lastly, Apple has the opportunity to lead by example in setting strong accessibility standards for the industry to follow.



Practitioner

Apple (ICT industry).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

You are an Apple product user? Go and check in your settings the “Accessibility” tab.

An Apple Store near you may also provide ‘Today At Apple – Accessibility’ sessions which can teach you the basics of using assistive technologies on Apple devices ([Check Availabilities Here](#)).



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

The practice supports Article 21 “Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information” and Article 30 “Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport”.



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the objectives “Accessibility –an enabler of rights, autonomy and equality” and “Equal Access and non-discrimination” of the Strategy.



Supporting material

- [Apple UK Accessibility Website](#)
- [Apple Human Interface Guidelines](#)
- [iPhone User Guide for Accessibility Features](#)
- [Apple Accessibility Tutorials on YouTube](#)
- [Accessibility and Inclusion Video Collection from WWDC 2021](#)
- [Accessibility for Developers](#)



Supporting persons with disabilities to access property - Malta



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Reinforce anti-discrimination law at all levels.



Description of the practice

To access property in Malta, one needs to subscribe to a life insurance. Persons with disabilities are often denied access to such insurance schemes, and the Maltese Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability has been campaigning against this discriminatory practice. The Maltese Ministry for Social Accommodation collaborated with the Ministry for Inclusion and Social wellbeing to create the New Hope Guarantee scheme to support persons with disabilities to become homeowners by acting as guarantors for loans up to 250 000 euros for a primary residence. Persons with disabilities need to meet some criteria to qualify and prove that they have been rejected under the life insurance schemes in order for their application to be accepted. This officially acknowledges the discrimination existing in housing market practices and provides a practical solution to address the discrimination that persons with disabilities face in accessing property in Malta.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

Being denied the right to housing based on one's disability is not coherent with the Maltese 'Equal Opportunities Act' and international standards. Hence, promoting equality measures to right the wrongs of this discriminatory practice is a way of reinforcing anti-discrimination law to the fullest extent. This is essential since finding suitable housing for persons with disabilities is a challenge - a recent OECD report raised the alarm on the state of the housing market in OECD countries. Few housing units are adapted to the needs of persons with disabilities, which stands in the way of independent living. Adaptations made to rental housing are subject to the agreement of the landlords, and there can be discrimination at this level too. Access to suitable housing is an important step in the deinstitutionalisation agenda. By working to address discrimination in access to property, the Maltese State strives to ensure that persons with disabilities and their families have housing options available and strengthens their right to choice.



Practitioner

Maltese Ministry for Social Accommodation and Ministry for Inclusion and Social Wellbeing (Public Authorities).



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

Access to property is a growing challenge in Europe. Are you aware of the regulation in your country in this area? Have you already tried to look at them from an anti-discrimination angle or read a report about how accessing property can be more challenging for some? Discrimination is not only an interpersonal phenomenon, it can be rooted in our political, housing, social, educational systems.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

The practice supports UNCRPD Article 5 "Equality and non-discrimination", Article 8 "Awareness-raising" and Article 23 "Respect for home and the family".



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the sub-objectives "Moving and residing freely" and "Equal access to social protection, healthcare, education and goods and services including housing" of the Strategy.



Supporting material

- [Article on the New Hope Guarantee Scheme on the CRPD website](#)
- [Ministry website](#)
- [Website of the Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability](#)
- ["A crisis on the horizon, Ensuring affordable, accessible housing for people with disabilities." OECD report](#)



Empower persons with disabilities in exercising their human rights and citizenship – France



S.H.I.F.T. Action

Involve persons with disabilities and their caregivers in consultations to understand their safety and dignity concerns, the barriers they face, and how to overcome these.



Description of the practice

The initiative CapDroits aims at bringing together citizens and scientists to discuss societal topics, including concerning the rights of persons with disabilities. CapDroits is organized regionally and works along different thematic strands, following a common working method of alternating sessions of knowledge co-creation based on the participants' experience at the local level and dialogue sessions to bring these findings together under the different forums. The variety of stakeholders it involves and its scientific approach makes CapDroits an important citizen-based resource to find solutions to the challenges society faces, such as exclusion. Every 3 years, CapDroits organises a conference called Confcap which aims to promote dialogue between citizens in situations of vulnerability due to poverty, illness, disability or old age, professionals or users of social, health or medical-social services, researchers in social or legal sciences, activists, caregivers, social workers, doctors, administrators, elected officials, administrative executives... The latest event in July 2021 focused on the theme of "Independent living, choice and inclusion in society" and the outcomes of the conference will be published in a booklet to feed into public debate.



How does it contribute to the S.H.I.F.T.?

Every person in a vulnerable situation can participate in the CapDroits working strand and in the triennial ConfCap conferences on an equal footing with researchers and practitioners. Every voice and expertise is welcome and considered in the debates. The project is driven by UNCRPD Article 19 on Independent living. The key findings and recommendations are used to shape policy and legislation from national to local level in France.



Practitioner

Alliance of NGOs, experts by experience and academic organisations.



How to #BeTheSHIFT?

We all are expert in something. Sometimes this expertise comes from books and years of studies but it can also be drawn by our own lived and personal experience. Have you ever considered yourself as an expert and looked for places where this expertise could be useful to others? Have a look at initiatives like CapDroits that may be in place in your region.



How does it boost the UNCRPD?

This practice supports Article 5 "Equality and non-discrimination", Article 19 "Living independently and being included in the community", and Article 29 "Participation in political and public life".



Supporting material

[CapDroits Webpage](#)



How does it fit under the 2021-2030 EU Disability Rights Strategy?

This practice supports the sub-objectives "Fostering participation in the democratic process" and "Developing independent living and reinforcing community-based services" of the Strategy.

Conclusion

The natural conclusion after going through this collection of practices **is that the S.H.I.F.T. is happening all over Europe**. These 45 factsheets are 45 additional arguments to strengthen COFACE's work to achieve the meaningful inclusion of persons with disabilities and their families, grounding our advocacy in concrete practices. They are **the real-life examples showing that the actions we present in our S.H.I.F.T guide are not wishful thinking but are implementable**. The variety of practitioners that are acting to advance the inclusion agenda is also supporting the whole-society vision that COFACE laid out in the S.H.I.F.T. guide in 2019. From COFACE's position as a Civil Society Network with members in 23 European countries, **this report achieves part of our mission of bringing voices of the inclusion movement together to show a European-wide picture of this inclusive transition. It helps us build bridges and foster the dissemination of practices and projects beyond their region and country of implementation to create dialogues and knowledge exchanges across countries, and hopefully also inspire other world regions**. While there was a conscious decision to focus on European practices in this report, some of the practices have a global reach. Furthermore with the 2030 SDGs, the UNCRPD global reach and the external dimension of the European Union Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in mind, we hope this report will help connect Europe with communities in other world regions which are also boosting the rights of persons with disabilities and their families.

We will keep building on the results of this collection of practices to **ensure that the principles, tools and actions of S.H.I.F.T. have a political resonance at the national, European and global level**. The potential of S.H.I.F.T. to be part of the solution for current policy files such as the European Pillar of Social Rights, the European Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the European Child Guarantee and the upcoming European Care Strategy, to name a few, has never been clearer. Hence, we will keep using it a tool to advance the rights of persons with disabilities and their families and **keep calling on every relevant stakeholder to join the movement and #BeTheSHIFT**. Whether you are a policy-maker working on the implementation of the UNCRPD or the European Strategy for the Rights of Persons with

Disabilities, a mother or father, a service provider, a teacher, a researcher, an employer... Make sure to consider how the S.H.I.F.T. actions can support your work to meaningfully include persons with disabilities and their families and how it can be implemented in practice!

Acknowledgements

We want to end this publication by again giving our thanks to all the people that have participated in this report. Every response we received through the survey presented valuable insights into the diversity of the practices fostering inclusion all over Europe, even if they ultimately did not make it to the final list, all of them helped us shape this report.

We also want to thank COFACE members who helped translate the S.H.I.F.T. survey in 15 languages allowing us to extend our reach to persons with disabilities, practitioners, communities and all relevant stakeholders, all over Europe. Thanks to our members and partners in Brussels and at national level who have helped us spread the survey broadly, it contributed to enrich the diversity of practices in this report.

Thanks to all who took the time to work with us through the process of validation of the factsheets by sending us information and corrections to ensure that the information in this report represents their work accurately.

Thanks to our EU partners who, even though they do not figure in this report as practitioners, have taken time to help us strengthen the report by using their expertise and knowledge to direct us towards practices and contacts who helped us collect practices to illustrate each of the 45 S.H.I.F.T. actions. Especially, to the European Network for Independent Living, the European Disability Forum, EQUINET, the EU Fundamental Rights Agency, the EU Social Protection Committee, and many more.

We hope that this report will be useful to all who have helped shape it, and we encourage you to connect, exchange, organise study visits, and test the resources in the report.

Annex:

United Nations CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Preamble

The States Parties to the present Convention,

A. *Recalling* the principles proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations which recognize the inherent dignity and worth and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family as the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

B. *Recognizing* that the United Nations, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the International Covenants on Human Rights, has proclaimed and agreed that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind,

C. *Reaffirming* the universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and the need for persons with disabilities to be guaranteed their full enjoyment without discrimination,

D. *Recalling* the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families,

E. *Recognizing* that disability is an evolving concept and that disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others,

F. *Recognizing* the importance of the principles and policy guidelines contained in the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons and in the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities in influencing the promotion, formulation and evaluation of the policies, plans, programmes and actions at the national, regional and international levels to further equalize opportunities for persons with disabilities,

G. *Emphasizing* the importance of mainstreaming disability issues as an integral part of relevant strategies of sustainable development,

H. *Recognizing also* that discrimination against any person on the basis of disability is a violation of the inherent dignity and worth of the human person,

I. *Recognizing further* the diversity of persons with disabilities,

J. *Recognizing* the need to promote and protect the human rights of all persons with disabilities, including those who require more intensive support,

K. *Concerned* that, despite these various instruments and undertakings, persons with disabilities continue to face barriers in their participation as equal members of society and violations of their human rights in all parts of the world,

L. *Recognizing* the importance of international cooperation for improving the living conditions of persons with disabilities in every country, particularly in developing countries,

M. *Recognizing* the valued existing and potential contributions made by persons with disabilities to the overall well-being and diversity of their communities, and that the promotion of the full enjoyment by persons with disabilities of their human rights and fundamental freedoms and of full participation by persons with disabilities will result in their enhanced sense of belonging and in significant advances in the human, social and economic development of society and the eradication of poverty,

N. *Recognizing* the importance for persons with disabilities of their individual autonomy and independence, including the freedom to make their own choices,

O. *Considering* that persons with disabilities should have the opportunity to be actively involved in decision-making processes about policies and programmes, including those directly concerning them,

P. *Concerned* about the difficult conditions faced by persons with disabilities who are subject to multiple or aggravated forms of discrimination on the basis of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic, indigenous or social origin, property, birth, age or other status,

Q. *Recognizing* that women and girls with disabilities are often at greater risk, both within and outside the home, of violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation,

R. *Recognizing* that children with disabilities should have full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with other children, and recalling obligations to that end undertaken by States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child,

S. *Emphasizing* the need to incorporate a gender perspective in all efforts to promote the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms by persons with disabilities,

T. *Highlighting* the fact that the majority of persons with disabilities live in conditions of poverty, and in this regard recognizing the critical need to address the negative impact of poverty on persons with disabilities,

U. *Bearing in mind* that conditions of peace and security based on full respect for the purposes and principles contained in the Charter of the United Nations and observance of applicable human rights instruments are indispensable for the full protection of persons with disabilities, in particular during armed conflicts and foreign occupation,

V. *Recognizing* the importance of accessibility to the physical, social, economic and cultural environment, to health and education and to information and communication, in enabling persons with disabilities to fully enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms,

W. *Realizing* that the individual, having duties to other individuals and to the community to which he or she belongs, is under a responsibility to strive for the promotion and observance of the rights recognized in the International Bill of Human Rights,

X. *Convinced* that the family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State, and that persons with disabilities and their family members should receive the necessary protection and assistance to enable families to contribute towards the full and equal enjoyment of the rights of persons with disabilities,

Y. *Convinced* that a comprehensive and integral international convention to promote and protect the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities will make a significant contribution to redressing the profound social disadvantage of persons with disabilities and promote their participation in the civil, political, economic, social and cultural spheres with equal opportunities, in both developing and developed countries,

Have agreed as follows:

Article 1 **Purpose**

The purpose of the present Convention is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.

Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

Article 2 **Definitions**

For the purposes of the present Convention:

“Communication” includes languages, display of text, Braille, tactile communication, large print, accessible multimedia as well as written, audio, plain-language, human-reader and augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, including accessible information and communication technology;

“Language” includes spoken and signed languages and other forms of non spoken languages;

“Discrimination on the basis of disability” means any distinction, exclusion or restriction on the basis of disability which has the purpose or effect of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal basis with others, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field. It includes all forms of discrimination, including denial of reasonable accommodation;

“Reasonable accommodation” means necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms;

“Universal design” means the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be usable by all people,

to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. "Universal design" shall not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where this is needed.

Article 3

General principles

The principles of the present Convention shall be:

- a. Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices, and independence of persons;
- b. Non-discrimination;
- c. Full and effective participation and inclusion in society;
- d. Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity;
- e. Equality of opportunity;
- f. Accessibility;
- g. Equality between men and women;
- h. Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities.

Article 4

General obligations

1. States Parties undertake to ensure and promote the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all persons with disabilities without discrimination of any kind on the basis of disability. To this end, States Parties undertake:

- a. To adopt all appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized in the present Convention;
- b. To take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices that constitute discrimination against persons with disabilities;
- c. To take into account the protection and promotion of the human rights of persons with disabilities in all policies and programmes;
- d. To refrain from engaging in any act or practice that is inconsistent with the present Convention and to ensure that public authorities and institutions act in conformity with the present Convention;
- e. To take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability by any person, organization or private enterprise;
- f. To undertake or promote research and development of universally designed goods, services, equipment and facilities, as defined in article 2 of the present Convention, which should require the minimum possible adaptation and the least cost to meet the specific needs of a person with disabilities, to promote their availability and use, and to promote universal design in the development of standards and guidelines;
- g. To undertake or promote research and development of, and to promote the availability and use of new technologies, including information and communications technologies, mobility aids, devices and assistive technologies, suitable for persons with disabilities, giving priority to technologies at an affordable cost;
- h. To provide accessible information to persons with disabilities about mobility aids, devices and assistive technologies, including new technologies, as well as other forms of assistance, support services and facilities;
- i. To promote the training of professionals and staff working with persons with disabilities in the rights recognized in the present Convention so as to better provide the assistance and services guaranteed by those rights.

2. With regard to economic, social and cultural rights, each State Party undertakes to take measures to the maximum of its available resources and, where needed, within the framework of international cooperation, with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of these rights, without prejudice to those obligations contained in the present Convention that are immediately applicable according to international law.

3. In the development and implementation of legislation and policies to implement the present Convention,

and in other decision-making processes concerning issues relating to persons with disabilities, States Parties shall closely consult with and actively involve persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities, through their representative organizations.

4. Nothing in the present Convention shall affect any provisions which are more conducive to the realization of the rights of persons with disabilities and which may be contained in the law of a State Party or international law in force for that State. There shall be no restriction upon or derogation from any of the human rights and fundamental freedoms recognized or existing in any State Party to the present Convention pursuant to law, conventions, regulation or custom on the pretext that the present Convention does not recognize such rights or freedoms or that it recognizes them to a lesser extent.

5. The provisions of the present Convention shall extend to all parts of federal States without any limitations or exceptions.

Article 5

Equality and non-discrimination

1. States Parties recognize that all persons are equal before and under the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law.

2. States Parties shall prohibit all discrimination on the basis of disability and guarantee to persons with disabilities equal and effective legal protection against discrimination on all grounds.

3. In order to promote equality and eliminate discrimination, States Parties shall take all appropriate steps to ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided.

4. Specific measures which are necessary to accelerate or achieve de facto equality of persons with disabilities shall not be considered discrimination under the terms of the present Convention.

Article 6

Women with disabilities

1. States Parties recognize that women and girls with disabilities are subject to multiple discrimination, and in this regard shall take measures to ensure the full and equal enjoyment by them of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure the full development, advancement and empowerment of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of the human rights and fundamental freedoms set out in the present Convention.

Article 7

Children with disabilities

1. States Parties shall take all necessary measures to ensure the full enjoyment by children with disabilities of all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with other children.

2. In all actions concerning children with disabilities, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.

3. States Parties shall ensure that children with disabilities have the right to express their views freely on all matters affecting them, their views being given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity, on an equal basis with other children, and to be provided with disability and age-appropriate assistance to realize that right.

Article 8

Awareness-raising

1. States Parties undertake to adopt immediate, effective and appropriate measures:

a. To raise awareness throughout society, including at the family level, regarding persons with disabilities, and to foster respect for the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities;

b. To combat stereotypes, prejudices and harmful practices relating to persons with disabilities,

including those based on sex and age, in all areas of life;

- c. To promote awareness of the capabilities and contributions of persons with disabilities.
2. Measures to this end include:
 - a. Initiating and maintaining effective public awareness campaigns designed:
 - (i) To nurture receptiveness to the rights of persons with disabilities;
 - (ii) To promote positive perceptions and greater social awareness towards persons with disabilities;
 - (iii) To promote recognition of the skills, merits and abilities of persons with disabilities, and of their contributions to the workplace and the labour market;
 - b. Fostering at all levels of the education system, including in all children from an early age, an attitude of respect for the rights of persons with disabilities;
 - c. Encouraging all organs of the media to portray persons with disabilities in a manner consistent with the purpose of the present Convention;
 - d. Promoting awareness-training programmes regarding persons with disabilities and the rights of persons with disabilities.

Article 9 Accessibility

1. To enable persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life, States Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure to persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications, including information and communications technologies and systems, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas. These measures, which shall include the identification and elimination of obstacles and barriers to accessibility, shall apply to, inter alia:

- a. Buildings, roads, transportation and other indoor and outdoor facilities, including schools, housing, medical facilities and workplaces;
- b. Information, communications and other services, including electronic services and emergency services.
2. States Parties shall also take appropriate measures:
 - a. To develop, promulgate and monitor the implementation of minimum standards and guidelines for the accessibility of facilities and services open or provided to the public;
 - b. To ensure that private entities that offer facilities and services which are open or provided to the public take into account all aspects of accessibility for persons with disabilities;
 - c. To provide training for stakeholders on accessibility issues facing persons with disabilities;
 - d. To provide in buildings and other facilities open to the public signage in Braille and in easy to read and understand forms;
 - e. To provide forms of live assistance and intermediaries, including guides, readers and professional sign language interpreters, to facilitate accessibility to buildings and other facilities open to the public;
 - f. To promote other appropriate forms of assistance and support to persons with disabilities to ensure their access to information;
 - g. To promote access for persons with disabilities to new information and communications technologies and systems, including the Internet;
 - h. To promote the design, development, production and distribution of accessible information and communications technologies and systems at an early stage, so that these technologies and systems become accessible at minimum cost.

Article 10 Right to life

States Parties reaffirm that every human being has the inherent right to life and shall take all necessary measures to ensure its effective enjoyment by persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others.

Article 11

Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies

States Parties shall take, in accordance with their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law, all necessary measures to ensure the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risk, including situations of armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and the occurrence of natural disasters.

Article 12

Equal recognition before the law

1. States Parties reaffirm that persons with disabilities have the right to recognition everywhere as persons before the law.

2. States Parties shall recognize that persons with disabilities enjoy legal capacity on an equal basis with others in all aspects of life.

3. States Parties shall take appropriate measures to provide access by persons with disabilities to the support they may require in exercising their legal capacity.

4. States Parties shall ensure that all measures that relate to the exercise of legal capacity provide for appropriate and effective safeguards to prevent abuse in accordance with international human rights law. Such safeguards shall ensure that measures relating to the exercise of legal capacity respect the rights, will and preferences of the person, are free of conflict of interest and undue influence, are proportional and tailored to the person's circumstances, apply for the shortest time possible and are subject to regular review by a competent, independent and impartial authority or judicial body. The safeguards shall be proportional to the degree to which such measures affect the person's rights and interests.

5. Subject to the provisions of this article, States Parties shall take all appropriate and effective measures to ensure the equal right of persons with disabilities to own or inherit property, to control their own financial affairs and to have equal access to bank loans, mortgages and other forms of financial credit, and shall ensure that persons with disabilities are not arbitrarily deprived of their property.

Article 13

Access to justice

1. States Parties shall ensure effective access to justice for persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others, including through the provision of procedural and age-appropriate accommodations, in order to facilitate their effective role as direct and indirect participants, including as witnesses, in all legal proceedings, including at investigative and other preliminary stages.

2. In order to help to ensure effective access to justice for persons with disabilities, States Parties shall promote appropriate training for those working in the field of administration of justice, including police and prison staff.

Article 14

Liberty and security of person

1. States Parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others:

- a. Enjoy the right to liberty and security of person;
- b. Are not deprived of their liberty unlawfully or arbitrarily, and that any deprivation of liberty is in conformity with the law, and that the existence of a disability shall in no case justify a deprivation of liberty.

2. States Parties shall ensure that if persons with disabilities are deprived of their liberty through any process, they are, on an equal basis with others, entitled to guarantees in accordance with international human rights law and shall be treated in compliance with the objectives and principles of the present Convention, including by provision of reasonable accommodation.

Article 15

Freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

1. No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. In particular, no one shall be subjected without his or her free consent to medical or scientific experimentation.
2. States Parties shall take all effective legislative, administrative, judicial or other measures to prevent persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others, from being subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 16

Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social, educational and other measures to protect persons with disabilities, both within and outside the home, from all forms of exploitation, violence and abuse, including their gender-based aspects.
2. States Parties shall also take all appropriate measures to prevent all forms of exploitation, violence and abuse by ensuring, inter alia, appropriate forms of gender- and age-sensitive assistance and support for persons with disabilities and their families and caregivers, including through the provision of information and education on how to avoid, recognize and report instances of exploitation, violence and abuse. States Parties shall ensure that protection services are age-, gender- and disability-sensitive.
3. In order to prevent the occurrence of all forms of exploitation, violence and abuse, States Parties shall ensure that all facilities and programmes designed to serve persons with disabilities are effectively monitored by independent authorities.
4. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to promote the physical, cognitive and psychological recovery, rehabilitation and social reintegration of persons with disabilities who become victims of any form of exploitation, violence or abuse, including through the provision of protection services. Such recovery and reintegration shall take place in an environment that fosters the health, welfare, self-respect, dignity and autonomy of the person and takes into account gender- and age-specific needs.
5. States Parties shall put in place effective legislation and policies, including women- and child-focused legislation and policies, to ensure that instances of exploitation, violence and abuse against persons with disabilities are identified, investigated and, where appropriate, prosecuted.

Article 17

Protecting the integrity of the person

Every person with disabilities has a right to respect for his or her physical and mental integrity on an equal basis with others.

Article 18

Liberty of movement and nationality

1. States Parties shall recognize the rights of persons with disabilities to liberty of movement, to freedom to choose their residence and to a nationality, on an equal basis with others, including by ensuring that persons with disabilities:
 - a. Have the right to acquire and change a nationality and are not deprived of their nationality arbitrarily or on the basis of disability;
 - b. Are not deprived, on the basis of disability, of their ability to obtain, possess and utilize documentation of their nationality or other documentation of identification, or to utilize relevant processes such as immigration proceedings, that may be needed to facilitate exercise of the right to liberty of movement;
 - c. Are free to leave any country, including their own;
 - d. Are not deprived, arbitrarily or on the basis of disability, of the right to enter their own country.
2. Children with disabilities shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right from birth to a name, the right to acquire a nationality and, as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by their parents.

Article 19

Living independently and being included in the community

States Parties to the present Convention recognize the equal right of all persons with disabilities to live in the community, with choices equal to others, and shall take effective and appropriate measures to facilitate full enjoyment by persons with disabilities of this right and their full inclusion and participation in the community, including by ensuring that:

- a. Persons with disabilities have the opportunity to choose their place of residence and where and with whom they live on an equal basis with others and are not obliged to live in a particular living arrangement;
- b. Persons with disabilities have access to a range of in-home, residential and other community support services, including personal assistance necessary to support living and inclusion in the community, and to prevent isolation or segregation from the community;
- c. Community services and facilities for the general population are available on an equal basis to persons with disabilities and are responsive to their needs.

Article 20

Personal mobility

States Parties shall take effective measures to ensure personal mobility with the greatest possible independence for persons with disabilities, including by:

- a. Facilitating the personal mobility of persons with disabilities in the manner and at the time of their choice, and at affordable cost;
- b. Facilitating access by persons with disabilities to quality mobility aids, devices, assistive technologies and forms of live assistance and intermediaries, including by making them available at affordable cost;
- c. Providing training in mobility skills to persons with disabilities and to specialist staff working with persons with disabilities;
- d. Encouraging entities that produce mobility aids, devices and assistive technologies to take into account all aspects of mobility for persons with disabilities.

Article 21

Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities can exercise the right to freedom of expression and opinion, including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas on an equal basis with others and through all forms of communication of their choice, as defined in article 2 of the present Convention, including by:

- a. Providing information intended for the general public to persons with disabilities in accessible formats and technologies appropriate to different kinds of disabilities in a timely manner and without additional cost;
- b. Accepting and facilitating the use of sign languages, Braille, augmentative and alternative communication, and all other accessible means, modes and formats of communication of their choice by persons with disabilities in official interactions;
- c. Urging private entities that provide services to the general public, including through the Internet, to provide information and services in accessible and usable formats for persons with disabilities;
- d. Encouraging the mass media, including providers of information through the Internet, to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities;
- e. Recognizing and promoting the use of sign languages.

Article 22

Respect for privacy

1. No person with disabilities, regardless of place of residence or living arrangements, shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his or her privacy, family, home or correspondence or other types of communication or to unlawful attacks on his or her honour and reputation. Persons with disabilities have the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

2. States Parties shall protect the privacy of personal, health and rehabilitation information of persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others.

Article 23

Respect for home and the family

1. States Parties shall take effective and appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against persons with disabilities in all matters relating to marriage, family, parenthood and relationships, on an equal basis with others, so as to ensure that:
 - a. The right of all persons with disabilities who are of marriageable age to marry and to found a family on the basis of free and full consent of the intending spouses is recognized;
 - b. The rights of persons with disabilities to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to age-appropriate information, reproductive and family planning education are recognized, and the means necessary to enable them to exercise these rights are provided;
 - c. Persons with disabilities, including children, retain their fertility on an equal basis with others.
2. States Parties shall ensure the rights and responsibilities of persons with disabilities, with regard to guardianship, wardship, trusteeship, adoption of children or similar institutions, where these concepts exist in national legislation; in all cases the best interests of the child shall be paramount. States Parties shall render appropriate assistance to persons with disabilities in the performance of their child-rearing responsibilities.
3. States Parties shall ensure that children with disabilities have equal rights with respect to family life. With a view to realizing these rights, and to prevent concealment, abandonment, neglect and segregation of children with disabilities, States Parties shall undertake to provide early and comprehensive information, services and support to children with disabilities and their families.
4. States Parties shall ensure that a child shall not be separated from his or her parents against their will, except when competent authorities subject to judicial review determine, in accordance with applicable law and procedures, that such separation is necessary for the best interests of the child. In no case shall a child be separated from parents on the basis of a disability of either the child or one or both of the parents.
5. States Parties shall, where the immediate family is unable to care for a child with disabilities, undertake every effort to provide alternative care within the wider family, and failing that, within the community in a family setting.

Article 24

Education

1. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to education. With a view to realizing this right without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity, States Parties shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and lifelong learning directed to:
 - a. The full development of human potential and sense of dignity and self-worth, and the strengthening of respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and human diversity;
 - b. The development by persons with disabilities of their personality, talents and creativity, as well as their mental and physical abilities, to their fullest potential;
 - c. Enabling persons with disabilities to participate effectively in a free society.
2. In realizing this right, States Parties shall ensure that:
 - a. Persons with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system on the basis of disability, and that children with disabilities are not excluded from free and compulsory primary education, or from secondary education, on the basis of disability;
 - b. Persons with disabilities can access an inclusive, quality and free primary education and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live;
 - c. Reasonable accommodation of the individual's requirements is provided;
 - d. Persons with disabilities receive the support required, within the general education system, to facilitate their effective education;
 - e. Effective individualized support measures are provided in environments that maximize academic and social development, consistent with the goal of full inclusion.
3. States Parties shall enable persons with disabilities to learn life and social development skills to facilitate their full and equal participation in education and as members of the community. To this end, States Parties shall take appropriate measures, including:
 - a. Facilitating the learning of Braille, alternative script, augmentative and alternative modes, means

and formats of communication and orientation and mobility skills, and facilitating peer support and mentoring;

b. Facilitating the learning of sign language and the promotion of the linguistic identity of the deaf community;

c. Ensuring that the education of persons, and in particular children, who are blind, deaf or deafblind, is delivered in the most appropriate languages and modes and means of communication for the individual, and in environments which maximize academic and social development.

4. In order to help ensure the realization of this right, States Parties shall take appropriate measures to employ teachers, including teachers with disabilities, who are qualified in sign language and/or Braille, and to train professionals and staff who work at all levels of education. Such training shall incorporate disability awareness and the use of appropriate augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, educational techniques and materials to support persons with disabilities.

5. States Parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities are able to access general tertiary education, vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning without discrimination and on an equal basis with others. To this end, States Parties shall ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to persons with disabilities.

Article 25

Health

States Parties recognize that persons with disabilities have the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health without discrimination on the basis of disability. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure access for persons with disabilities to health services that are gender-sensitive, including health-related rehabilitation. In particular, States Parties shall:

a. Provide persons with disabilities with the same range, quality and standard of free or affordable health care and programmes as provided to other persons, including in the area of sexual and reproductive health and population-based public health programmes;

b. Provide those health services needed by persons with disabilities specifically because of their disabilities, including early identification and intervention as appropriate, and services designed to minimize and prevent further disabilities, including among children and older persons;

c. Provide these health services as close as possible to people's own communities, including in rural areas;

d. Require health professionals to provide care of the same quality to persons with disabilities as to others, including on the basis of free and informed consent by, inter alia, raising awareness of the human rights, dignity, autonomy and needs of persons with disabilities through training and the promulgation of ethical standards for public and private health care;

e. Prohibit discrimination against persons with disabilities in the provision of health insurance, and life insurance where such insurance is permitted by national law, which shall be provided in a fair and reasonable manner;

f. Prevent discriminatory denial of health care or health services or food and fluids on the basis of disability.

Article 26

Habilitation and rehabilitation

1. States Parties shall take effective and appropriate measures, including through peer support, to enable persons with disabilities to attain and maintain maximum independence, full physical, mental, social and vocational ability, and full inclusion and participation in all aspects of life. To that end, States Parties shall organize, strengthen and extend comprehensive habilitation and rehabilitation services and programmes, particularly in the areas of health, employment, education and social services, in such a way that these services and programmes:

a. Begin at the earliest possible stage, and are based on the multidisciplinary assessment of individual needs and strengths;

b. Support participation and inclusion in the community and all aspects of society, are voluntary, and are available to persons with disabilities as close as possible to their own communities, including in rural areas.

2. States Parties shall promote the development of initial and continuing training for professionals and staff working in habilitation and rehabilitation services.

3. States Parties shall promote the availability, knowledge and use of assistive devices and technologies, designed for persons with disabilities, as they relate to habilitation and rehabilitation.

Article 27

Work and employment

1. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others; this includes the right to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities. States Parties shall safeguard and promote the realization of the right to work, including for those who acquire a disability during the course of employment, by taking appropriate steps, including through legislation, to, inter alia:

- a. Prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability with regard to all matters concerning all forms of employment, including conditions of recruitment, hiring and employment, continuance of employment, career advancement and safe and healthy working conditions;
- b. Protect the rights of persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others, to just and favourable conditions of work, including equal opportunities and equal remuneration for work of equal value, safe and healthy working conditions, including protection from harassment, and the redress of grievances;
- c. Ensure that persons with disabilities are able to exercise their labour and trade union rights on an equal basis with others;
- d. Enable persons with disabilities to have effective access to general technical and vocational guidance programmes, placement services and vocational and continuing training;
- e. Promote employment opportunities and career advancement for persons with disabilities in the labour market, as well as assistance in finding, obtaining, maintaining and returning to employment;
- f. Promote opportunities for self-employment, entrepreneurship, the development of cooperatives and starting one's own business;
- g. Employ persons with disabilities in the public sector;
- h. Promote the employment of persons with disabilities in the private sector through appropriate policies and measures, which may include affirmative action programmes, incentives and other measures;
- i. Ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to persons with disabilities in the workplace;
- j. Promote the acquisition by persons with disabilities of work experience in the open labour market;
- k. Promote vocational and professional rehabilitation, job retention and return-to-work programmes for persons with disabilities.

2. States Parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities are not held in slavery or in servitude, and are protected, on an equal basis with others, from forced or compulsory labour.

Article 28

Adequate standard of living and social protection

1. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to an adequate standard of living for themselves and their families, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions, and shall take appropriate steps to safeguard and promote the realization of this right without discrimination on the basis of disability.

2. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to social protection and to the enjoyment of that right without discrimination on the basis of disability, and shall take appropriate steps to safeguard and promote the realization of this right, including measures:

- a. To ensure equal access by persons with disabilities to clean water services, and to ensure access to appropriate and affordable services, devices and other assistance for disability-related needs;
- b. To ensure access by persons with disabilities, in particular women and girls with disabilities and older persons with disabilities, to social protection programmes and poverty reduction programmes;
- c. To ensure access by persons with disabilities and their families living in situations of poverty to assistance from the State with disability-related expenses, including adequate training, counselling, financial assistance and respite care;
- d. To ensure access by persons with disabilities to public housing programmes;
- e. To ensure equal access by persons with disabilities to retirement benefits and programmes.

Article 29

Participation in political and public life

States Parties shall guarantee to persons with disabilities political rights and the opportunity to enjoy them on an equal basis with others, and shall undertake:

- a. To ensure that persons with disabilities can effectively and fully participate in political and public life on an equal basis with others, directly or through freely chosen representatives, including the right and opportunity for persons with disabilities to vote and be elected, inter alia, by:
 - (i) Ensuring that voting procedures, facilities and materials are appropriate, accessible and easy to understand and use;
 - (ii) Protecting the right of persons with disabilities to vote by secret ballot in elections and public referendums without intimidation, and to stand for elections, to effectively hold office and perform all public functions at all levels of government, facilitating the use of assistive and new technologies where appropriate;
 - (iii) Guaranteeing the free expression of the will of persons with disabilities as electors and to this end, where necessary, at their request, allowing assistance in voting by a person of their own choice;
- b. To promote actively an environment in which persons with disabilities can effectively and fully participate in the conduct of public affairs, without discrimination and on an equal basis with others, and encourage their participation in public affairs, including:
 - (i) Participation in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country, and in the activities and administration of political parties;
 - (ii) Forming and joining organizations of persons with disabilities to represent persons with disabilities at international, national, regional and local levels.

Article 30

Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport

1. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to take part on an equal basis with others in cultural life, and shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities:
 - a. Enjoy access to cultural materials in accessible formats;
 - b. Enjoy access to television programmes, films, theatre and other cultural activities, in accessible formats;
 - c. Enjoy access to places for cultural performances or services, such as theatres, museums, cinemas, libraries and tourism services, and, as far as possible, enjoy access to monuments and sites of national cultural importance.
2. States Parties shall take appropriate measures to enable persons with disabilities to have the opportunity to develop and utilize their creative, artistic and intellectual potential, not only for their own benefit, but also for the enrichment of society.
3. States Parties shall take all appropriate steps, in accordance with international law, to ensure that laws protecting intellectual property rights do not constitute an unreasonable or discriminatory barrier to access by persons with disabilities to cultural materials.
4. Persons with disabilities shall be entitled, on an equal basis with others, to recognition and support of their specific cultural and linguistic identity, including sign languages and deaf culture.
5. With a view to enabling persons with disabilities to participate on an equal basis with others in recreational, leisure and sporting activities, States Parties shall take appropriate measures:
 - a. To encourage and promote the participation, to the fullest extent possible, of persons with disabilities in mainstream sporting activities at all levels;
 - b. To ensure that persons with disabilities have an opportunity to organize, develop and participate in disability-specific sporting and recreational activities and, to this end, encourage the provision, on an equal basis with others, of appropriate instruction, training and resources;
 - c. To ensure that persons with disabilities have access to sporting, recreational and tourism venues;
 - d. To ensure that children with disabilities have equal access with other children to participation in play, recreation and leisure and sporting activities, including those activities in the school system;

e. To ensure that persons with disabilities have access to services from those involved in the organization of recreational, tourism, leisure and sporting activities.

Article 31

Statistics and data collection

1. States Parties undertake to collect appropriate information, including statistical and research data, to enable them to formulate and implement policies to give effect to the present Convention. The process of collecting and maintaining this information shall:

- a. Comply with legally established safeguards, including legislation on data protection, to ensure confidentiality and respect for the privacy of persons with disabilities;
- b. Comply with internationally accepted norms to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms and ethical principles in the collection and use of statistics.

2. The information collected in accordance with this article shall be disaggregated, as appropriate, and used to help assess the implementation of States Parties' obligations under the present Convention and to identify and address the barriers faced by persons with disabilities in exercising their rights.

3. States Parties shall assume responsibility for the dissemination of these statistics and ensure their accessibility to persons with disabilities and others.

Article 32

International cooperation

1. States Parties recognize the importance of international cooperation and its promotion, in support of national efforts for the realization of the purpose and objectives of the present Convention, and will undertake appropriate and effective measures in this regard, between and among States and, as appropriate, in partnership with relevant international and regional organizations and civil society, in particular organizations of persons with disabilities. Such measures could include, inter alia:

- a. Ensuring that international cooperation, including international development programmes, is inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities;
- b. Facilitating and supporting capacity-building, including through the exchange and sharing of information, experiences, training programmes and best practices;
- c. Facilitating cooperation in research and access to scientific and technical knowledge;
- d. Providing, as appropriate, technical and economic assistance, including by facilitating access to and sharing of accessible and assistive technologies, and through the transfer of technologies.

2. The provisions of this article are without prejudice to the obligations of each State Party to fulfil its obligations under the present Convention.

Article 33

National implementation and monitoring

1. States Parties, in accordance with their system of organization, shall designate one or more focal points within government for matters relating to the implementation of the present Convention, and shall give due consideration to the establishment or designation of a coordination mechanism within government to facilitate related action in different sectors and at different levels.

2. States Parties shall, in accordance with their legal and administrative systems, maintain, strengthen, designate or establish within the State Party, a framework, including one or more independent mechanisms, as appropriate, to promote, protect and monitor implementation of the present Convention. When designating or establishing such a mechanism, States Parties shall take into account the principles relating to the status and functioning of national institutions for protection and promotion of human rights.

3. Civil society, in particular persons with disabilities and their representative organizations, shall be involved and participate fully in the monitoring process.

Article 34

Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

1. There shall be established a Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (hereafter referred to as “the Committee”), which shall carry out the functions hereinafter provided.

2. The Committee shall consist, at the time of entry into force of the present Convention, of twelve experts. After an additional sixty ratifications or accessions to the Convention, the membership of the Committee shall increase by six members, attaining a maximum number of eighteen members.

3. The members of the Committee shall serve in their personal capacity and shall be of high moral standing and recognized competence and experience in the field covered by the present Convention. When nominating their candidates, States Parties are invited to give due consideration to the provision set out in article 4, paragraph 3, of the present Convention.

4. The members of the Committee shall be elected by States Parties, consideration being given to equitable geographical distribution, representation of the different forms of civilization and of the principal legal systems, balanced gender representation and participation of experts with disabilities.

5. The members of the Committee shall be elected by secret ballot from a list of persons nominated by the States Parties from among their nationals at meetings of the Conference of States Parties. At those meetings, for which two thirds of States Parties shall constitute a quorum, the persons elected to the Committee shall be those who obtain the largest number of votes and an absolute majority of the votes of the representatives of States Parties present and voting.

6. The initial election shall be held no later than six months after the date of entry into force of the present Convention. At least four months before the date of each election, the Secretary-General of the United Nations shall address a letter to the States Parties inviting them to submit the nominations within two months. The Secretary-General shall subsequently prepare a list in alphabetical order of all persons thus nominated, indicating the State Parties which have nominated them, and shall submit it to the States Parties to the present Convention.

7. The members of the Committee shall be elected for a term of four years. They shall be eligible for re-election once. However, the term of six of the members elected at the first election shall expire at the end of two years; immediately after the first election, the names of these six members shall be chosen by lot by the chairperson of the meeting referred to in paragraph 5 of this article.

8. The election of the six additional members of the Committee shall be held on the occasion of regular elections, in accordance with the relevant provisions of this article.

9. If a member of the Committee dies or resigns or declares that for any other cause she or he can no longer perform her or his duties, the State Party which nominated the member shall appoint another expert possessing the qualifications and meeting the requirements set out in the relevant provisions of this article, to serve for the remainder of the term.

10. The Committee shall establish its own rules of procedure.

11. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall provide the necessary staff and facilities for the effective performance of the functions of the Committee under the present Convention, and shall convene its initial meeting.

12. With the approval of the General Assembly of the United Nations, the members of the Committee established under the present Convention shall receive emoluments from United Nations resources on such terms and conditions as the Assembly may decide, having regard to the importance of the Committee's responsibilities.

13. The members of the Committee shall be entitled to the facilities, privileges and immunities of experts on mission for the United Nations as laid down in the relevant sections of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations.

Article 35

Reports by States Parties

1. Each State Party shall submit to the Committee, through the Secretary-General of the United Nations, a comprehensive report on measures taken to give effect to its obligations under the present Convention and on the progress made in that regard, within two years after the entry into force of the present Convention for the State Party concerned.

2. Thereafter, States Parties shall submit subsequent reports at least every four years and further whenever the Committee so requests.

3. The Committee shall decide any guidelines applicable to the content of the reports.

4. A State Party which has submitted a comprehensive initial report to the Committee need not, in its subsequent reports, repeat information previously provided. When preparing reports to the Committee, States Parties are invited to consider doing so in an open and transparent process and to give due consideration to the provision set out in article 4, paragraph 3, of the present Convention.

5. Reports may indicate factors and difficulties affecting the degree of fulfilment of obligations under the present Convention.

Article 36

Consideration of reports

1. Each report shall be considered by the Committee, which shall make such suggestions and general recommendations on the report as it may consider appropriate and shall forward these to the State Party concerned. The State Party may respond with any information it chooses to the Committee. The Committee may request further information from States Parties relevant to the implementation of the present Convention.

2. If a State Party is significantly overdue in the submission of a report, the Committee may notify the State Party concerned of the need to examine the implementation of the present Convention in that State Party, on the basis of reliable information available to the Committee, if the relevant report is not submitted within three months following the notification. The Committee shall invite the State Party concerned to participate in such examination. Should the State Party respond by submitting the relevant report, the provisions of paragraph 1 of this article will apply.

3. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall make available the reports to all States Parties.

4. States Parties shall make their reports widely available to the public in their own countries and facilitate access to the suggestions and general recommendations relating to these reports.

5. The Committee shall transmit, as it may consider appropriate, to the specialized agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations, and other competent bodies, reports from States Parties in order to address a request or indication of a need for technical advice or assistance contained therein, along with the Committee's observations and recommendations, if any, on these requests or indications.

Article 37

Cooperation between States Parties and the Committee

1. Each State Party shall cooperate with the Committee and assist its members in the fulfilment of their mandate.

2. In its relationship with States Parties, the Committee shall give due consideration to ways and means of enhancing national capacities for the implementation of the present Convention, including through international cooperation.

Article 38

Relationship of the Committee with other bodies

In order to foster the effective implementation of the present Convention and to encourage international cooperation in the field covered by the present Convention:

a. The specialized agencies and other United Nations organs shall be entitled to be represented at the consideration of the implementation of such provisions of the present Convention as fall within the scope of their mandate. The Committee may invite the specialized agencies and other competent bodies as it may consider appropriate to provide expert advice on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their respective mandates. The Committee may invite specialized agencies and other United Nations organs to submit reports on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities;

b. The Committee, as it discharges its mandate, shall consult, as appropriate, other relevant bodies instituted by international human rights treaties, with a view to ensuring the consistency of their respective reporting guidelines, suggestions and general recommendations, and avoiding duplication and overlap in the performance of their functions.

Article 39

Report of the Committee

The Committee shall report every two years to the General Assembly and to the Economic and Social Council on its activities, and may make suggestions and general recommendations based on the examination of reports and information received from the States Parties. Such suggestions and general recommendations shall be included in the report of the Committee together with comments, if any, from States Parties.

Article 40

Conference of States Parties

1. The States Parties shall meet regularly in a Conference of States Parties in order to consider any matter with regard to the implementation of the present Convention.
2. No later than six months after the entry into force of the present Convention, the Conference of States Parties shall be convened by the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The subsequent meetings shall be convened by the Secretary-General biennially or upon the decision of the Conference of States Parties.

Article 41

Depositary

The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall be the depositary of the present Convention.

Article 42

Signature

The present Convention shall be open for signature by all States and by regional integration organizations at United Nations Headquarters in New York as of 30 March 2007.

Article 43

Consent to be bound

The present Convention shall be subject to ratification by signatory States and to formal confirmation by signatory regional integration organizations. It shall be open for accession by any State or regional integration organization which has not signed the Convention.

Article 44

Regional integration organizations

1. "Regional integration organization" shall mean an organization constituted by sovereign States of a given region, to which its member States have transferred competence in respect of matters governed by the present Convention. Such organizations shall declare, in their instruments of formal confirmation or accession, the extent of their competence with respect to matters governed by the present Convention. Subsequently, they shall inform the depositary of any substantial modification in the extent of their competence.
2. References to "States Parties" in the present Convention shall apply to such organizations within the limits of their competence.
3. For the purposes of article 45, paragraph 1, and article 47, paragraphs 2 and 3, of the present Convention, any instrument deposited by a regional integration organization shall not be counted.
4. Regional integration organizations, in matters within their competence, may exercise their right to vote in the Conference of States Parties, with a number of votes equal to the number of their member States that are Parties to the present Convention. Such an organization shall not exercise its right to vote if any of its member States exercises its right, and vice versa.

Article 45

Entry into force

1. The present Convention shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after the deposit of the twentieth instrument of ratification or accession.
2. For each State or regional integration organization ratifying, formally confirming or acceding to the present Convention after the deposit of the twentieth such instrument, the Convention shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after the deposit of its own such instrument.

Article 46
Reservations

1. Reservations incompatible with the object and purpose of the present Convention shall not be permitted.
2. Reservations may be withdrawn at any time.

Article 47
Amendments

1. Any State Party may propose an amendment to the present Convention and submit it to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The Secretary-General shall communicate any proposed amendments to States Parties, with a request to be notified whether they favour a conference of States Parties for the purpose of considering and deciding upon the proposals. In the event that, within four months from the date of such communication, at least one third of the States Parties favour such a conference, the Secretary-General shall convene the conference under the auspices of the United Nations. Any amendment adopted by a majority of two thirds of the States Parties present and voting shall be submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly of the United Nations for approval and thereafter to all States Parties for acceptance.

2. An amendment adopted and approved in accordance with paragraph 1 of this article shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after the number of instruments of acceptance deposited reaches two thirds of the number of States Parties at the date of adoption of the amendment. Thereafter, the amendment shall enter into force for any State Party on the thirtieth day following the deposit of its own instrument of acceptance. An amendment shall be binding only on those States Parties which have accepted it.

3. If so decided by the Conference of States Parties by consensus, an amendment adopted and approved in accordance with paragraph 1 of this article which relates exclusively to articles 34, 38, 39 and 40 shall enter into force for all States Parties on the thirtieth day after the number of instruments of acceptance deposited reaches two thirds of the number of States Parties at the date of adoption of the amendment.

Article 48
Denunciation

A State Party may denounce the present Convention by written notification to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The denunciation shall become effective one year after the date of receipt of the notification by the Secretary-General.

Article 49
Accessible format

The text of the present Convention shall be made available in accessible formats.

Article 50
Authentic texts

The Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish texts of the present Convention shall be equally authentic.

IN WITNESS THEREOF the undersigned plenipotentiaries, being duly authorized thereto by their respective Governments, have signed the present Convention.






FROM WORDS TO ACTIONS

SHEDDING LIGHT ON THE S.H.I.F.T.
TOWARDS MEANINGFUL INCLUSION IN EUROPE



For more information,
please contact
COFACE Families Europe

Rue de Londres 17,
1050 Brussels
Tel: +322.511.41.79
Email: secretariat@coface-eu.org
Website: coface-eu.org

 @COFACE_EU
 @COFACE.EU
 @familieseurope
 Families Europe
 COFACE Families Europe