



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

Easy-to-read

Easy-to-read is information that is written in a simple way so that people with intellectual disabilities and all people can understand it.

You can find more information about easy-to-read at www.inclusion-europe.eu/easy-to-read.



Who we are

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

- The European Disability Forum
In short: EDF

- The European Network on Independent Living
In short: ENIL



We believe that people with disabilities should be part of the community and make their own choices in life. Nothing should be decided about us without us!

What this booklet is about

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



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

Independent living

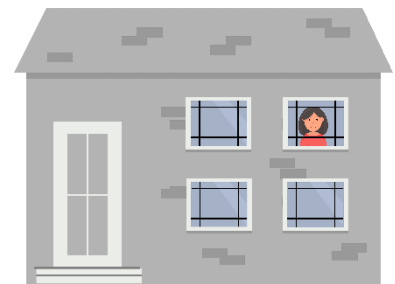
Independent living means you can make your own choices about your life. For example, you can choose where, how and with whom you want to live. All people have the right to live independently and to be part of the community.



Sadly, in practice, many people with disabilities do not enjoy their right to live independently like other people.

They may:

- Live in **institutions** away from their families and friends.
- Not be allowed to make their own choices about their lives.
- Not get the support they need to be able to take part in the community like other people.



The role of the European Union

The European Union has signed
'the UN Convention on the Rights
of Persons with Disabilities'.

In short, we call it 'the UN Convention'.

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

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



By signing the UN Convention,
the European Union agreed to do
what the UN Convention says
to protect people with disabilities.

The European Union should respect
what the UN Convention says in everything it does.
That means in the way it spends its money too.



Use of European Union's money

The European Union gives a big amount of money to help countries in the world that are in need.

For example, countries that are poor.

This money is used to help people in these countries to have a better and safer life.

For example, to have access to clean water and food and to build schools and hospitals.

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

For example, it should be used to:

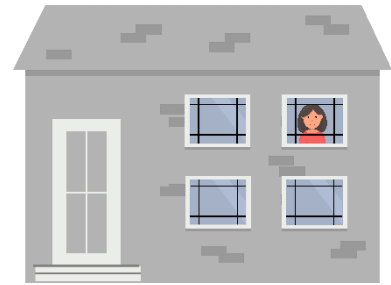
- Make things and services **accessible** so that people with disabilities can use them to take part in the community.
- Create services that help people with disabilities to live independently. For example, some people with disabilities may need a support person to help them in their daily life.

Sadly, in practice, some of this money is used in projects



that do not promote independent living for people with disabilities.

For example, it may be used for **institutions** where people with disabilities live away from the community.



This is against the rights in the UN Convention and the European Union needs to stop it.

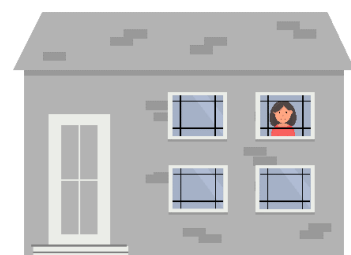
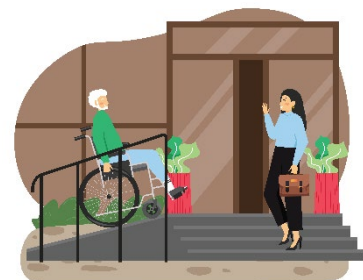
Promoting independent living

The **European Union** should make sure that the money it gives to countries in need is used in a way that respects the rights of people with disabilities.



Amongst others, the European Union should:

- Spend its money on projects that support people with disabilities to live independently.
- Not support institutions where people with disabilities live away from the community.



- Check if countries use this money for the good of people with disabilities and all people.



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



More information

For more information about our work, you can check:

- [The website of the European Disability Forum](#)
- [The website of the European Network on Independent Living](#)



If you have any questions, you can send us an email at: info@edf-feph.org.



Explanation of difficult words

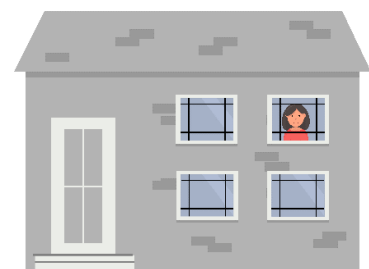
European Union

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



Institutions

Institutions are places where people with disabilities live away from other people and from the community.



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

Accessible

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

