

A Short Guide to the UN Convention on

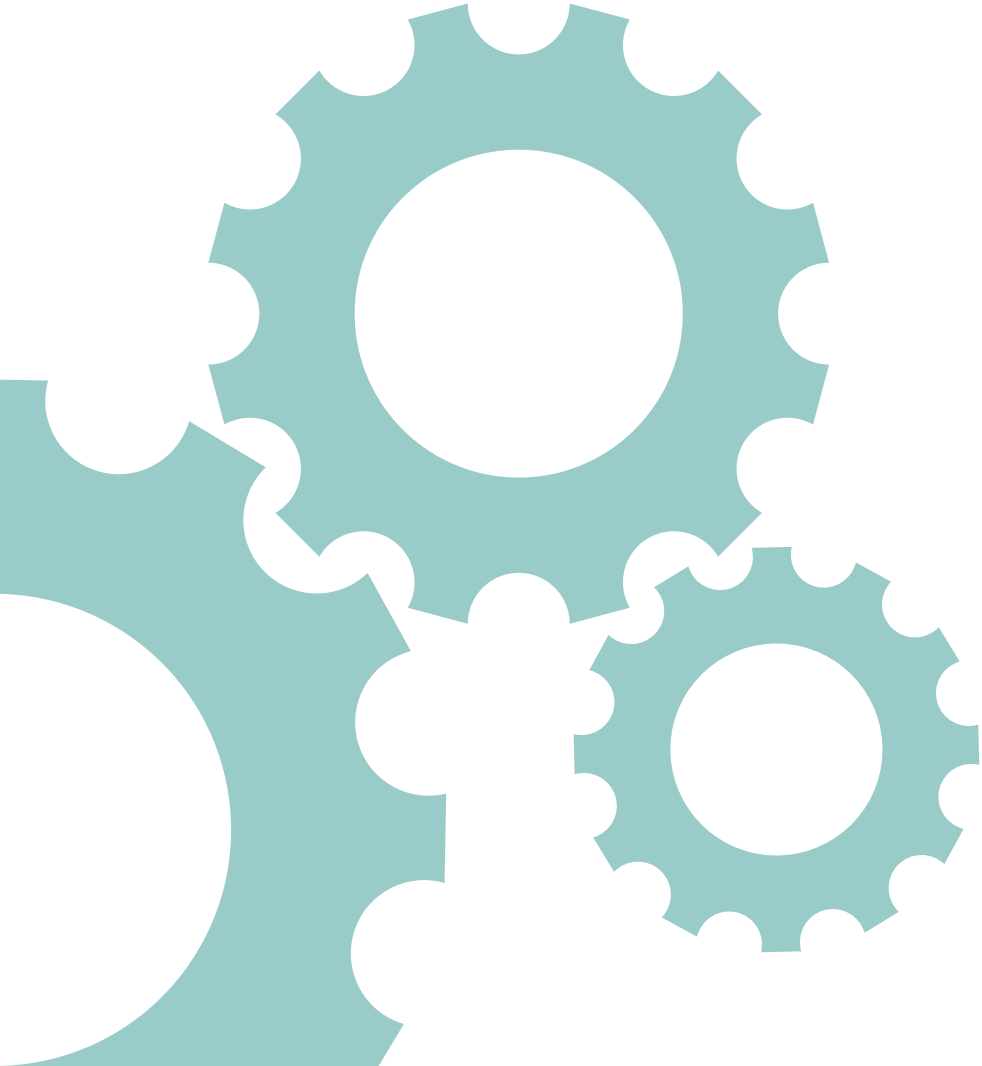
The Rights of Persons with Disabilities



CRPD

Independent Mechanism
for Northern Ireland

Promote | Protect | Monitor



A Short Guide to the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is an international “treaty”, or agreement. It is sometimes called the CRPD, or the Disability Convention.

Countries that sign the Convention agree to make sure that the dignity, human rights and freedoms of all disabled people are respected, promoted and protected.

The UK Government signed the Convention in 2007, and “ratified” it (making it legally binding) on 8 June 2009.

This leaflet tells you how the Convention will work in Northern Ireland.



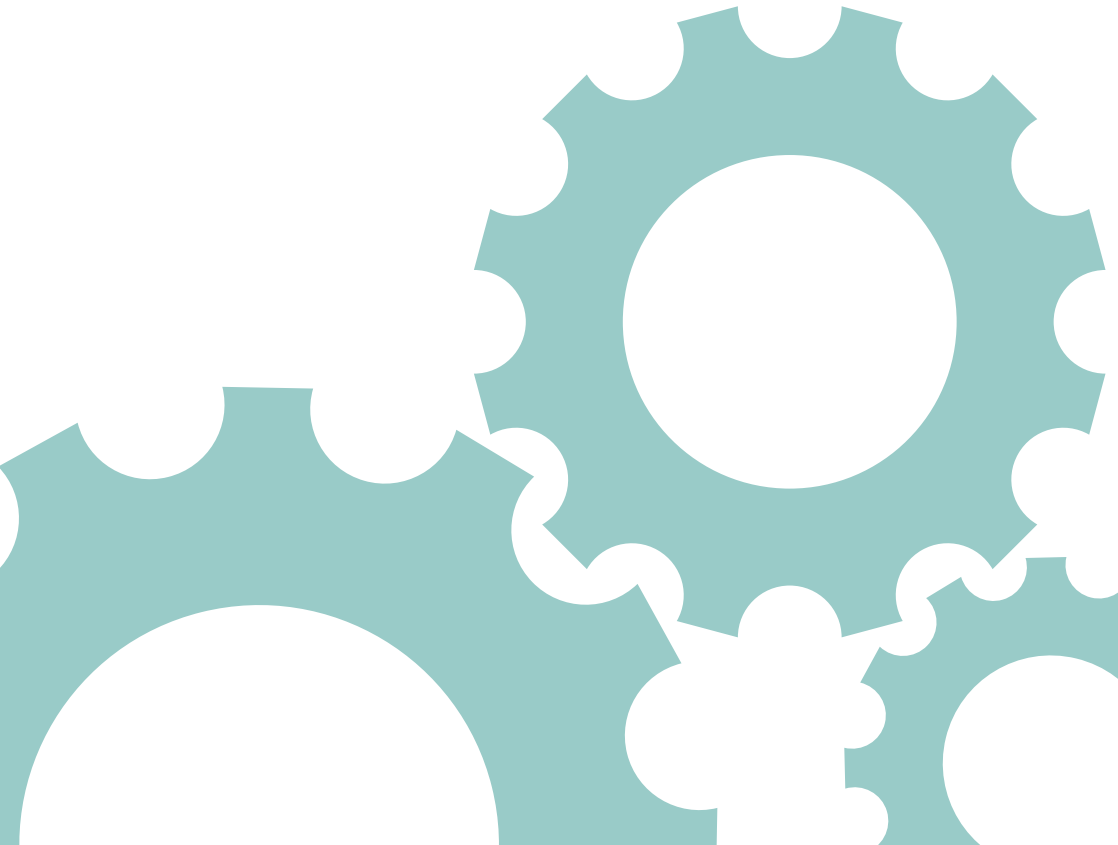
Does the Convention create any new rights?

The Convention does not create new rights, but says that countries should not discriminate against people with disabilities, and sets out what countries should do to make sure that disabled people can enjoy all their human rights. These rights include:

- Equality before the law without discrimination;
- Right to life, liberty and security of person;
- Equal recognition before the law, and legal capacity;
- Freedom from torture;
- Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse;
- Respect for physical and mental integrity;
- Freedom of movement, and nationality;
- Right to live in the community;
- Freedom of expression and opinion;
- Respect for privacy, home and the family;
- Right to education;
- Right to health;
- Right to work;
- Right to an adequate standard of living;
- Right to take part in political and public life;
- Right to take part in cultural life.

Who is responsible for making sure the rights contained in the Convention are put into practice ?

The Government is responsible for making sure that the rights contained in the Convention are put into practice. Parliament, the Northern Ireland Assembly, and different Government Departments and public bodies have to work together.



What does the Government have to do?

The Government must:

- Make sure that buildings and services are accessible to disabled people – including workplaces, schools, medical facilities and transport.
- Provide information intended for the general public in accessible formats and technologies such as Braille or sign language.
- Ensure the rights of people with disabilities to equal pay for equal work, equal employment opportunities and safe and healthy working conditions.

Who makes sure that the rights contained in the Convention are put into practice?

The Convention says that every country should have an “independent mechanism” to help protect, promote and monitor the rights of disabled people. Here, the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission work together as the “independent mechanism” for Northern Ireland. Disabled people and their organisations will also monitor how the Convention works.

Internationally, the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, a body of human rights experts, will examine how the UK protects, respects and fulfils the rights contained in the Convention. The Committee will get reports from the UK Government on what they have done to put Convention rights into practice. The Committee will also receive reports from the “independent mechanism”, and reports and complaints from disabled people and disabled people’s organisations.

How will the Convention help people with disabilities in Northern Ireland?

- Government and public bodies will be expected to make decisions and deliver services which take into account the rights contained in the Convention.
- The Convention encourages the wider community to recognise the importance of disabled people's human rights.
- The Convention could be used to challenge or change the law.
- Under certain circumstances, people in Northern Ireland can make complaints to the UN Committee if they believe that their rights under the Convention are not being protected.
- The Government has to report to the UN Committee on how it has put the rights contained in the Convention into practice. The Committee will help to ensure that disabled people's rights are being enforced by reviewing reports and making recommendations to Government.

If you want more information on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, please contact either the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland or the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission or e-mail us at CRPDEnquiries@equalityni.org





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