



DPCN

THE DISABILITY
PARTICIPATION AND
CONSULTATION NETWORK

**The Disability Participation and Consultation
Network's Response to the State's Draft Report
on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of
Persons with Disabilities**

April 2021



About this document

This is an Easy to Read summary of a report on consultations organised by the Disability Participation and Consultation Network (DPCN).



Introduction

The Disability Participation and Consultation Network (DPCN) was set up in December 2020.

The job of the DPCN is to make sure that the Government listens to persons with disabilities when they make laws and policies.

Members of the DPCN include:

- AsIAM,
- Disability Federation of Ireland
- Inclusion Ireland
- Mental Health Reform, and
- The Coalition of 6 National Disabled Persons Organisations – known as the DPO Coalition.

The members are:

- AsIAM,
 - Disabled Women Ireland,
 - Independent Living Movement of Ireland (ILMI),
 - Irish Deaf Society (IDS),
 - National Platform of Self Advocates (NPSA) and
 - Voice of Vision Impairment (VVI).



Over 100 individuals and disability organisations from around the country are also members of the DPCN.



Inclusion Ireland got funding from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth to support the setting up of the DPCN.



About the consultations

The first job of the DPCN was to organise consultations on a report the Government is sending to the United Nations.



The report is called the State's Draft Report.

It says what the Government is doing to put the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) into action so the lives of disabled people can be better.



Before the State's Draft Report goes to the UN, the Government must ask people with disabilities what they think of the Report.

In March, the DPCN held six online consultations.

At the consultations people gave their views about the State's Draft Report – what the Government has done or not done for people with disabilities in Ireland.



After the consultations, the DCPN wrote a report and sent it to the Department of Children, Disability, Equality, Integration and Youth on 9 April 2021.



This document is an Easy to Read summary of the Report the DCPN sent to the Department about the consultations.



There are 9 different areas in the report:

- Equality
- Respected as experts with experience
- The cost of living with a disability
- Accessibility and getting around
- Education
- Employment
- Health and well-being
- Independent living
- Taking part in political and public life



Equality

People with disabilities say they always must fight to be treated equally.

The State's Draft Report



- does not say what the Government is doing to promote and help people understand equality.
- does not talk about how people with disabilities do not have much choice about the services and supports they get.
- does not say that the supports or services you get can depend on where you live or the type of disability you have.
- does not talk about the waiting times for therapies that happen for children and families.
- does not talk about the need for staff training so staff can understand the needs of people with disabilities better.
- does not say that it is important that disabled people get information about human rights or how that might happen.
- does not say that only a small number of people get a Personalised Budget





seirbhís tacaíochta
cinn-teoireachta
decision support service



Respected as experts with experience

People with disabilities must be recognised as experts with lived experience of disability.

The State's Draft Report

- does not talk about more funding for the Decision Support Service.
- does not talk about how health and social services need to be person-centred.
- does not talk about how disabled people need to be included on advocacy committees where decisions get made.
- does not see how important it is to make it easy for people to complain if supports and services do not work well for them.

The cost of living with a disability

There are many extra costs of living for people with disabilities.

The State's Draft Report

- does not show how people living with a disability can be living in poverty.
- does not talk about how hard it is to live independently on disability payments.
- does not say how hard it is for families of children with disabilities to pay for everything they need.
- does not say how difficult it can be to apply for extra money or funding.
- does not talk about changing the system for medical cards so that all persons with a disability can get a medical card.

Accessibility and getting around



When people find it difficult to get around or access information it can be very stressful and make people feel embarrassed or isolated.

The State's Draft Report

- does not say how services and information will be more accessible and how this can be made into law, so people always follow the rules.
- does not talk about the public buildings that are not accessible, like Government buildings, colleges, or leisure facilities
- does not talk about the lack of accessible toilets, especially Changing Places toilets.
- does not talk about how public transport can be more accessible in cities and in the country.
- does not explain how Access Officers can be trained so they can support persons with different disabilities.
- does not say that all public information will be provided in different accessible formats like Easy to Read, video, braille or sign language.



Education

Many persons with disabilities do not feel they have equal access to education.

The State's Draft Report

- is not clear on how education can include people with disabilities.
- does not talk about how the Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act, 2004 (EPSN) can be put into action.
- does not talk about the barriers for children with disabilities who want to go to mainstream schools.





- does not talk about how Progressing Disability Services, which are services for children with disabilities, can be very different in different parts of the country.
- does not say anything about the low numbers of adults with disabilities in college.
- does not talk about how hard it can be for teenagers and adults to get support with their careers and choices.

Employment

The State's Draft Report

- does not talk about people losing their disability payment if they start working.
- should talk about workers being paid the minimum wage, at least.
- should say that people with disabilities should not be expected to work as volunteers, be on 'work experience' or CE schemes all the time.
- should talk about the positives and benefits of employing people with disabilities and promote the need for reasonable accommodations and support in employment.
- does not talk about the need for more funding for employment supports.
- does not ask the Government to increase the number of people with disabilities in Government jobs.

Health and wellbeing

The State's Draft Report:

- does not talk about how long you may have to wait to for services like physiotherapy or occupational therapy.



- does not say how hard it can be to make an appointment with a GP or other services.
- does not talk about the need for more money for different mental health supports, like counselling or music therapy.
- does not talk about how there is very little Easy to Read information about health and health services.

Independence and community living



People with disabilities need support to live independently. These can include personal assistance, transport, and housing.

The State's Draft Report:



- does not talk about how hard it is to get a house that is accessible in the community.
- does not say how important it is that councils offer social housing to people with disabilities.
- does not talk about how hard it is to get the supports you need to live independently.
- does not talk about the needs of disabled people who live at home and need support from their families.
- does not talk about the need for advocacy supports to live independently.
- does not say that more funding is needed for Personal Assistance (PA) hours.
- does not talk about the need for more home help services.
- does not talk about the need for safe places in the community, like accessible parks and playgrounds, parking spaces and bathrooms.



Taking part in political and public life

The State's Draft Report

- does not talk about the need to support people with disabilities to stand for election.
- does not talk about the need for political parties to have accessible information about who they are and what they do.
- should say how the Government will support and ask people with disabilities to vote.



This Easy to Read Document was developed by the DPCN. The document was proof-read by disabled people.



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