



**ANED – Academic Network of European Disability Experts
(JUST/2011/PROG/PR/01/D3-30-CE-0450002/00-88)**

2013 Annual Activity Report



**Human European Consultancy and
Centre for Disability Studies – Leeds University**

Reporting Period: 21 December 2012 – 21 December 2013



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Introduction

The Academic Network of European Disability experts (ANED), was established by the European Commission in 2008 to provide academic support and advice for its disability policy Unit. In particular, the activities of the Network support the development of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 and implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) in Europe. The philosophy and aims of ANED focus on research and policy that support the objectives of full participation and equal opportunities for all disabled people. The Network is co-ordinated by [Human European Consultancy](#) (Netherlands) and the [Centre for Disability Studies at the University of Leeds](#) (UK), with national experts in 34 countries and an additional pool of experts in specific fields.

The results, achieved under previous contracts,¹ have been described in:

- the 2008 Activity Report (in [English](#), [French](#) and [German](#))
- the 2009 Activity Report (in [English](#), [French](#) and [German](#))
- the 2010 Activity Report (in [English](#), [French](#) and [German](#))
- the 2011 Activity Report (in [English](#), [French](#) and [German](#))
- the 2012 Activity Report (in [English](#), [French](#) and [German](#))

The work programme identified the following tasks for 2013:

- Task 1: Network management
- Task 2: Collecting and analysing data (mapping tool)
- Task 3: Legal framework and instruments
- Task 4: Accessibility
- Task 5: National strategies and social policies
- Task 6 : Comparative data and indicators
- Task 7: Annual meeting

The results of each of these tasks are described in this activity report.

¹ Contract references VC/2007/0043, VC/2008/0916, VC/2009/1348 and VC/2010/1634.



Task 1: Network management

The network tasks were managed by a management team consisting of a project director (Piet Leunis), a scientific director (Prof. Mark Priestley) and a support manager (Andrea Trotter). A content support assistant (Dr. Sarah Woodin) assisted the scientific director.

A core research team (Prof. Mark Priestley, Prof. Lisa Waddington, Ms. Anna Lawson and Mr. Stefanos Grammenos) was involved in leading the implementation of the tasks including the drafting of the relevant task Terms of Reference.

Representatives from two European NGOs (AGE Platform Europe and the European Disability Forum) were also consulted throughout the project on Terms of References as well as various task draft reports.

The input in the implementation of the tasks at the country level was delivered by the ANED members and individual national experts:

Table 1: ANED members EU Member States

Country	Member Institution	Name of expert
Bulgaria	Centre for Independent Living (CIL) Sofia	Kapka Panayotova
Denmark	Danish National Institute of Social Research	Steen Bengtsson
Finland	Finnish Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities	Antti Teittinen
France	Institut Fédératif de Recherche sur le Handicap	Catherine Barral
Germany	International Research Unit Disability Studies, Universität zu Köln	Anne Waldschmidt
Ireland	National University of Ireland, Galway	Gerard Quinn
Italy	Centre for Governmentality and Disability Studies "Robert Castel"	Giampiero Griffo
Malta	Kummissjoni Nazzjonali Persuni b'Dizabilità	Jo Camilleri
Portugal	Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas Universidade Técnica de Lisboa Pólo Universitário da Ajuda Rua Almerindo	Paula Pinto



Country	Member Institution	Name of expert
Romania	DISABNET, the Romanian Forum of Service Providers in the disability sector	Diana Chiracescu
Slovakia	The Institute for Labour and Family Research	Kvetoslava Repkova
Spain	Instituto Universitario de Integración en la Comunidad, INICO, University of Salamanca	Miguel Ángel Verdugo
Sweden	The Swedish Institute for Disability Research, University of Örebro	Berth Danermark
UK	Centre for Disability Studies University of Leeds , University of Leeds	Mark Priestley

Table 2: ANED members EFTA Countries

Country	Member Institution	Name of Expert
Iceland	Center for Disability Studies, University of Iceland	Rannveig Traustadottir
Norway	Disability Law and Policy Research Unit, Department of Social Work and Health Science, Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU)	Jan Tøssebro

Table 3: Individual national experts

Country	Names	
Austria	Volker Schönwiese	Universität Innsbruck, Institut für Erziehungswissenschaften
Belgium	Jef Breda	University of Antwerp
Cyprus	Katerina Mavrou	European University of Cyprus, Department of Education
Czech Republic	Jan Siska	Univerzita Karlova v Praze, Pedagogická Fakulta
Estonia	Luule Sakkeus	National Institute for Health Development
Greece	Eleni Strati	
Hungary	Tamás Gyulavári	ELTE University, Labour Law Department



Country	Names	
Latvia	Daina Calite	APEIRONS
Liechtenstein	Wilfried Marxer	Liechtenstein-Institut
Lithuania	Jonas Ruskus	Social Work Department , Kaunas Vytautas Magnus University
Luxemburg	Arthur Limbach-Reich	Luxemburg University
Netherlands	Jose Smits	Various NGOs supporting disabled people and promoting their inclusion
Poland	Ewa Wapiennik	Division of Special Education for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities , Maria Grzegorzewska Academy of Special Education
Slovenia	Darja Zaviršek	Faculty of Social Work, University of Ljubljana
Turkey	Volkan Yilmaz	

From 2013 Italy and Turkey were represented by new ANED members.

An up-to-date list of ANED members and experts can be found at the ANED website:
<http://disability-europe.net/contact/aned-country-members>.

The scientific director kept close contact with the rapporteurs of the various tasks, starting with the preparation of the Terms of Reference and during the implantation of the tasks.

The support manager organised the document workflow. In addition to this, the support manager organised a review process for the individual country input from the combined Task 3 and 4 on citizenship and political participation and Task 5 National strategies and social policies. This greatly improved the overall review process and individual country contributions.

The scientific director was in regular contact with the Commission on the definition of and reporting on the tasks.



Task 2: Mapping tool in relation to the EU Disability Strategy

Work process

In 2013, the Network's key objectives in relation to the mapping tool were to update the DOTCOM entries to reflect policy developments since 2012. Data was collected and updated from the Network's country experts. In total, 366 policy items were updated or supplemented with new evidence during the year (approximately one quarter of the 2012 dataset). Some items were updated for clarity of information, while others reflected policy changes across different domains, including new information on CRPD ratification and monitoring arrangements, developments in education and employment policies, and changes in legal capacity or disability benefit entitlements.

These included, for example: the adoption standard guidelines on accessible built environments by provincial governments (Laender) and a new framework for teacher training in Austria; establishment of the Committee for Persons with Disabilities of the Government of the Republic of Croatia and advancement of voting rights for people deprived of legal capacity; the First Report of Cyprus to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the First National Disability Action Plan; adoptions of EU regulation on the Rights of Passengers in Bus and Coach Transport; a new action plan for disability policy in Denmark; co-ordination of the independent CRPD mechanism in Estonia and development of a new care strategy; development of new disability Act proposals and publication of the first Disability Policy Program Monitoring Report in Finland; a new CRPD implementation programme for 2013-2019 and legislative compliance changes in Latvia, including extensions to personal assistance rights; recognition of Lithuanian sign language by the Ministry of Education and a new implementation plan for the National Programme; draft legislative proposals for CRPD ratification and an awareness raising program in the Netherlands; a new Help and Information Line for Disabled Citizens provided by the Ombudsman in Portugal; drafting new regulations on voting and elections, and a new allowance to maintain disabled employees in Slovakia; publication of a revised national disability strategy in the UK.

A new dataset for Turkey was added and a new item was also added on national disability strategies across all 34 countries. The web-based content management and presentation architecture allowed for direct data entry and review process by ANED country authors and core team reviewers. A number of multi-annual national policy programmes or action plans concluded in 2013 and are expected to be renewed or replaced during 2014.

Findings and recommendations

During the second year of its implementation the DOTCOM tool has been increasingly accessed by researchers, public administrators and policy makers – both within Europe



and as an international public knowledge resource. The methodology of concurrent multi-national rights monitoring has some significant advantages over traditional report based monitoring and the DOTCOM project and has helped to validate and advance the case for developing similar parallel reporting tools (e.g. by the European Blind Union).

In human rights monitoring, there is a need for new systems and tools. Both DOTCOM and the IDEE statistical indicators have made valuable contributions to disability rights monitoring in Europe. DOTCOM, in particular, illustrates how concurrent multinational monitoring can be enhanced by interactive web technologies that move authorship and dissemination beyond the static document models.

Nevertheless, these tools are still in development and there would be greater scope to move toward a more integrated system of mapping and monitoring, in which qualitative and quantitative evidence could be combined. This would provide more direct links between evidence of structure, process and outcome indicators and come closer to the kind of integrated indicators approach advocated by UN OHCHR. Alongside this, it would be important to consider how to represent evaluative evidence from civil society.

The process of conceptualising and developing DOTCOM has demonstrated the importance of collaboration across disciplines and between countries. The involvement of independent experts (from academia or NGOs) is likely to remain key to the establishment and maintenance of such data systems in the short term but there would be great capacity for the architecture to supplement or facilitate the collaborative co-ordination reporting of the Member States currently elaborated via High Level Group reports.

Deliverables:

The DOTCOM tool was updated on the ANED website.

<http://www.disability-europe.net/dotcom>

The tool was linked from the Commission's disability website

http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/disabilities/index_en.htm



Task 3: Legal framework and instruments

Subtask 3.1: Update existing mapping of EU law and policy

Task Leader: Professor Lisa Waddington

Rapporteur: Janina Arsenjeva

The existing mapping of EU law and policy, originally developed in 2008 and 2009, and updated on an annual basis since then, was updated in 2013.

Work process

One of ANED's core functions is to monitor and evaluate laws and policies that affect the 80 million disabled people in the European Union. Under the previous contract ANED carried out an annual systematic mapping review of EU legislation and soft law which made a reference to disability. This review was updated and expanded in 2013, and the most recent mapping provides a public reference resource mapping 271 legal and policy instruments with annotations and expert commentary, organised according to EUR-LEX categories. The 2013 review includes recently adopted instruments, and pays particular attention to the initiatives taken following the conclusion of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by the EU. Moreover, the mapping draws explicit attention to instruments listed under the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020.

Findings and recommendations

The largest numbers of instruments (legal acts and policy measures) which include a reference to disability are found in the fields of: Freedom of movement for workers and social policy (75 instruments); Industrial policy and the internal market (48 instruments); and Transport policy (28 instruments).

Following the entry into force of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, two Treaty articles (10 and 19 TFEU) specifically refer to disability. Whereas Article 10 is yet to be explicitly linked to the legislative and policy initiatives of the EU, Article 19 (ex Article 13 EC Treaty) serves as the legal basis for three of the instruments included in the review. All other covered instruments are based on Treaty articles that make no reference to disability whatsoever (such as articles relating to transport or the internal market). This demonstrates the particular nature of disability as a cross-cutting issue.

Since work on the present review began in 2008, a number of trends have been noted. Following the conclusion by the EC/EU of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the subsequent adoption of a very comprehensive European Disability Strategy 2010-2020, the number of instruments mentioning disability has greatly increased and become more consistent. This trend has been noted not so



much in what may be the most obvious areas (such as social policy) but in mainstream areas of EU policy, namely industrial policy and the internal market, and external relations. It is recommended that attention be paid to ensure that the implementation and follow up of these new instruments respects the paradigm shift of the Convention. It would also be helpful if the European Commission were to better publicise, in one place, all relevant initiatives. This would promote a better understanding of the extent of the Union's obligations under the CRPD and its implementation activities.

The Europe 2020 Strategy that governs the European **social policy** (and some of its flagship initiatives, in particular) includes within it a disability angle. The Employment and Social Investment packages, adopted in 2012 and 2013 respectively, can be very useful for guiding national and European policies that are relevant to persons with disabilities. The development of the disability dimension in relation to **internal market and industrial policy** deserves special attention. After years of working on soft measures for accessibility, like standardisation, to bridge the accessibility gap for persons with disabilities, and the legislative proposal to approach accessibility from the anti-discrimination angle (that remains under discussion in Council), the Commission has decided to explore the possibilities under the internal market legal basis and address the functioning of the internal market of accessible goods and services as a result of divergent national legislation. The conclusion of the CRPD, alongside the internal EU initiatives such as the Single Market Act, has fostered this thinking and served as the basis for development of better policies in the field of accessibility of goods and services to persons with disabilities.

With respect to **transport policy**, the legislative package is now complete, with four legislative instruments addressing passengers' rights in the air, rail, maritime and road transport. Responding to implementation difficulties, a number of guidance documents have been produced, as well as a publicity campaign. A number of instruments regulating the physical accessibility of (maritime, road and rail) transport also exist.

Some areas, notably **science, information, education and culture**, only have a handful of legal acts which explicitly include a disability dimension (although there has been increasing attention paid to disability issues in the field of Research & Development). Undoubtedly, these areas will eventually benefit from the tightened accessibility regulations currently in development (see above).

The situation is not very different in the fields of **environment, consumer protection** and, to a lesser extent, **health protection**. This is somewhat surprising, given the obvious importance of the protection of consumers with disabilities, or health services to persons with disabilities

In many horizontal instruments, persons with disabilities are often covered by the concept of 'vulnerable' users, consumers, or groups. Although the goal is to protect specific groups of people in specific situations, the over-use of the term 'vulnerable'



(especially when it is undefined) may be in part detrimental to the notion of equality of persons with disabilities. Caution must be exercised when using the term and applying it to all persons with disabilities.

The area of **external relations** has seen a number of important developments following the entry into force of the CRPD that obliges the States Parties to take disability into account in all international cooperation work. Further important developments are expected in 2014, when the EU will submit its initial report to the CRPD Committee, and the global actors advance further on a post-2015 framework for eradication of poverty (post-MDGs) that is expected to have a strong disability perspective.

Finally – and crucially – it must be noted that future disability mainstreaming will be heavily impacted by the final outcome of the EU negotiations on the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020, which had not been voted on at the time of writing this review, in early November 2013. All strands of EU budget, from Research & Development to employment, will be affected, defining the EU funding priorities for the next seven years. The allocation of the EU Structural Funds is of particular importance.

Deliverables:

Annotated review of European disability law and policy with reference to disability, prepared by Janina Arsenjeva under the direction of Lisa Waddington

This report reviews 271 legal instruments (60 pages), following the structure of the 19 EurLex system classification headings. Individual instruments are listed at the end of each thematic section and annotated in a structured annex (134 pages). For the 2013 report, instruments adopted in the last twelve months were included within the review and mapping, the thematic summaries accompanying each of the classification headings were revised accordingly, and the conclusions and recommendations included within the report were redrafted, taking account of new developments and the relevance of the CRPD to EU disability law and policy.

ANED website page on Law and policy:

<http://www.disability-europe.net/theme/law-and-policy>.



Subtask 3.2: Report on the Access to Citizenship and Political Participation of People with Disabilities in Europe

Task Leader and rapporteur: Prof. Lisa Waddington

Under task 3 ANED carries out research related to legal frameworks and instruments. In addition to the mapping of EU legal and policy instruments which contain a reference to disability identified above, ANED carries out research on a specific topic or element of European law or policy, as it relates to persons with disabilities, each year. In 2013 this focused on the access to citizenship and political participation of people with disabilities in Europe.

This task resulted in a synthesis report addressing the citizenship of people with disabilities and the participation of disabled people in political and public life under European Union law and policy, and under the law and policy of a selection of Member States and associated countries. The work is designed to support the Commission's commitment to "address accessibility to voting in order to facilitate the exercise of EU citizens' electoral rights"(European Union Disability Strategy 2010-2010). The work was carried out within the framework of collaboration between ANED and the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights.

Work Process:

The first part of the report sets out the general legal context of the research. The relevant provisions of the CRPD, which impose obligations both on the EU and the Member States, are examined. In particular, attention is paid to Articles 18 and 29 CRPD on nationality and participation in public and political life respectively. Secondly, access to EU citizenship, and the rights associated therewith are examined, including in particular the rights linked to political participation. Lastly access to and the rights associated with Member State nationality/citizenship are examined, with once again a focus on political participation rights.

The second part of the report synthesizes and comments on the responses provided by ANED country reporters to a questionnaire. The countries covered are: Austria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain. Seven key topics or issues are covered, with one or more questions being addressed by the national reporters and reported on for each issue. These topics are introduced and references made to relevant international and EU law before a summary and commentary on country specific



information is given. The report ends with some final conclusions and recommendations addressing both the EU and national level.

Findings and Recommendations:

Most individuals living within the EU acquire citizenship at two levels. On the one hand, they are citizens of one or more EU Member States, which may or may not also be their state of residence. On the other hand, since the coming into force of the Treaty on European Union in 1993 (Maastricht Treaty), all citizens of EU Member States are also citizens of the EU. These two citizenship statuses bring with them different sets of rights.

Amongst the most important rights associated with citizenship, at both the national and EU level, are rights connected to political participation, including the right to vote in elections and stand for political office. The importance of both citizenship and political participation is recognised in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

In light of this legal background and based on information provided by ANED country reports, seven key topics related to access to citizenship and political participation of persons with disabilities were analysed from a comparative perspective. The report therefore covers:

1. Acquisition of citizenship / naturalisation
2. National disability strategies and action plans
3. Citizenship education
4. Right to vote of all persons with disabilities
5. Voting rights of people living in institutions
6. Right to stand for political and public office
7. Duty not to discriminate of political parties

Each section addressing one of these topics begins with background information covering relevant legislation, policy and case law of the European Union and the Council of Europe. A sub-classification is made under each section, and countries displaying similar characteristics or features are grouped together, and their legislation and policy discussed. Each section concludes with an assessment identifying the key trends and differences between the countries considered.

European Union

Amongst the key findings were that in principle it is within the competence of Member States to decide on the rules regarding the acquisition of nationality of the state, and to apply those rules to individual cases. However, an EU dimension arises, since individuals who acquire the nationality of an EU Member State also acquire EU



citizenship. Following the EU's conclusion of the CRPD, provisions relating to the acquisition or loss of EU citizenship must be in compliance with Article 18 CRPD. The report has found evidence that Member State' laws and regulations relating to naturalisation can (indirectly) discriminate against people with disabilities on a variety of grounds (knowledge tests, income requirements, lack of legal capacity, minimum periods of residence) (for further information see directly below under "European Countries"). This seems to be an area worthy of further investigation and reflection to establish the extent to which this falls within the scope of EU law and the relevant requirements.

EU legislation² regulates the right to vote and stand as a candidate in elections for a limited group of EU citizens, namely those EU citizens who reside in a Member State other than the state of their nationality. The relevant legislation allows Member States to restrict the right to vote or stand as a candidate for such EU citizens, as long as this occurs on the same basis as for nationals. To date, restrictions existing in some Member States such as the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Denmark and Germany based on lack of legal capacity have not been challenged before the Court of Justice, or on the grounds that they breach EU law. However, in light of the EU's conclusion of the CRPD, and Article 29 thereof in particular, it seems necessary to revise the relevant EU directives to prohibit any restrictions on the right to vote or stand as a candidate based on lack of legal capacity or any other disability-related criteria, to the extent that this falls within the competence of the EU. For this reason it is noted that the Directives in question only concern the right to vote of EU citizens living in a Member State other than their own, in elections to the European Parliament, and municipal elections. The report also found that a number of Member States, including Austria and the Netherlands, do not impose any disability-related restrictions on the right to vote.

It is worth noting that Article 3 of Protocol 1 to the ECHR may also be relevant to the right to vote of EU citizens, especially in light of the EU's expected accession to the ECHR. In *Alajos Kiss v. Hungary*³ the European Court of Human Rights found that Article 3 of Protocol No. 1 to the ECHR does not allow for an absolute and automatic bar on voting rights applied to anyone placed under partial guardianship irrespective of a person's actual abilities. . In the earlier case of *Case C-300/04 Eman and Sevinger v. College van burgemeester en wethouders van Den Haag*⁴ the Court of Justice of the EU had found that Article 3 of Protocol 1 did not preclude the residence criteria applied by the Dutch authorities for determining who had the right to vote and stand for election

² Council Directive 93/109/EC lays down arrangements for the exercise of the right to vote and stand as a candidate in elections to the European Parliament for citizens of the Union residing in a Member State of which they are not nationals, [1993] OJ L 329/34, and Council Directive 94/80/EC lays down such arrangements with regard to voting and standing as a candidate in municipal elections, [1994] OJ L 368/38.

³ *Alajos Kiss v. Hungary* No. 38832/06, judgment of 20 May 2010.

⁴ *Case C-300/04 Eman and Sevinger v. College van burgemeester en wethouders van Den Haag* [2006] ECR I-8055..



to the European Parliament.⁵ The implication of the *Eman* judgment may be that a disenfranchisement which was precluded by Article 3 of Protocol No. 1 of the ECHR would also not be compatible with EU law. With regard to non-discrimination by European level political parties, Regulation 2004/2003/EC,⁶ as amended in 2007,⁷ is potentially relevant. The Regulation provides for funding from the EU's general budget for political parties and political foundations active at the European level. In order to receive funding such parties must, inter alia, observe the founding principles of the Union, including respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, in their political programme and activities. The Regulation does not refer to the CRPD or impose any explicit obligations on political parties which can be linked to the CRPD. It is recommended that, at the next amendment to this Regulation, a provision explicitly obliging beneficiaries to respect the principles found in the CRPD, and to take (positive) action to eliminate discrimination against disabled people, be included.

European Countries

A wide variety of practice and approaches regarding the seven covered topics were identified in European countries. In spite of the diversity, some important trends and areas of concern were identified.

A small number of instances in which national law and policy has been revised with a view to compliance with the CRPD were identified in the report. These include the revisions to the Danish naturalisation law which extended the possibility for certain people with disabilities to obtain exemptions from knowledge based requirements for naturalisation, and the changes to the Croatian electoral legislation to provide equal voting rights to all persons with disabilities.

These represent an improvement on the previous situation, although this does not necessarily render the new provisions CRPD compliant. However, given the wide number of potential breaches of the CRPD in many of the areas considered in this report (naturalisation procedures, right to vote, right to stand for elected office), it is concerning that there is not more evidence of reform or ongoing reform in light of the CRPD.

For example, with regard to naturalisation procedures, whilst a large number of states seem to grant exemptions or waivers to certain people with disabilities with regard to the language and other knowledge based requirements for naturalisation, relatively few provided for adapted or accessible training and testing for disabled people who are capable of achieving and demonstrating the necessary knowledge, or an adapted form thereof, if taught or tested in an appropriate manner. It is also worth stressing that ANED country reporters did not identify how the waivers were being applied in practice, and

⁵ See para. 54 of judgment.

⁶ [2003] OJ L297/1.

⁷ [2007] OJ L343/5.



whether all disabled people who needed such waivers or exemptions, including people with invisible disabilities, were able to benefit from them.

In addition, several other standard requirements for naturalisation which potentially indirectly discriminate against people with disabilities were identified. These include income based requirements, which could potentially put disabled applicants for naturalisation at a disadvantage for two reasons. Firstly, for reasons related to both lack of access to paid employment and low levels of disability-related benefits, some disabled people may be unable to demonstrate a sufficiently high level of income to meet the set conditions. Secondly, a requirement which seems to be emphasized in most statutes is that the income must be secure or reliable. It is questionable whether social security or social assistance benefits would always meet this criteria. It is noticeable that both Austria and Germany provide exceptions for income based requirements for naturalisation for people with disabilities. In addition the requirement to renounce any previous nationality in order to naturalise may put some people with disabilities at a disadvantage. This is true for people who have been denied legal capacity or who have an intellectual disability and are not regarded as capable of meeting this requirement, i.e. there is no legal possibility for them to renounce a currently held nationality.. No research on the impact of such requirements on people with disabilities was identified by the report author or ANED country reporters, and it is strongly recommended that such research be carried out as a priority, in light of the obligations under Article 18 CRPD.

In terms of political participation (right to vote and right to stand as a candidate) it is notable that, in spite of the widespread ratification of the CRPD, and the obligations found in Article 29 CRPD, legal incapacity or comparable grounds were a significant bar to participation in many states. However, there was also clear evidence that not all states adopted such approaches, and a number imposed no restrictions on political participation, in terms of the right to vote or stand for office, on grounds of legal incapacity or any other disability-related criteria.

Relatively few examples of disability-related support for disabled candidates and elected officials were identified by ANED country reporters. Moreover, such individuals may fall outside the scope of national and EU disability non-discrimination law. This reflects a lacuna in the non-discrimination law at national and EU level, which needs to be addressed in light of the CRPD. In addition, it is not always clear in how far all activities of political parties are covered by a general prohibition of disability discrimination with regard to services. This is particularly the case where the law does not refer to political parties.

Deliverables:



Report: **Access to Citizenship and Political Participation of People with Disabilities in Europe**, written by Lisa Waddington

34 country reports based on a questionnaire concerning access to citizenship and political participation of people with disabilities, written by ANED country reporters.

ANED website page on Law and policy:

<http://www.disability-europe.net/theme/eu-law-and-policy>.



Task 4: Accessibility

Task Leader and rapporteur: Anna Lawson

This task focused on the accessibility of voting and elections and was designed to support the Commission in its commitment (in the action plan accompanying the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020) to “address accessibility to voting in order to facilitate the exercise of EU citizens' electoral rights”. Like Task 3, it was carried out in the context of a collaborative working arrangement between ANED and the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) focused on developing and populating human rights indicators relating to disabled people and political participation in Europe.

Work Process

This task was based on the compilation of reports by each of ANED's national experts on various issues relating to the accessibility of voting and elections. A template to structure these reports was developed by the task leader after discussion with Commission staff and the ANED core team. ANED national experts were issued with these templates and also with accompanying guidance which explained the focus of the task.

Relevant sources which national researchers were encouraged to use included academic literature, government documents, reports of equality bodies and ombudsman offices, and materials produced by disabled people's and older people's organisations. ANED experts were not asked to collect primary data.

Findings and Recommendations

Data from the national reports was used to populate nine indicators relating to the accessibility of voting and elections. These were:

1. There are legal requirements relating to the accessibility of polling stations
2. Detailed guidelines and standards relating to accessibility of polling stations are made available.
3. Training is provided to election authorities and election officials on accessibility
4. Polling stations, voting booths and ballot papers are accessible
5. Disabled people can access assistance during voting in the polling station
6. Alternatives to voting at Polling Stations are available to Disabled People
7. The activities and communications of political parties are accessible
8. There is evidence that broadcasts of election communications and debates are made accessible and
9. The business of political office is accessible for elected representatives



For each of these indicators, data from the national reports was organised into three sections using the same structure as that used by FRA to analyse data relating to other aspects of the participation of disabled people in public and political life. These consisted of an introduction providing the normative context of the relevant indicator and setting out its significance in terms of the CRPD and EU law, incorporating reference to any relevant initiatives or instruments of the Council of Europe; a brief analysis of the performance of the various countries when evaluated against the indicator in question; and finally a concluding section with any noteworthy examples of good practice to emerge from the national reports.

A striking finding applicable to several of the indicators was the lack of any sort of statistical data that could found comparisons either with the situation in other countries or within the same country over time. Thus, even for indicators 4 and 9 above (which would seem to be obvious candidates for statistical data), there was insufficient data to group countries according to any empirical measurement of accessibility standards reached. Instead, groupings were based on the basis of whether data relating to the relevant type of accessibility existed. It is helpful to consider this finding in the light of previous work by ANED which has stressed the importance of developing indicators which measure accessibility. The current research demonstrates that there is an urgent need to develop monitoring systems which will provide statistical data to populate such indicators and that, until they are established and able to yield relevant information, there will be a need to rely on indicators based on the extent to which such monitoring is in place.

Despite the general shortage of relevant statistical data, impressive efforts are being made in some States. In Poland, for instance, not only is there an extensive Electoral Commission statistical study on the accessibility of polling stations, but there are also reports and studies by other official bodies which probe the robustness of these statistics

One of the challenges of collecting statistical data relating to accessibility in this area is lack of clear-cut guidance or standards which set out the meaning of accessibility for these purposes. Such guidance is beginning to emerge in various countries but it is generally developed on a country-specific basis. Thus, if used to measure levels of accessibility, it may prove helpful in gauging progress within particular countries but is nevertheless likely to remain limited as the basis of cross-national comparison.

There was considerable variation in the extent to which electoral authorities and broadcasters were placed under binding legal obligations to ensure accessibility. Further, even where there were such obligations, there was variation in their specificity and coverage. In some countries the obligation itself was framed in apparently very general terms but had been underpinned by accompanying interpretation or detail which



provided it with helpful content. In others, however, such accompanying detail appeared to be absent. As regards coverage, there appeared to be particular emphasis on people with physical and visual impairments. Accessibility obligations which also extended to people with hearing impairments, intellectual disabilities and psychosocial disabilities were rarer.

Another important finding is that in many countries the lack of accessibility of mainstream voting mechanisms is being side-stepped to some extent by rules which permit disabled people to vote in exceptional or non-mainstream methods. While such exceptional approaches may be used to give additional choice and flexibility to disabled and other voters, they do not satisfy the demands of Article 9 of the CRPD to establish mainstream voting systems which are fully accessible to disabled people through the identification and elimination of any accessibility barriers – whether in architecture, infrastructure, information, communications or ICT. Encouragingly, significant efforts appear to be being made in a number of countries (eg Estonia and the UK) to develop mainstream alternatives to voting in polling stations which are inclusive of and accessible to disabled people.

Finally, it was evident that accessibility barriers which impede the participation of disabled people in local or national elections will also impede their participation in elections for the European Parliament. No significant differences in approach or accessibility mechanisms for EU-level elections were reported.

Deliverables:

Synthesis report – ‘Accessibility of Voting and Political Elections in Europe’ by Anna Lawson

National reports on the participation of disabled people in public and political life (also covering Task 3)

ANED web page: <http://disability-europe.net/accessibility>



Task 5: National Strategies and social policies

Task Leader: Professor Mark Priestley

Following the pattern of previous years, the main focus for ANED activity in 2013 was again to provide evidenced based policy input to the EU2020 strategy process⁸ of the European Semester. This work focuses particularly on headline concerns with employment, education and poverty, and the mainstreaming of disability concerns in preparation for Commission inputs to staff working papers and country-specific recommendations, based on the National Reform Programmes.

Work process

In a change from previous years, the work programme included preparation of input to two cycles of the Annual Growth Survey, for 2013 at the beginning of the year and for 2014 at the end of the year. This scheduling reflected an evaluation of previous inputs and the need to seek influence at an earlier stage in the Semester process to maximize impact. To this end, initial information and argument were provided for each Member State in January 2013 with specific reference to a survey of disability issues in the preceding cycle of Commission Staff Working Documents and the Country Specific Recommendations. Specific issues were highlighted, reviewed and revised in collaboration with Commission staff. This process was then repeated in December 2013 in order to anticipate preparations for the 2014 Survey at an earlier stage, thus displacing the previously planned supplementary reporting on selected social inclusion topics. It is expected that the schedule for input to the 2015 cycle will again take place towards the end of 2014.

Findings and recommendations

The themes and conclusions in 2013 were largely consistent with those of the previous year, with persistent concerns about the lasting impact of the economic crisis on public spending, disability services and community supports in many countries.

The 2013 Annual Growth Survey focused on measures to enhance growth and labour-market participation. Amongst these priorities, one of the most important was ‘*Tackling unemployment and the social consequences of the crisis*’, including:

- promoting business creation and self-employment;
- enhancing labour mobility;
- strengthening initiatives that combine work experience and education;

⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm



- reducing labour taxation and disincentives to job creation;
- reinforcing coverage and effectiveness of active labour market policies
- improving social protection systems to protect the most vulnerable

The concerns with employment, education/training, and poverty reduction are closely linked to key targets in the EU2020 Strategy. The Annual Growth Survey showed that progress by Member States towards the targets had been disappointing and that national plans needed to be more ambitious. The reports showed how disability remains an important factor within such bottlenecks, for example, where youth unemployment and training, or benefits and pension reforms are concerned but also for accessibility in public infrastructure investments such as housing and transport. Equality gaps remain for disabled people in economic participation, educational attainment and risk of poverty and social exclusion in every Member State. However, where effective social protection measures exist, the rate of additional economic impact on disabled people has not always been as harsh as on the general population. In other countries, notably in more liberal market economies, there have been very real concerns about the dramatic impact of austerity measures on disabled people's income protection and security. For example, concerns have been expressed by disabled people's organisations about the impact of welfare reforms in the UK, Netherlands or Portugal, or about cuts in services and allowances in Greece, Cyprus and Ireland.

Developing themes identified in 2012 there was continued attention to developing long-term labour supply through national reforms that target disability pensions and subsidised schemes and generate cost efficiencies. In practice, such reforms continue to focus on tighter eligibility criteria for out of work cash benefits alongside stricter work capability assessments and 'sickness' management programmes. These have affected large numbers of disabled people, notably at the margins of labour market inclusion. Whilst there has been attention to the supply side, increasing the number of disabled people eligible and expected to work, there is concern that this has not been matched by social investments to generate work opportunity and work skills for those now unable to call on disability benefit supports. The low participation of the disabled people in the labour market continues to be compounded by substantial equality gaps in educational progression at tertiary level and specific consideration will need to be given to disabled young people in forthcoming European discussions of 'youth guarantees'.

As a consequence of the 2013 Survey, Country Specific Recommendations related to disability were forthcoming in Estonia, Slovenia and Netherlands

Deliverables:



ANED country flash reports supporting Commission staff inputs to the 2013 and 2014 Annual Growth Surveys for internal use in policy process.



Task 6: Comparative data and indicators

Task Leader and rapporteur: Stefanos Grammenos

The main objective was to elaborate quantitative indicators with a view to monitoring the situation of persons with disabilities. This activity aims to support the European Disability Strategy, notably the axe of ‘Statistics and data collection and monitoring’. The EU strategy builds notably on the UNCRPD (Article 31 covering statistics and data collection).

The first set of indicators helps to monitor the EU 2020 targets. The elaboration of indicators in the fields of employment, education and poverty provides a series of tools for assessing current policies.

The second set of indicators aims to contribute at the European Year of Citizens. ANED’s thematic focus in 2013 is on issues of citizenship for disabled people and their participation in public and political life. Article 29 CRPD obliges States Parties to ensure disabled people’s rights to participate in public and political life and the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 also contains a commitment to ‘address accessibility to voting in order to facilitate the exercise of EU citizens’ electoral rights’.

Work process

Concerning “Europe 2020 and People with disabilities”, data analysis was conducted using the EU-SILC 2011 survey micro-data. This survey includes all EU28 Member States and samples those aged 16 years old and over living in private households.

Concerning “People with disabilities and Citizenship”, analysis valorized the micro-data of five European surveys: 1. European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS), 2. European Statistics of Income and Living Condition (EU-SILC) – Ad hoc module 2006, 3. European Social Survey (ESS), 4. Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE), and 5. Eurobarometer “Accessibility”.

The work included the elaboration of quantitative indicators, a discussion with graphs and tables and an econometric analysis.

Findings and recommendations

I. EUROPEAN COMPARATIVE DATA ON EUROPE 2020 & PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Europe 2020 is a new strategy for the EU which aims among others to deliver high levels of employment and strengthen social cohesion. Monitoring achievements through



statistics is integral part of the Europe 2020 strategy. Also, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities refers in its Article 31 to statistics and data collection.

In the following, we present the relevant indicators based on EU-SILC 2011 survey (Version 2 of August 2013). The data cover EU 28 except Ireland.

PART I: POPULATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

In 2011, about 26% of persons aged 16 and over declared an activity limitation. In comparison to 2010, there is an increase of about one percentage point. However, the EU-SILC definition does not take into account any “interactions with barriers”. The prevalence rate ranges from 12% (Malta) to 36% (Slovenia). About 28% of women aged 16 and over declare an activity limitation compared to 23% of men of the same age group. About 8% of persons aged 16 and over declare a severe disability (strongly limited) and about 18% declare a moderate disability.

PART II: EUROPE 2020 AND RELATED INDICATORS

II.1 EMPLOYMENT RATE

Europe 2020 objective requires that 75 % of the population aged 20-64 should be employed.

At the EU level, about 47% of persons with disabilities are employed compared to 72% of persons without disabilities. The EU average is 67%. The employment gap is about 25 percentage points (26 percentage points in 2010). We may note that countries with similar employment rates for non-disabled people present big differences for people with disabilities. This means that there is a potential for increasing the employment rate of people with disabilities.

Concerning people with disabilities, the female employment rate is 44% and the male employment rate is 51%. We observe a gender gap of 7 percentage points. The employment rate of women without disabilities is 65%. Among women, the disability gap is 21 percentage points.

The degree of disability decreases employment rate. At the EU level, the employment rate of severely disabled people is 28%. The employment rate of people with a moderate disability is correlated with the employment rate of persons without a disability. On the contrary, the employment rate of people with a severe disability is loosely related to the employment rate of people without disabilities. Measures which are aimed to affect the general population might not have a significant impact on people with a severe disability.



At the EU level, 13% of persons with disabilities work part-time and 34% work full-time. Furthermore, the importance of part-time work increases with the degree of disability. Part-time seems to meet the demands of a certain number of persons with disabilities. A policy of flexible working hours coupled with social security guarantees might make part-time jobs accessible and attractive to severely disabled people.

The recent financial crisis did not deteriorate the employment situation of persons with disability at the EU level. But there was a significant deterioration in certain countries, notably Greece and Spain.

II.2 UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

The EU unemployment rate of people with disabilities, aged 20-64, is 17% compared to 10% of people without disabilities. The EU average is 11%. It ranges from 7% (Netherlands) to 49% (Croatia).

At the EU level, the unemployment rate of women with disabilities is 17% compared to 18% of men with disabilities. But a discouragement effect might push women to quit the labour force.

We may note that the difference between the unemployment rate of people with disabilities and the general unemployment rate is increasing with age. The degree of disability increases unemployment rate. Persons with a severe disability experience an unemployment rate of 28%, persons with a moderate disability 15% and persons without disabilities 10%. The change between 2010 and 2011 is marginal.

II.3 ACTIVITY RATE

At the EU level, 57% of persons with disabilities aged 20-64 participate on the labour market (employed or unemployed) compared to 80% of persons without disabilities. The EU average is 76%. There is a significant difference in the activity rates between people with and without disabilities in all Member States. The activity rate of women with disabilities is 52%. The disability degree decreases significantly the activity rate.

The six countries with the lowest activity gap (Germany, Luxembourg, Austria, Slovenia, Italy and France) have well developed quota schemes in favour of people with disabilities.

The activity rates of persons with a moderate disability and of persons without disabilities are correlated. On the contrary there is no correlation between the activity rates of persons with a severe disability and persons without disabilities. We may question the efficacy of mainstreaming for persons with severe disabilities. If they don't



share some common characteristics with persons without disabilities, then we ought to elaborate specific policies for this group.

At the EU level, we note a very small increase of the activity rate of persons with disabilities, between 2010 and 2011.

II.4 EARLY LEAVERS FROM EDUCATION AND TRAINING

According to the Europe 2020 objectives, the share of early school leavers should be under 10%. This indicator covers population aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education and not in further education or training.

At the EU level, 19% of young disabled are early school leavers compared to 11% of non-disabled young persons. The EU average is 12%. The high rates of early school leavers among young disabled might indicate problems related to accessibility and absence of adapted programmes.

Generally, young women have better achievements (lower share of early school leavers) compared to young boys. At the EU level, 16% of girls with disabilities are early school leavers compared to 22% of young disabled boys. The rate of early school leavers among young with a severe limitation is 39%. The same rate for persons with a moderate disability is 14%.

The share of early school leavers among persons with disabilities aged 18-24 is decreasing continuously. At the EU level, the percent of young disabled aged 18-24 early school leavers was 19% in 2011, compared to 22% in 2010. The reduction of the share of early school leavers benefited young persons with a moderate disability.

Changes between 2010 and 2011 of the two groups (with and without disabilities) are not correlated. General education policies covering all young pupils might have little impact on young persons with disabilities facing architectural barriers. General policies ought to include the necessary adaptations meeting the needs of young pupils with special educational needs.

II.5 PERSONS WHO HAVE COMPLETED A TERTIARY OR EQUIVALENT EDUCATION

Europe 2020 states that the share of the 30-34 years old having completed tertiary or equivalent education should be at least 40% in 2020.

At the EU level, 27% of persons with disabilities have completed a tertiary or equivalent education compared to 37% for persons without disabilities. The EU average is 36%.



The percentage of women with disabilities aged 30-34 who completed tertiary or equivalent education is 31%. The equivalent rate for disabled men is 23%.

Only 15% of persons with a severe disability aged 30-34 have completed a tertiary or equivalent education programme compared to 32% of persons with a moderate disability.

We may observe a continuous improvement of the situation of persons with disabilities. The disability gap of 14 percentage points in 2010 has been reduced to 10 percentage points in 2011. The main beneficiaries of the improvement are persons with a moderate disability. This might indicate that future efforts ought to be directed towards persons with a severe disability.

II.6 PEOPLE LIVING IN HOUSEHOLDS WITH VERY LOW WORK INTENSITY

Work intensity measures the employment rate of the household but it does not take into account the distribution of employment inside a household (including several adults).

At the EU level, 24% of persons with disabilities live in households with a low work intensity (<20) compared to 8% of persons without disabilities. This represents a difference of about 17 percentage points (rounded numbers). The EU average is 10%.

About 24% of women with disabilities live in households with low work intensity compared to 9% of women without disabilities. The respective percentages for men are 25% and 7%. The differences between disabled and non-disabled are substantial in all Member States.

The degree of disability is an important factor. At the EU level, the percentage of severely disabled people living in households with a low work intensity (WI<20) amounts to 40% compared to 18% of persons with a moderate disability.

From 2010 to 2011, the deterioration was extremely small. However, we observe important national differences. The financial crisis affected mainly persons with severe disabilities, notably in Latvia, Spain and Greece.

II.7 PEOPLE AT-RISK-OF-POVERTY AFTER SOCIAL TRANSFERS

The risk of poverty means that a person lives in a household with a household equivalised disposable income less than 60% of the median national household equivalised disposable income (after social transfers).

The data reveal that people with a disability face a higher risk of financial poverty compared to people without disabilities. At the EU level, in 2011, the risk is 19% for



persons with disabilities and 15% for persons without disabilities. The EU average is 16%. The data indicate that the difference between people with and without disabilities is significantly lower compared to work related measures. We can conclude that the welfare state is correcting the labour market inequalities. However, it is important to note that these results might underestimate poverty rates among persons with disabilities. In fact, special allowances to cover disability related costs are treated as an income.

At the EU level, about 20% of women with disabilities live in households at risk of financial poverty compared to 16% of women without disabilities. The respective percentages for men are 19% and 14%. But there are significant differences across countries. However, the method of estimating poverty might underestimate gender differences. In fact, the income level is computed at the household level. We may note that single parent household with dependent children face the highest risk of financial poverty both for persons with and without disabilities.

At the EU level, in the age group 16 to 64, about 21% of persons with disabilities are at risk of financial poverty compared to 15% for persons without disabilities. The respective percentages for elderly people aged 65 and over are 17% and 14%. Pension schemes in the EU decrease the risk of poverty. The percentage of elderly at risk of poverty is less compared to persons aged 16-64. This is notably true for persons with disabilities. A disability related gap of 6 percentage points among persons aged 16-64 is reduced to 3 percentage points among elderly people. Overall, retirement pensions reduce poverty inequalities both in absolute values and in relative terms.

Comparing the situation between 2010 and 2011, we may observe a small deterioration of the situation of people with disabilities at the EU level of 0,6 percentage points (increase of poverty). We observe a similar increase of financial poverty of 0,5 percentage points for persons without disabilities.

II.8 SEVERELY MATERIALLY DEPRIVED PEOPLE

"Severely materially deprived persons" is an indicator of social exclusion which expresses the person's inability to afford for certain goods or services which are considered as of common use. The collection "material deprivation" covers indicators relating to economic strain, durables, housing and environment of the dwelling.

In 2011, about 12% of people with disabilities are living in households which are severely materially deprived compared to 7% of people without disabilities. The EU average is 9%. The range of variation across countries is much bigger compared to other poverty indicators. Concerning persons with disabilities, this rate ranges from a low 2% in Luxembourg to a high 59% in Bulgaria.



In the EU, 13% of women with disabilities live in households who are severely materially deprived compared to 7% of women without disabilities. The respective percentages for men are 11% and 7%.

At the EU level and for the age group 16-64, about 14% of persons with disabilities are severely materially deprived compared to 8% of persons without disability. The respective percentages for persons aged 65 and over are 9% and 5%. Age decrease the percentage. Retirement schemes reduce the disadvantage associated to the degree of disability in most countries, notably in the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Sweden

The degree of disability increases significantly the percentage of persons living in households which are in severe material deprivation. About 15% of persons with a severe disability face severe material deprivation. This percentage is 11% for persons with a moderate disability and 7% for persons without disabilities.

At the EU level, in 2011, 12% of persons with disabilities were living in households which were severely materially deprived compared to 11% in 2010.

II.9 PEOPLE AT-RISK-OF-POVERTY OR SOCIAL EXCLUSION (UNION OF THE THREE INDICATORS ABOVE)

This indicator corresponds to the sum of persons who are either at risk of poverty or severely materially deprived or living in households with very low work intensity. Persons present in several sub-indicators are counted only once.

There is a big difference between adults (16-64) and elderly people (65 and over). In fact, the criteria for each age group are not the same. Low work intensity concerns only persons aged less than 65 years.

In 2011, at the EU level, 31% of people with disabilities aged 16 and over live in households which are at risk of poverty or social exclusion compared to 21% of persons without a disability of the same age group. The percentage for all persons aged 16 and over is 24%.

Concerning poverty among persons aged 16-64, in 2011, at the EU level, 37% of people with disabilities aged 16 to 64 live in households which are at risk of poverty or social exclusion compared to 22% of persons without a disability of the same age group. The EU average for all persons aged 16-64 is 24%.

At the EU level and for the age group 16-64, about 37% of women with disabilities are at risk of poverty compared to 23% of women without disabilities. The corresponding rates for men are 37% and 21%. Gender differences inside each group (group of disabled and



non-disabled) are small or inexistent. But this is not surprising as the indicator is constructed at the household level and not at the individual level.

The degree of disability increases significantly the risk of poverty in all Member states. At the EU level, 49% of persons with a severe disability aged 16-64 are at risk of poverty or social exclusion. This same rate is 32% for persons with a moderate disability and 22% for persons without disabilities.

The data reveal the urgency to act in favour of persons with a severe disability.

We observe a persistent gap between persons with and without disabilities through time. Furthermore, this gap has slightly widened. Between 2010 and 2011, the increase of poverty rate was about 1,4 percentage points for persons with disabilities and 0,7 percentage point for persons without disabilities.

The data indicate a persistent gap between persons with and without disabilities between 2010 and 2011. Furthermore, this gap has slightly widened. The increase was about 1,4 percentage points for persons with disabilities compared to 0,7 percentage point for persons without disabilities (aged 16-64). This deterioration of the situation of persons with disabilities took place in the majority of the Member States.

II. EUROPEAN COMPARATIVE DATA ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES & CITIZENSHIP

In the context of the European Year of Citizens, ANED's thematic focus in 2013 is on issues of citizenship for disabled people and their participation in public and political life. Article 29 CRPD obliges States Parties to ensure disabled people's rights to participate in public and political life and the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 also contains a commitment to 'address accessibility to voting in order to facilitate the exercise of EU citizens' electoral rights'.

In order to extract a high number of indicators, we have used different surveys, notably: 1. European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS); 2. European Statistics of Income and Living Condition (EU-SILC) – Ad hoc module 2006; 3. European Social Survey (ESS); 4. Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE), and 5; Eurobarometer "Accessibility".

The different surveys do not follow the approach adopted by the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In fact, the questions of the different surveys rely on a medical approach:

1. EQLS: "Do you have any chronic (6 months and over) physical or mental health problem, illness or disability"? If the person answers "Yes", "Are you limited in



your daily activities by this physical or mental health problem, illness or disability”?

2. EU-SILC : “Limitation in activities people usually do because of health problems for at least the last 6 months” (Whether they are hampered in their daily activity by any ongoing physical or mental health problem, illness or disability)
3. ESS: “Are you hampered in your daily activities in any way by any longstanding illness, or disability, infirmity or mental health problem?”
4. SHARE: “For the past six months at least, to what extent have you been limited because of a health problem in activities people usually do”?
5. Eurobarometer: “For at least the last 6 months, to what extent, have you or someone in your household been limited because of a health problem, in activities people usually do”?

The EQLS survey includes a filter question and thus might cover a slightly different population of persons with disabilities compared to other surveys.

All surveys, except the Eurobarometer survey, report “self-assessments”. But the Eurobarometer survey the interviewed person presents an assessment of his own capacities as well as of the capacities of other household members. The base is closer to household than to the individual person.

But despite these differences, we may consider that the different surveys present similar results for a certain number of indicators, if we control certain important dimensions (age, definition of the indicator, etc.).

1. TRUST IN POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS: Parliament, Government & Local authorities

The European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS) 2011-2012 reports a set of indicators concerning trust in parliament, in government and in local authorities of persons aged 18 and over. The person may rate it from ‘1’ to ‘10’. At the EU 28 level, the average scores are 4,1 for parliament, 4,0 for government and 5,2 for local authorities. The respective scores attributed by persons with disabilities are: 3,9 (parliament), 3,9 (government) and 5,3 (local authorities).

Concerning trust in parliament and in the government, in the big majority of countries, people with disabilities report a lower score compared to people without disabilities. Even in countries with a relatively high score of trust like Germany, Netherland and Sweden, we find a significant difference between persons with and without disabilities.

Persons with disabilities as well as persons without disabilities give a higher score to local authorities. Perhaps people consider that these institutions are closer to their needs and/or understand better their choices. There might be a proximity dimension.



Generally, women with disabilities give a higher score compared to disabled men. This is notably true for trust in local authorities. Elderly people with disabilities assign a higher score compared to adult people with disabilities in almost all Member States.

We observe a strong impact of the degree of disability on trust scores for parliament and government. At the EU 28 level, the average trust in parliament for persons with a severe disability is 3,7 compared to 4,0 for persons with a moderate disability and 4,1 for persons without disabilities. The results for trust in government are similar, respectively 3,7, 3,9 and 4,0. On the contrary, the differences are insignificant for trust in local authorities. But local authorities are the main providers of services for people with severe disabilities (accessibility, education, etc.).

We run an econometric analysis based on a binary variable: unfavourable score (1 to 5) and favourable score (6 to 10). The percentages of favourable scores in the sample are 29% for the parliament, 28% for the government and 49% for local authorities. By controlling age, education, economic status, poverty risk, origin and household structure, severe limitation decreases the probability to report a favourable score by 6 to 9 percentage points (depending on the institution) in comparison to non-disabled persons. A moderate disability decreases this probability by 4 to 7 percentage points in comparison to a non-disabled person. This means that disability by itself might act as a proxy for specific characteristics shared by persons with disabilities and these might include accessibility issues and barriers related to the interaction between the disability and the physical environment.

2. SATISFACTION WITH THE WAY DEMOCRACY WORKS

The European Social Survey (ESS) 2012 asks persons aged 15 and over “on the whole, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in the country”? The person may rate it from ‘0’ to ‘10’. We report the data for the 18 EU Member States. People with disabilities report a lower score (5,3) compared to people without disabilities (5,4). The differences are small but generally significant (at 5%). Countries that are traditionally considered more egalitarian, and with a well-developed social protection system, are associated with higher levels of satisfaction both for persons with and without disabilities (Finland, Sweden and Denmark).

Women with disabilities report a lower score of satisfaction compared to men with disabilities. Generally, age increases satisfaction with the way democracy works. In fact, age has a “U” shaped impact. However, in certain new Member States (Estonia, Poland and Czech Republic) elderly disabled persons express less satisfaction with the way democracy works. At the EU level, we can advance that the degree of disability decreases satisfaction with the way democracy works.



For the econometric analysis, we have grouped the scores into persons “dissatisfied” (score from ‘0’ to ‘4’) and persons “satisfied” (score from ‘6’ to ‘10’). In the sample, 61% declare satisfied. Severe disability decreases the probability to report “satisfied” (score 6-10) by 11,5 percentage points in comparison to persons without disabilities. Having a moderate disability decreases this same probability by 4,7 percentage points in comparison to persons without disabilities.

3. INTEREST IN POLITICS

The ESS 2012 covers 18 EU Member States. For this group of countries, persons with disabilities are more interested in politics than persons without disabilities. About 51% of persons with disabilities declare an interest (very or quite interested) compared to 47% of persons without disabilities. But age might add ‘noise’ to the comparison.

There is an important gender gap. For the 18 EU countries, about 45% of females with disabilities express an interest to politics compared to 59% of males with disabilities. This represents a gender gap of 14 percentage points among persons with disabilities. The gender gap among persons without disabilities is 13 percentage points. The low interest of women for politics might be due to discrimination. If women consider that they are discriminated, their incentive to invest in such activities will be low.

Age increases the interest for politics. When we present detailed age groups, there is no significant and systematic difference between persons with and without disabilities of the same gender. There is only a gender difference. The analysis by degree indicates that men with a moderate disability are particularly interested in politics.

4. PARTICIPATION IN ELECTIONS

The EQLS 2007-2008 survey includes a question concerning participation in last national elections.

A first analysis of the data indicates that, at the EU level, there is a non-significant difference between persons with and without disabilities but sharp contrasts across Member States.

Still previous studies have shown that the participation rate of persons with disabilities is lower compared to persons without disabilities. But they find also that age has an important impact. Participation increases with age. As the percentage of disabled increases with age, the age effect might dominate any negative impact related to disability. In this case, the statistics will provide a higher participation rate for persons with disabilities. The raw data are not relevant for our analysis.

The problems discussed above concerning age and disability are further complicated by gender issues. The number of elderly women with disabilities is relatively important.



Again, we have the two effects (age and disability) pushing participation into opposing directions. Also, the degree of disability is an important factor as it might imply more accessibility and mobility problems, notably during the voting process. At the EU 27 level, about 79% of persons with a severe disability voted during last national elections compared to 84% of persons with a moderate disability and 83% of persons without disabilities.

An econometric analysis reveals that, by controlling for personal characteristics and socio-economic status, severe disability decreases the probability to vote by 8 percentage points in comparison to persons without disabilities. This negative impact might be related to barriers surrounding the voting process. The negative impact of moderate disabilities is weak and not statistically robust.

5. ELIGIBILITY TO VOTE

The EQLS 2007-2008 survey includes a question concerning participation in last national election. There is a possible answer 'not eligible'. But non-eligibility may stem from different causes and there is no information on this. No relevant data have been identified.

6. VOLUNTARY WORK IN COMMUNITY, EDUCATIONAL, SOCIAL, POLITICAL & OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Participation in volunteering favours social contacts and reduces the risk of isolation. Furthermore, it increases the probability to get more information, advice, assistance, etc. In summary, it increases the social capital of the participant.

The EQLS 2011-2012 survey enables us to analyse involvement in a. Community and social services, b. Educational, cultural, sports or professional associations, c. Social movements, d. Political parties, trade unions, and e. Other voluntary organisations. In the following, volunteering will imply participation in at least one of the previous five activities.

At the EU 28 level, about 27% of persons with disabilities participate in voluntary activities compared to 34% of persons without disabilities. We may observe a difference in all member States except in the Czech Republic. Participation may be hindered by barriers and limited accessibility. However, we may not exclude that lower participation might result from health problems.

There is a small gender difference inside both groups (persons with and without disabilities). However, this is not true for all Member States. Involvement in community and social services is high both for women with and without disabilities. On the contrary,



unpaid work for political parties and trade-unions is lower among women irrespective of disability status.

Volunteering is lower among disabled elderly people. At the EU level, about 31% of persons with disabilities aged 18-64 did unpaid voluntary work compared to 21% for persons with disabilities aged 65 or more. The respective rates for persons without disabilities are 34% and 29%. The degree of disability decreases the number of volunteers both for men and women.

The Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE) 2011 survey reveals that a high number of persons with disabilities (aged 50+) are dissatisfied with non-participation in social, political and other activities. On the contrary, persons without disabilities are more satisfied than disabled people from non-participation in the listed activities. This means that for persons without disabilities, non-participation is a free choice. On the contrary, for persons with disabilities, this is an undesirable situation which might be related to barriers.

7. UNPAID WORK THROUGH POLITICAL PARTIES AND TRADE-UNIONS

The EQLS 2011-2012 indicates that about 4,1% of persons with disabilities did some voluntary work in the last 12 months through political parties and trade-unions, compared with 5,8% of persons without disabilities.

At the EU level, the number of women with disabilities who did unpaid work through political parties and trade-unions is about 2,8% compared to 5,8% of disabled men. The percentage of persons with disabilities aged 18-64 who did unpaid work through political parties and trade-unions is about 5,0% compared to 2,8% of persons with disabilities aged 65 or plus.

The degree of disability decreases political participation. At the EU 28 level, the percentage of persons with a severe disability who did unpaid work through political parties and trade-unions is 3,4% compared to 4,4% of persons with a moderate disability and 5,8% of persons without disabilities. The lower frequency of participation of persons with severe disabilities weakens further the low overall participation rate.

The analysis by degree and gender indicates an important disadvantage for women with disabilities. The low participation rate of women with severe disabilities might lead to a bias in the decision making process of political institutions. In fact, their needs might be undervalued and dominated by the interests of other competing groups.



8. PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVITIES OF POLITICAL PARTIES OR TRADE UNIONS

The EU-SILC ad hoc module 2006 on social participation includes a question on “Participation in activities of political parties or trade unions”. At the EU level, about 4,0% of persons with disabilities participated in activities related to political groups, political association, political parties or trade unions, in the last 12 months, compared with 4,3% of persons without disabilities.

Women have a lower participation rate in the big majority of Member States. This is also true for women with disabilities. At the EU level, the number of women with disabilities who participated in activities of political parties or trade unions is about 2,8% compared to 5,7% for disabled men. The respective rates for women and men without disabilities are 3,0% and 5,7%.

Age decreases political participation in almost all Member States. At the EU level, the percentage of persons with disabilities aged 16-64 who participated in activities of political parties or trade unions is about 4,8% compared to 2,9% of persons with disabilities aged 65 or plus. When we control for age, there is no significant difference between women with and without disabilities.

The degree of disability decreases political participation. At the EU level, the percentage of persons with a severe disability who participated in activities of political parties or trade unions is 2,8% compared to 4,6% of persons with a moderate disability and 4,3% of persons without disabilities.

9. ATTENDED A MEETING OF TRADE-UNION, A POLITICAL PARTY OR A POLITICAL ACTION GROUP

The EQLS 2011-2012 indicates that, at the EU level, about 6,6% of persons with disabilities attended a meeting of a trade union, a political party or political action group compared to 8,4% of persons without disabilities.

We may observe a gender gap in political activism between females and males. About 5,1% of women with disabilities attended a meeting of a trade union, a political party or political action group compared to 8,6% for men with disabilities. Younger disabled are more active politically compared to elderly disabled persons. The degree of disability reduces the percentage of persons who attended a meeting of a trade union, a political party or political action group. This decrease is true for both men and women.



10. MEMBER OF A TRADE UNION OR SIMILAR ORGANISATION

The ESS 2012 reports that, at the EU level (18 MS), 13,1% of persons with disabilities are members of a trade union compared to 14,4% of persons without disabilities. There are significant national differences but membership may be affected by national laws governing work organisation.

At the EU level, the rate of women with disabilities who are members of a trade union or similar organisation is 10,8% compared to 15,7% of men with disabilities. The respective rates for persons without disabilities are 12,7% and 16,2%. Age decreases trade union membership. Women with and without disabilities share a similar evolution: generally lower compared to men. But, often women occupy jobs where unionisation is low and work part-time.

Globally, age and gender differences play a dominant role. Although disability related differences are present, they play a minor role (except for young workers). Aggregated data will tend to give a higher unionisation rate for persons with disabilities as their mean age is 57 compared to 45 for persons without disabilities. The degree of disability decreases trade union membership in all Member States (except Estonia).

11. DIFFICULTIES IN VOTING IN ELECTION

A Flash Eurobarometer survey on “Accessibility” took place in 2012. It enables us to focus on persons with disabilities aged 15 and over. In this report, we use the term disability to cover persons with limitations in daily activities.

About 21,1% of respondents, who say that they or a member of their household have been limited, have experienced difficulties voting in an election. About 9,6% of respondents experienced difficulty most of the time whilst voting, while 11,5% said that it happens only from time to time. The rates reported by men and women are similar.

The degree of disability increases the rate of persons reporting difficulties voting in elections. The rate of respondents who say that they or someone in their household have been severely limited and encounter difficulties voting in elections is 28,4% compared to 14,2% of respondents who say that they or someone in their household have been moderately limited.

12. DIFFICULTIES IN USING OFFICIAL AUTHORITIES' WEBSITES

The special Eurobarometer 2012 on accessibility provides that, at the EU level, about 26% respondents, who say that they or a member of their household have been limited, have experienced difficulties in using official authorities' websites. About 10% of respondents experienced difficulty most of the time whilst using official authorities'



websites, while 16% said that it happens only from time to time. There are important differences across EU countries.

Globally, difficulties reported by men and women are similar. Persons aged 15-64 who have a limitation (or someone in their household) report more often difficulties 'from time to time' compared to persons aged 65 and over. But this might be due to a more extensive use of official authorities' website for work or leisure, notably by persons aged 30 to 50 years. In fact, employees report more often difficulties compared to other economic categories.

The degree of disability increases the rate of persons reporting difficulties in using official authorities' websites. The rate of respondents who say that they or someone in their household have been severely limited and encounter difficulties in using official authorities' websites is 30%% compared to 22% of respondents who say that they or someone in their household have been moderately limited.

Deliverables:

EUROPEAN COMPARATIVE DATA ON EUROPE 2020 & PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

EUROPEAN COMPARATIVE DATA ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES & CITIZENSHIP

ANED web page on comparative data and indicators:

<http://www.disability-europe.net/theme/data-and-indicators>



Task 7: Annual academic meeting and conference

On 12 November 2013, ANED organised a conference in Brussels, bringing together its academic members from the 30 EU and EU/EEA Member States with representatives from the Commission staff and key invited guests. The meeting provided an important opportunity for members to share expertise, to reflect on all of the work completed and to discuss the possibilities for the future of the Network.

Johan Ten Geuzendam (Head of the European Commission's Disability Unit) opened the meeting, speaking of the very co-operative and productive relationship between ANED and the Commission. Additionally mentioned was that ANED has also developed good cooperation with the EU Fundamental Rights Agency, to great mutual benefit.

Professor Mark Priestley (the Scientific Director) outlined the 2013 work programme in relation to the key tasks (described earlier in this report). Additionally, Mark Priestley outlined the most relevant strategy targets in relation to research on employment, education and poverty risk and provided trends and thematic concerns raised based on the input of the country researchers. Together Els Mortier, Mark Priestley provided an overview of ANED's activity and inputs relevant to the EU2020 Strategy.

Els Mortier (European Commission) gave an overview of the structure and process of the European Semester, focusing on the opportunities and expectations for ANED's input. Together with Mark Priestley, Els Mortier provided an overview of ANED's activity and inputs relevant to the EU2020 Strategy.

Professor Stefanos Grammenos (Centre for European Social and Economic Policy) presented a range of comparative data against key quantitative indicators relevant to the EU2020 strategy. These relate to headline targets agreed for the whole of the EU (with each Member State adopting its own target), with a focus on Employment, Education and Poverty and Social exclusion. The ANED indicators also considered Accessibility.

Professor Lisa Waddington (Maastricht University) discussed EU citizenship and political participation in light of the UN CRPD.

ANED country experts Petra Flieger (Austria), **Eleni Strati** (Greece) and **Tamás Gyulavári** (Hungary) gave examples of barriers to citizenship and participation in political life and examples of progress at the national level.

Martha Stickings (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights [FRA]) and **Professor Mark Priestley** (ANED) gave a joint presentation on the work that FRA and ANED are undertaking to develop and populate indicators on the right to political participation of persons with disabilities.



Inmaculada Placencia-Porrero (Deputy Head, Disability Unit European Commission) suggested that the EU could act to promote accessibility bringing benefits both to disabled people and from a market perspective. A European Accessibility law is in the legislative programme for 2014 indicating that a proposal is to be brought forward in the first months of 2014 .

Gunta Anca (Board member of the European Disability Forum [EDF]) spoke of the urgent need for EU legislation on accessibility, and about the EDF's Freedom of Movement campaign.

A summary from the proceedings and links to the presentations are available on the ANED website: <http://disability-europe.net/seminar>