**Minutes**

**Meeting of the EU Framework to promote, protect and monitor**

**the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD)**

**10 November 2021, 14:00-16:30**

(online meeting)

* Participants:
* EP: Katrin Langensiepen (Chair), Abir Alsahlani, David Ivan Nosak, Angelika Kiss, Jaroslaw Duda, John Hultengard, Monika Makay, Saulius Milius, Katja Vatter, Karin Sauerteig
* EDF: Alejandro Moledo, Marine Uldry
* European Ombudsman: Marta Hirsch-Ziembinska, Valentina Stoeva
* Fundamental Rights Agency: Robert Jan Uhl, Sandra Boudjoulian, Sarah Moutard
1. **Welcome and Opening**

The Chair welcomed the participants to the meeting.

1. **Approval of the Agenda**

The agenda was approved.

1. **Discussion on the upcoming review of the EU by the CRPD Committee (scheduled for the March session of the Committee)**

The CRPD committee has announced that the list of issues prior to reporting on the European Union is to be discussed at the Committee’s March 2022 session. The deadline for written submissions to this session is January 2022. At the occasion of the previous review, a briefing was organised for the committee by the Framework. EDF is currently working on an alternative report to be submitted by the end of January 2022 and will take part in the civil society meeting with the CRPD Committee and will also have private meetings with members of the Committee in March. It was noted that there was a [joint statement](https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/contribution-eu-framework-post-2020-disability-strategy_en.pdf) by the Framework on the new Disability [Strategy](https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1484); a joint framework submission to the Committee could also be considered. It was decided that the modality of submission (joint or separate) would be decided on at the next meeting of the Framework.

1. **Discussion on the 2022 review of the Framework**

In the new EU Disability Strategy, a review of the CRPD Framework has been announced. Members noted the importance of establishing, in discussions with the Commission, how this review will be conducted, and of taking a position on the future of the framework. It was decided that the members would engage in internal discussions on the future of the framework, and that this issue would be discussed at the Framework’s next meeting.

1. **Preparation for meeting with the Focal Point (European Commission)**

It was decided to ensure that the next meeting with the European Commission would take place before the end of the year; the chair will propose dates for this. The meeting should take the form of an exchange of views on implementation of the CRPD and activities undertaken in the area of disability.

1. **Updates from EU Framework members on activities to promote, protect and monitor the implementation of the UN CRPD**

EDF:

* Recent campaign, particularly regarding the implementation of CRPD, gathering information from MS by late November – ready by 03/12/21 – hopefully ready for publication by beginning 2022
* Also [closely following](https://www.edf-feph.org/edf-proposals-for-a-new-eu-electoral-law/) the EP [proposal](https://oeil.secure.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/popups/ficheprocedure.do?reference=2020/2220(INL)&l=en) to put forward a new electoral law; impact of AI on persons with disabilities; [Minimum Wage Directive](https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1539&langId=en); implementation of the European [Accessibility Act](https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1202) (lots of MS late); [Web Accessibility Directive](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2016/2102/oj)
* Very soon, launch of a digital tool on EDF website: accessibility database to collect complaints and testimonials on accessibility issues (passengers rights and transport services)
* Campaign to withdraw additional protocol of Oviedo Convention; the additional protocol of the [Oviedo Convention](https://www.coe.int/en/web/bioethics/oviedo-convention) involves the Council of Europe, so is a bit detached from the EU – but it impacts policies on mental health, very negative impact on implementation of CRPD as a whole: EDF believes EU Member States have a role to play and should speak out against the protocol – CRPD Committee has also spoken out against adoption of this protocol

EU Agency for Fundamental Rights:

* Work on CRPD: national monitoring and development of human rights indicators to measure the implementation of CRPD – worked with Czechia on development of such indicators recently
* Working on a paper on setting up human rights indicators with ENNHRI members to be published in 2022
* Working on a paper on voting restrictions and challenges in relation with EP elections (ready ahead of the next EP elections)
* Working on gathering promising practices (to be published in the Fundamental Rights Report 2023, will ask for information from FRANET partners)
* Continuing with annual FRR updates on CRPD implementation
* New project on EU Funds, looking at fundamental rights and CRPD (close relationship link with independent living/institutionalisation and EU funds): look at the national monitoring bodies, see what their role could be in EU funds cycle => need a human rights check in the EU funding cycle
* A FRA summary of research findings of the last reports, including of COVID-19 bulletins, FRR, Fundamental Rights Survey and other FRA surveys will be prepared to feed into the list of issues.

European Ombudsman:

* COM should not finance projects if not compliant with CRPD
* Involvement of national Ombudsmen in monitoring – next week, meeting with them; check what EC can do and will do
* Sent letter to EC to collect information about how COVID-19 has impacted its staff members with disabilities, to provide EU administration with best practices. Decision is available here: https://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/en/decision/en/143861
* Another ongoing investigation: how the Commission monitors EU funds used to promote the right of persons with disabilities and older persons to independent living, launched this year, based on 2 prior complaints received by Ombudsman: <https://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/en/opening-summary/en/137679>
* A complaint is currently being handled on a refusal by the Commission to award a staff member double dependency allowance for taking care of a child with disabilities.EC reply received, should have conclusions by the end of the year

European Parliament:

* The PETI report [“The protection of persons with disabilities through petitions: lessons learnt”](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2021-0414_EN.html) was adopted on 7 October 2021 in Plenary (<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2021-0414_EN.html>). On 9 November 2021, PETI held its annual [workshop on the rights of persons with disabilities](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/241922/Draft%20Study_%202015_Observations_CRPD_PETI.pdf) that focused on the implementation of the 2015 Concluding Observations of the CRPD Committee by the EU and the 2021-2030 Disability Strategy. An expert [study](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/241922/Draft%20Study_%202015_Observations_CRPD_PETI.pdf) on this issue has been also presented. Following the workshop, members discussed the following petitions: Petition1205/2020 on the EU-wide introduction of workshops for persons with disabilities and petition 1553/2020 on the Dutch employment legislation and its consequences for persons with disabilities in the Netherlands;
* List of petitions submitted since the last framework meeting:

0788-21 on alleged violation of human rights of a person with disability by the Catalan administration

0816-21 on alleged discrimination against civilian with disabilities in Croatia

1031-21 on teaching universal sign language in all schools

1. **AOB**

EDF noted the ongoing [EC call for organisations to join the Disability Platform](https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=10094&furtherNews=yes) to replace the high-level group on Persons with Disabilities – however no decision published yet (application deadline: 26/11/2021). It will be platform which meets 4 times a year and will be a way to exchange experiences and best practices in the field of disability and spur coordination with national disability strategies.