**The EU Framework for the rights of**

**People with Disabilities**

**How does the European Union help people with disabilities?**

The European Union is a group of 28 countries in Europe.
The European Union makes laws and policies

for the people that live in these countries.
The European Union is called the EU for short.

One of the most important documents
for people with disabilities is the
United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.

A convention is an agreement between different countries
on rights that everyone has.

Countries who agreed to the Convention must make sure that people with disabilities have the same rights as people without disabilities.
This means that people with disabilities can make their own choices
and are treated as anyone else.

The European Union thinks these rights are very important.
The European Union tries to make
the lives of people with disabilities better.
The European Union makes laws.
The European Union checks to see that all 28 countries follow its laws.

**What is the "EU framework"?**

The EU Framework means four organisations working together.
An organisation is a group of people working together.

These organisations want people in Europe to enjoy their rights.

The EU Framework wants the laws and policies of the European Union to make the lives of people with disabilities better.

Laws are rules people must follow.
Policies help people to follow the law.

**Who are the four members of the EU framework?**

The organisations in the EU framework are:

[The European Parliament](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/portal/en)

The European Parliament is one of the institutions
of the European Union.
It represents all the people in the EU.

Every five years people who live in the EU vote
for new members of the European Parliament.

It holds a big meeting every month,

to discuss and decide about new laws.

The big meeting is in Strasbourg, in France.

The European Parliament helps to protect the interests
of all the people in the EU with laws
that change the life of everyone.

If you have a problem with the EU,
you can contact the European Parliament to find a solution.

[The European Ombudsman](http://www.ombudsman.europa.eu/home.faces)

The Office of the European Ombudsman looks at
how the institutions of the European Union work.

The European Ombudsman and her team
helps people who live in the European Union.

People with disabilities can call or write to the European Ombudsman
about their problems with the EU institutions.

You can also tell the European Ombudsman
when someone you know is treated wrongly by an EU institution.

[The EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)](http://fra.europa.eu/en)

The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
is called FRA for short.

FRA helps to make sure everyone in the European Union
can use their rights.

FRA looks at the rights of people in the EU.
FRA looks at the protection of rights in the 28 countries of the EU.

It compares how countries protect these rights.
For example, FRA shows what is the same in these countries
and what is different between these countries.

FRA works on the rights of people with disabilities.
It looks at how people with disabilities can enjoy their rights.

[The European Disability Forum (EDF)](http://www.edf-feph.org/)

The European Disability Forum protects the interests
of 80 million Europeans with disabilities.

The European Disability Forum is called EDF for short.

It makes sure that the EU listens to the voice of people with disabilities
and their organisations from any country in the EU.

EDF makes sure that the EU is
making the life of people with disabilities better.

When your country does not protect your rights,
you can ask EDF to help you complain.

**What does the EU Framework do?**

Each organisation in the EU Framework has a different job.

They all want a better life for people with disabilities in Europe.

Their work is divided into three parts
called promotion, protection and monitoring.

**1. Promotion**

The EU framework makes sure people know
about the rights of people with disabilities.

The EU Framework also helps all people
to understand what these rights mean.

Letting more people know about rights and
what they can do is called promotion.

**2. Protection**

The EU framework helps protect people with disabilities.

People with disabilities can ask for help
when they think they are treated differently
and they cannot use their rights.

People with disabilities can complain
when the government has done something wrong.

They should ask for help.

There are organisations that protect the rights of people with disabilities in the country where they live.
They give advice about who to talk to.

The European Ombudsman can help
when people with disabilities have a problem
about a law, policy or decision that the European Union made.

Taking action when something is wrong is called protection.

**3. Monitoring**

The EU Framework collects information
about the laws and policies in each country.

The EU Framework uses this information to check
to see the laws are working properly for people with disabilities and to make things better for people with disabilities.

Monitoring is when you check that everything is working right.

The European Ombudsman can ask other EU institutions questions to check they are treating people with disabilities well.

**How does the EU Framework work?**

In the EU Framework different organisations work together.

The members of the EU Framework meet two times a year.
The members discuss how people with disabilities can use their rights.
The members also plan what the EU Framework will do.

In the EU Framework there is one person
to help the other members discuss and make decisions.
This person is called the "Chairperson".

The EU Framework has a person
that helps the Chairperson and the members prepare the meetings.
This person is called the “secretariat”.

The EU Framework has a work programme.
The work programme says what the EU Framework will do.
The work programme also says when things will be done.

The EU Framework takes a decision
when everyone agrees on what has been discussed.

**How well is the EU doing to help people with disabilities?**

The European Union has to tell the United Nations what
the European Union is doing to help people with disabilities.
The European Union has to this every four years.

This is one of the rules in the
United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.

The United Nations looks at what the European Union says it is doing.
The United Nations then tells the European Union
what it is doing well
what it is doing badly
and what it still needs to do.
These are called “concluding observations”.

The EU Framework is working on the first concluding observations
that the United Nations sent to the EU Framework.

The concluding observations help the EU Framework.
The concluding observations tell the EU Framework
what to do help people with disabilities.