**Members of municipal authorities with a disability**

Indicators on political participation

of persons with disabilities

2014

DISCLAIMER: The background country information reports contain background material for the comparative report on *The right to political participation for persons with disabilities: human rights indicators* by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA). The bulk of the information in the background country information reports comes from ad hoc information reports prepared under contract by the FRA’s research network FRANET. The views expressed in the background country information reports do not necessarily reflect the views or the official position of the FRA. These reports are made publicly available for information purposes only and do not constitute legal advice or legal opinion.

**Are people with disabilities elected to municipal governments?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **EUMS** | **Source and supporting information** |
| AT | There are no members of current municipal governments who identify as having a disability.[[1]](#footnote-1)An information request was sent to the Austrian Association of Municipalities. In a response they explained that they have no data on the requested information.[[2]](#footnote-2) |
| BE | This data is not collected as the presence of a disability is considered a confidential matter.[[3]](#footnote-3) |
| BG | There is no official source containing such information.  |
| CY | No data is available.[[4]](#footnote-4) |
| CZ | No data is available.[[5]](#footnote-5) |
| DE | No information obtained/recorded.[[6]](#footnote-6) |
| DK | None are known. The Local Government Denmark (*Kommunernes Landsforening*), the Danish National Centre for Social Research and the University of Copenhagen have been consulted and none of these possess this information. |
| EE | This kind of data (being sensitive personal data) is not collected in Estonia.[[7]](#footnote-7) |
| EL | The Directorate for Elections of the Ministry of Interior does not maintain data on the percentage and the number of elected members of municipal and district authorities with disabilities. Specific feedback was provided by certain districts. Namely:* In the District of Athens elected members of the district board with a disability are 1%
* In the District of West Macedonia, 1 (out of 50) elected member of the district board has a disability
* The district of Central Macedonia does not maintain data related to disability
* In the district of Western Greece 1 (out of 51) elected member of the district board has a disability
* The district of Ipeiros does not maintain data on disability
 |
| ES | After consultation of the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP)[[8]](#footnote-8), no information seems to be available.On 29/07/2013, Ms Ángela Bachiler became the first Spanish city councillor with Down Syndrome, having substituted a resigned member of the Popular Party (PP) in the City Council of Valladolid (region of Castilla and Leon).[[9]](#footnote-9) This news provoked significant resonance in the Spanish media.[[10]](#footnote-10) |
| FI | There is no available data about how many members of municipal governments identify as having a disability. The National Council on Disability, VANE (*Valtakunnallinen vammaisneuvosto 2013-2015, VANE/Riksomfattande handikapprådet, VANE*) estimates that disabled persons are underrepresented in municipal political bodies.[[11]](#footnote-11) |
| FR | No data is available.[[12]](#footnote-12) |
| HR | Association of towns in the Republic of Croatia *(Udruga gradova u Republici Hrvatskoj*) does not have the data on how many members of current town governments identify as having a disability.[[13]](#footnote-13) Neither does the Association of Municipalities (*Udruga općina*) collect this data, however it surveyed its members upon request for information in preparation of this report. They received 54 responses, out of 428 municipalities[[14]](#footnote-14), i.e. a response rate of 12,61%. Among responding municipalities, 6 responded having one member self-identifying as a person with disabilities. |
| HU | Due to the Hungarian data protection rules, the number of municipality representatives living with disabilities is not registered officially. Following the MEOSZ, two mayors of small settlements and five members of municipal governments are living with moderate physical disabilities.[[15]](#footnote-15) |
| IE | Data not available. There are a number of Councillors who are wheelchair users. |
| IT | There is no official data on the members of municipal governments with disabilities. A few members of regional and municipal governments are known as having disability according to the agency *DisabiliAbili[[16]](#footnote-16)*. |
| LT | CEC does not have data about how many members of the current municipal governments identify as having a disability.[[17]](#footnote-17) The central association for municipal governments does not have such data, since neither candidates nor elected members must declare a disability |
| LU | No official data is available. According to estimation by different institutions (the Ministry, Syvicol, NGOs)[[18]](#footnote-18), a maximum of 10 persons of the 106 municipal governments elected in 2011 with approximately 1,000 members of the 106 executives councils might identify as having a disability.One person with a disability has been elected for the *City of Luxembourg*’s council in October 2011 and should take up his task in 2014 under a rotation system (political party Dei Lenk - the Left). Probably he will be unable to fulfil his mandate as he would need personal assistance, which is not foreseen in Luxembourg.[[19]](#footnote-19) |
| LV | No official information is available. According to the information provided by the Latvia's Union of Municipalities, the Union does not have any information about any local government deputies identifying themselves as persons with disability.[[20]](#footnote-20) Additionally, article 2 of the Personal Data Protection Law considers information about the health of the person as sensitive personal data and restricts gathering and processing such information.[[21]](#footnote-21) |
| MT | There are no records of local council members having been identified as a person with disability.[[22]](#footnote-22) A blind Local Council member will stand as a candidate for the forthcoming European Parliament elections. |
| NL | No data could be found.The Federation of Dutch Municipalities (*Vereniging Nederlandse Gemeenten, VNG*) ProDemos and the Council of the Chronically Ill and Disabled were consulted. No information is available regarding this question.[[23]](#footnote-23) |
| PL | There is no available data on the number of members of current municipal governments who identify as having a disability.The responsibility to gather data on municipal governments and their members lies within the competences of the National Statistical Office (NSO). NSO compiles data on the basis of particular criteria which do not include the criterion of disability. Information on the number of members of current municipal governments who identify as having a disability could be available from the organs of municipal governments – communes (*gminy*) and towns (*miasta*). However, since there are 2479 communes and 908 towns, such an undertaking would exceed the scope of the current report.In reference to this point it should be noted that in accordance with the Article 492 § 1 point 6 of the Electoral Code[[24]](#footnote-24) the mandate of the presidents of the municipalities - voyt, city mayor and city president (*wójt, burmistrz, prezydent miasta*) expires when the decision on incapability of performing the work is issued by the Medical Commission of the Social Insurance Fund (*Komisja Lekarska Zakładu Ubezpieczeń Społecznych*) on the basis of the regulations of the Act on Pensions and Benefits from the Social Insurance Fund[[25]](#footnote-25). In December 2012, the Human Rights Defender submitted a claim to the Constitutional Tribunal seeking for a declaration of Article 492 § 1 point 6 of the Electoral Code as unconstitutional[[26]](#footnote-26). The case is on-going before the Constitutional Tribunal. |
| PT | Not available. |
| RO | No such statistics could be identified. |
| SE | The Swedish Agency for Disability Policy Co-ordination (*Handisam*) published a study in 2007 about accessibility in the political life in Sweden for people with disabilities.[[27]](#footnote-27) 32 percent of the elected politicians according to this study in the municipalities have a disability according to the definition used in the research. Half of those did not themselves consider that they had a disability.[[28]](#footnote-28)  |
| SI | The association of municipalities of Slovenia (*Združenje občin Slovenije*) and the Community of municipalities of Slovenia (*Skupnost občin Slovenije*), do not collect this type of data.[[29]](#footnote-29)Similarly, the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (*Statistični urad Republike Slovenije*, SURS), the national statistical agency, does not collect these data.[[30]](#footnote-30) The Statistical Office only collects data disaggregated by sex and age groups.[[31]](#footnote-31)  |
| SK | This type of statistics is not kept in Slovakia and we are not aware of any member of municipal government with disability.[[32]](#footnote-32)The Association of Slovak Towns and Villages was unable to supply the information on how many members of municipal governments identified themselves as persons with disabilities.[[33]](#footnote-33) |
| UK | Freedom of Information Requests were made to the following centralised organisations: * Welsh Local Government Association
* Convention of Scottish Local Authorities
* Northern Ireland Local Government Association
* Local Government Association (England and Wales)

The following responses were received: Total in Wales: 43Total in Scotland: 5Total in Northern Ireland: 3Total in England: 2,563 councillors: 14.1% of councillors in the 2010 census indicated that they had a long-term illness, health problem or disability that limited the daily activities or work they could do.[[34]](#footnote-34) Full disaggregated data can be found in table 2 of the Annex to the UK country data report.  |

1. Austria, Wegscheider, A. (2013), ‘Political Participation of Persons with Disabilities’ *SWS-Rundschau* Vol. 53, No 2, pp. 216-234. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Information provided by the Austrian Association of Municipalities *(Österreichischer Gemeindebund)* on 2 July 2013 in a response to an information request. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Information provided by stakeholders consultation with the CEOOR and also reflected in Belgium, ASPH (Socialist Association for Persons with Disabilities) Report “Persons with intellectual disabilities: full citizens”, available at: <http://www.asph.be/Documents/Analyses-etudes-2008-pdf-anysurfer/2008-09-vote-personnes-handicapees-anysurfer.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Information obtained from the Union of Cyprus Municipalities and the Cyprus Union of Communities. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The Union of Towns and Municipalities of the Czech Republic was consulted. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The State parliaments and Federal associations of municipalities were consulted. Following the State Parliaments, this kind of information is not recorded. For the intention of the UN CRPD impairment of parliamentarians should not matter and therefore can’t be separately recorded [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Information obtained from the Association of Municipalities of Estonia [Eesti Omavalitsuste Liit]; Information obtained from the Association of Estonian Cities [Eesti Linnade Liit]. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. See: [www.femp.es](http://www.femp.es) (accessed on 03/09/2013). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Members of the political group of the Popular Party in the City Council of Valladolid: [www.valladolid.es/es/ayuntamiento/corporacion-municipal/grupos-politicos/grupo-municipal-popular-pp](http://www.valladolid.es/es/ayuntamiento/corporacion-municipal/grupos-politicos/grupo-municipal-popular-pp) (accessed on 03/09/2013). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. For example: http://[sociedad.elpais.com/sociedad/2013/07/29/actualidad/1375089920\_623732.html](http://sociedad.elpais.com/sociedad/2013/07/29/actualidad/1375089920_623732.html) (accessed on 03/09/2013). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Statement by the National Council on Disability, VANE (Valtakunnallinen vammaisneuvosto 2013-2015, VANE/Riksomfattande handikapprådet, VANE), 12.8.2011: *Issue: UN; Human right of disabled persons; the OHCHR questionnaire about the participation of disabled persons to political and public life* (Asia; YK; Vammaisten henkilöiden ihmisoikeudet; OHCHR:n kysely vammaisten henkilöiden osallistumista poliittiseen ja julkiseen elämään). Available at (accessed 29.7.2013): <http://www.vane.to/images/stories/OHCHR-kyselyHEL7852-23.doc> [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Consultation of the web, associations of people with disabilities, the Election Department and the DDD. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Information obtained from the Association of towns in the Republic of Croatia (*Udruga gradova u Republici Hrvatskoj*) (2013). [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Data on municipalities available at: http://www.uprava.hr/default.aspx?id=12. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Information obtained from the MEOSZ (8 July 2013). [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. <http://www.disabiliabili.net/> [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Central Electoral Commission, written answer of the 10 July, 2013 (No. 2-517 (1.5) to the request of NFP-Lithuania. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Information obtained from Info-handicap and Only with us (*Nemme mat eis)* on the 17th of July 2013 and 23d July 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Information obtained from Nemme mat eison the 28th of July 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Information obtained from Latvia's Union of Municipalitieson 8 August 2013 (Information Letter No.0720131794/A1165). [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Latvia, Personal Data Protection Law (Fizisko personu datu aizsardzības likums), 23 March 2000, available in Latvian at: <http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=4042> , published in Latvian Herald (*Latvijas Vēstnesis*) 123/124 (2034/2035), 06.04.2000, available in Latvian at: www.vestnesis.lv/?menu=doc&id=4042 [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Reply received in writing from the National Commission Persons with Disability, 29 July 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Information obtained from the Federation of Dutch Municipalities (*Vereniging Nederlandse Gemeenten*, VNG), 8 July 2013; ProDemos Knowledge Centre for Democracy and the Rule of Law, 19 July 2013 and the Council of the Chronically Ill and Disabled (*CG-Raad*), 11 July, 22 July, 31 July 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Poland, Electoral Code (*Ustawa z dnia 5 stycznia 2011 Kodeks wyborczy*). [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Poland, Act on Pensions and Benefits from the Social Insurance Fund (*Ustawa z 17 grudnia 1998 r. o emeryturach i rentach z Funduszu Ubezpieczeń Społecznych*). [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Poland, Human Rights Defender (*Rzecznik Praw Obywatelskich*), no. RPO/707447/12/I/114.2 RZ of 3 December 2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Swedish Agency for Disability Policy Co-ordination (*Handisam*) Accessibility in the political life of local governments (*Tillgängligheten i det politiska livet i kommuner och landsting*), 2007, available at: [www.handisam.se/Publikationer-och-press/Rapporter/Handikappolitisk-utveckling/Tillgangligheten-i-det-politiska-livet-i-kommuner-och-landsting/](http://www.handisam.se/Publikationer-och-press/Rapporter/Handikappolitisk-utveckling/Tillgangligheten-i-det-politiska-livet-i-kommuner-och-landsting/) [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Swedish Agency for Disability Policy Co-ordination (*Handisam*), Accessibility in the political life of local governments (*Tillgängligheten i det politiska livet i kommuner och landsting*), 2007, p. 14, available at: [www.handisam.se/Publikationer-och-press/Rapporter/Handikappolitisk-utveckling/Tillgangligheten-i-det-politiska-livet-i-kommuner-och-landsting/](http://www.handisam.se/Publikationer-och-press/Rapporter/Handikappolitisk-utveckling/Tillgangligheten-i-det-politiska-livet-i-kommuner-och-landsting/) [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Information provided by the Association of municipalities of Slovenia (*Združenje občin Slovenije*) and the Community of municipalities of Slovenia (*Skupnost občin Slovenije*) upon request (telephone enquiry of 30 July 2013). [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Information provided by the the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (*Statistični urad Republike Slovenije*, SURS) upon request (written response of 22 July 2013). [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. See e.g. <http://pxweb.stat.si/pxweb/Database/General/06_elections/10_local_elections/06650_mun_council_2010/06650_mun_council_2010.asp>. ( Access to this page, however, may take some amount of time. If not accessible, please follow this route: a) website of the Statistical Office is accessible at the following address – www.stat.si; b) select English version in the top right corner; c) please click then SI-STAT Data Portal in database section on the left; d) on the next page, select “General” in the “Field of statistics” section in the top left corner; e) the next page includes section on elections (e.g. Municipal councils elections, Slovenia, October 10, 2010); f) click the relevant elections and on the next page one finds the relevant data disaggregated by the mentioned variables; g) it is then possible to select specific data and to create the relevant tables. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Information received based on mail communication with Institute for Labour and Family Research dated 12 July 2013, and with Slovak Disability Council and Slovak Blind and Partially Sighted Union dated 17 July 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. The information was retrieved during a telephone interview with the Office of Association of Slovak Towns and Villages on September 10, 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. [UK] Local Government Association (2011) National Census of Local Authority Councillors 2010, p.21, available at: <http://www.local.gov.uk/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=c8b75651-438a-4cdc-89ab-0016b14e27c5&groupId=10171>. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)