



An Comhchoiste um Nithe a Bhaineann le Míchumas

Tuarascáil Taistil: Freastal ar an 17ú Seisiún de na Stáit
is Páirtithe sa Choinbhinsiún ar Chearta Daoine faoi
Mhíchumas, Meitheamh 2024

Meán Fómhair 2024

Joint Committee on Disability Matters

Travel Report: Attendance at the 17th Session of State
Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with
Disabilities June 2024

September 2024

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Related information

Publications

All publications for this committee are available on the [Oireachtas website](#)

Committee videos

Footage of Committee proceedings can be found on the [Committee videos page](#)

Contact details

The contact details for the Committee can be found on the [Committee page](#)

Terms of reference

Read the [terms of reference](#) for the Committee

Committee Membership

Cathaoirleach

[Michael Moynihan TD](#), Fianna Fáil

Leas-Cathaoirleach

[Pauline Tully TD](#), Sinn Féin

Members

[Seán Canney TD](#), Independent

[Dessie Ellis TD](#), Sinn Féin

[Frankie Feighan TD](#), Fine Gael

[Gary Gannon TD](#), Social Democrats

[Simon Coveney TD](#), Fine Gael

[Brian Leddin TD](#), Green Party

[Jennifer Murnane O'Connor TD](#), Fianna Fáil

[Senator Tom Clonan](#), Independent

[Senator Eileen Flynn](#), Independent

[Senator Erin McGreehan](#), Fianna Fáil

[Senator Fiona O'Loughlin](#), Fianna Fáil

[Senator Mary Seery Kearney](#), Fine Gael

Introduction

1. The role of the Joint Committee on Disability Matters (the Committee) is to monitor the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). The Committee's Work Programme was developed in line with the emerging themes from the UNCRPD.
2. The Committee is one of the first parliaments in the world to monitor the UNCRPD and is therefore able to highlight their work in this regard at the Conference of State Parties (COSP17), meeting other national parliaments who are undertaking this work as well.

Conference of State Parties

3. The Conference of State Parties is an annual event organised by the United Nations. During the Conference, participants discuss the implementation of the UNCRPD. The Conference was established by [article 40 of the Convention](#).
4. Participants include representatives of the State Parties (countries and regional organisations that ratified the Convention), civil society organisations (such as organisations of persons with disabilities) and disability rights experts (such as the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities and academics). The conference, and its side events, usually take place during June at the UN headquarters in New York.
5. The 17th session of COSP took place at the United Nations Headquarters, New York, from 11 to 13 June 2024. The overarching theme was **rethinking disability inclusion in the current international juncture and ahead of the Summit of the Future**.

Sub theme 1: International cooperation to promote technology innovations and transfer for an inclusive future.

Sub theme 2: Persons with disabilities in situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies.

Sub theme 3: Promoting the rights of persons with disabilities to decent work and sustainable livelihood.

Committee delegation

6. The following members of the Committee attended the conference:

Deputy Pauline Tully.

The delegation was accompanied by one member of staff from the Committee Secretariate.

Proceedings of COSP17

11 June 2024 Opening of Conference

7. Conference opened by H.E. Ambassador Tarek Ladeb, President of the Conference.
 - Adoption of the agenda and organisation of the work
 - Opening remarks
 - Election of members of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
 - Matters related to the implementation of the Convention – a general debate.

12 June 2024

Roundtable 1 – International cooperation to promote technology innovations and transfer for an inclusive future.

8. Co-chaired by Mr. Sugeeshwara Gunaratna, Vice President of the Conference and Dr. Joseph Murray, World Federation of the Deaf
9. Roundtable 1 considered the challenges and opportunities to enhance international co-operation to advance disability rights within the realms of innovation and assistive technology. There is broad international consensus on the importance of technology transfer in addressing climate change, public health, and sustainable development as well as contributing to the implementation of the Convention. Advancement in technology has the power to enhance inclusivity for, and the empowerment of, individuals with disabilities by providing access to essential services, communication, mobility, and greater participation.

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10. The Convention recognises the critical role of digital accessibility. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development contains a crucial target for digital inclusion, Goal 9 is to significantly increase access to ICT and strive to provide universal access to the Internet. An increasing number of laws, policies and programmes have been introduced to enhance digital accessibility for person with disabilities. Several countries have adopted accessibility requirements in public procurement, influencing digital accessibility in government services and promoting overall digital accessibility.
 11. Barriers remain which impeded the transfer of technology and associated knowledge. Discrimination such as socioeconomic status, gender and age can limit access and further marginalise individuals and communities. Lack of opportunities to learn digital literacy through education systems can impact young people, particularly those with a disability, limiting access to the benefits of technologies. Inconsistent implementation of strategies across regions can delay or block the intended impact of international agreements on accessibility for individuals with disabilities.
 12. The discussion highlighted the importance of implementation standards keeping pace with technological evolution. Effective monitoring and regulatory frameworks are also important for overseeing the progress of technological transfer and innovations initiatives for persons with disabilities, ensuring the incorporation of inclusive and ethical considerations. The importance of empowering persons with disabilities through active participation and leadership was also emphasised.
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Roundtable 2 - Persons with disabilities in situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies.

13. Co-chaired by Mr. Niko Tatulashvili – Advisor to the Prime Minister of Georgia on Human Rights Issues, Vice President of the Conference and Ms. Pratima Gurung, National Indigenous Disabled Women Association Nepal.
14. Roundtable 2 highlighted the persisting social and environmental barriers as well as the marginalisation of the needs and human rights of persons with disabilities before, during and after situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies. Armed conflict is rising across the world, the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, climate change, natural disasters and health emergencies are increasing in frequency, severity, and complexity. The United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs estimate that nearly 300 million people around the world will require humanitarian assistance and protection in 2024.
15. Persons with disabilities are disproportionately affected both during and in the aftermath of humanitarian emergencies, and are vulnerable to the effects of climate change, conflict, and health emergencies. However, persons with disabilities are largely excluded from the implementation of plans, response, and recovery systems, therefore progress on disability inclusive disaster risk reduction is lagging in all regions.
16. Several examples of best practice were cited at the session, for example hospital settings in Chile and Guatemala amongst others. Columbia and Jordan have adopted a disability inclusive approach to their national disaster risk reduction strategies. Latvia have used their disability-disaggregated data to determine the effects of climate change on socially vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities.

17. The following policy recommendations were highlighted:

18. National and local strategies and plans for disaster risk reduction and climate action should be developed and implemented with persons with disabilities at the centre of decision making.

19. Ensure disability inclusion in early warning systems by providing information in assessable formats.

20. Capacity building, awareness and training of all relevant personnel including in health care sectors.

21. Promotion of the collection of qualitative data, regular monitoring, and evaluation processes in consultation with persons with disabilities.

13 June 2024

Roundtable 3: Promoting the rights of persons with disabilities to decent work and sustainable livelihood.

22. Co-chaired by H.E Ambassador Evangelos Sekeris, Vice President of the Conference and Mr. Ezekiel Kumwenda, World Federation of the Deafblind.

23. The rights of persons with disabilities, including the rights to decent work and sustainable livelihoods, are well recognised in the Convention as well as in several key internationally agreed development instruments, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

24. In various countries, initiatives have been taken to promote inclusive employment and the right to decent work for persons with disabilities, including awareness raising campaigns, targeted vocational training, support making applications, technical and financial support for starting businesses. However, progress is slow and uneven and persons with disabilities still encounter high levels of discrimination. Persons with disabilities are more

likely to be unemployed or work in the informal sector, in more precarious employment situations.

25. The roundtable session looked at the emerging challenges and opportunities and the right to decent work for persons with disabilities in the future of work. Work is undergoing significant changes due to emerging technologies, globalisation, and megatrends such as population aging, migration, and climate change. These changes present opportunities but also can pose changes for disabled workers and job seekers. Artificial intelligence systems increasingly used in recruitment, are often not designed to include the perspectives and presence of persons with disabilities and may discriminate against disabled candidates.

26. In conclusion, the discussion calls for accelerated actions to address existing barriers and challenges. Interventions can be made at different levels, the system level improving policy and legislation; programme level making reasonable accommodations and at the individual level with appropriate training to support new skills.

Interactive discussion Interactive Dialogue among States Parties, the United Nations system and other stakeholders on Implementation of the Convention between States Parties and the UN System chaired by H.E Ambassador Tarek Ladeb, President of the Conference.

Decisions of the Conference of State Parties

Close of the Conference

The programme for the 17th session of COSP is attached at appendix 1.

COSP17 side events

1. In addition to the main conference, there was a very significant number of side events, over 60 listed for this year's event. Only Governments, UN agencies, and accredited civil society organizations (CSOs) can conduct side-events at sessions of COSP.
 2. The side events are closely related to the work of the Conference of States Parties to the CRPD and have as the focus the theme for the session.
 3. The delegation participated in several side events including
 - Accessible crisis preparation (Sweden and the Nordic Council of Ministers)
 - Political Will to tangible change (Permanent Mission of Germany to the UN)
 - Role of strategies (Delegation of the European Union to the UN)
 - Inclusive Education: Tools (Rehabilitation International)
 - Mobilising state parties for employment (Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Belgium to the UN)
 - Centre for independent living – Disabled people leading their own future (European Network on Independent Living and World Independent Living Network)
 - Facilitating the mobility of students with disability (Permanent Mission of France, Greece, Argentina, and Tunisia to the UN)
 - Legal capacity without borders (Inclusion Canada and the Government of Canada)
 - Leave no -one behind (Disabled Peoples International Korea and Queensland Advocacy Inclusion)
 - Australia's Autism Strategy (Australian Government, Department of Social Services)
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- Inclusive Humanitarian Action and Underappreciated Risks: Calories, Conflict, Climate, and Collaboration (Permanent Mission of Ireland, Finland, Australia to the UN)
- Inclusive and accessible pedestrian environments (University of Syracuse, USA)
- Advancing health equity by bridging the digital divide for persons with disabilities (Permanent Mission of Ireland and Qatar to the UN, International Telecommunication Union, World Health Organization, International Disability Alliance, International Disability and Development Consortium, Humanity & Inclusion, Sight savers)
- Global perspectives to support autism in society (Permanent Mission of Ireland to UN)

Conclusion

The Committee wish to thank the Ambassador and the staff of the Permanent Mission of Ireland to the United Nations for all their assistance.

The Committee will continue to explore this further under its Work Programme.

Appendix 1 - Agenda and Easy to Read Programme

[Provisional Agenda](#)

[Easy Read version of the Draft Program](#)
