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An Comhchoiste um na Nithe a bhaineann le Míchumas

Freastal an Chomhchoiste um Nithe a Bhaineann le
Míchumas ar an 15ú seisiún de Chomhdháil na Stát is Páirtithe sa
Choinbhinsiún ar Chearta Daoine faoi Mhíchumas (CCDM)

Deireadh Fómhair 2022

Joint Committee on Disability Matters

Joint Committee on Disability Matters Attendance at the 15th
session of the Conference of States Parties to the CRPD

October 2022

Membership

- Holly Cairns T.D., Social Democrats
- Seán Canney T.D., Independent
- Emer Higgins T.D., Fine Gael
- Neasa Hourigan T.D., Green Party
- Michael Moynihan T.D., Fianna Fáil, (Cathaoirleach)
- Jennifer Murnane O'Connor T.D., Fianna Fáil
- John Paul Phelan T.D., Fine Gael
- Pauline Tully T.D., Sinn Féin, (Leas-Chathaoirleach)
- Violet-Anne Wynne T.D., Sinn Féin
- 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

Joint Committee on Disability Matters



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Jennifer Murnane
O'Connor T.D.,
Fianna Fáil



John Paul Phelan
T.D., *Fine Gael*



Pauline Tully T.D.,
Sinn Féin,
Leas-Chathaoirleach



Violet-Anne Wynne,
Sinn Féin



Senator Eileen Flynn,
Independent



Senator Erin
McGreehan
Fianna Fáil



Senator Tom Clonan,
Independent



Senator Fiona
O'Loughlin,
Fianna Fáil



Senator Mary Seery
Kearney,
Fine Gael

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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 People with Disabilities (UNCRPD). The Committee's Work Programme 2022 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 (COSP15), 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 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. 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 15th session of COSP took place at the United Nations Headquarters, New York, from 14 to 16 June 2022, during which an election of nine members of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with disabilities was conducted.

6. The overarching theme of COSP15 is **Building disability-inclusive and participatory societies in the COVID context and beyond**

Sub theme 1: Innovation and technology advancing disability rights

Sub theme 2: Economic empowerment and entrepreneurship of persons with disabilities

Sub theme 3: Participation of persons with disabilities in climate action, disaster risk reduction and resilience against natural disasters

Committee delegation

7. The conference was attended by the following members of the Committee:

Deputy Michael Moynihan.

Deputy Holly Cairns.

Senator Erin McGrehan.

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

Proceedings of COSP15

14 June 2022 Opening of conference

8. Conference chaired by H.E. Mr. Jukka Salovaara, Permanent State Secretary of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and President of the Conference, Finland.

Adoption of the agenda.

Organisation of the work.

Delegation lunch hosted by Ambassador Byrne Nason.

Session 2 – Election of the members of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

15 June 2022

Session 3 – Innovation and technology advancing disability rights

9. Co-chaired by Mr. Sarhad Fatah, Deputy Permanent Representative of Iraq, Vice President of the Conference and Mr. Moses Serwadda, Civil Society Representative.
10. The session considered how assistive technologies can contribute to the full enjoyment of human rights by persons with disabilities and noted that these technologies should be designed in consultation with persons with disabilities and with appropriate safeguards to protect their rights.
11. The digital divide is still very wide, in particular for women and girls with disabilities, persons living in rural areas and those who are vulnerable or in vulnerable situations. There is a need to make a strong case for disability rights. First and foremost, it is important to underscore that promotion of accessibility and access to assistive technologies by persons with disabilities is a human right imperative in line with the Convention.
12. Under the Convention, States parties commit to taking active measures to deliver on their obligations, such as undertaking or promoting research and development of technological products and systems, and promoting the availability and use of new technologies, including ICT, mobility aids, devices and assistive technologies, that are suitable for persons with disabilities, giving priority to technologies at an affordable cost (article 4); States parties also commit to undertaking and promoting international cooperation (article 32).

Session 4 – Economic empowerment and entrepreneurship of persons with disabilities

13. Co-chaired by Ms. Libna Bonilla, Minister Counsellor of Permanent Mission of Guatemala, Vice President of the Conference and Ms. Itto Outini, Civil Society Representative

14. This session discussed how the pandemic has deepened and prolonged pre-existing structural inequalities in every society. Recovery between countries is unequal.
15. Economic empowerment is the ability of persons with disabilities to bring about change and contribute to society as a result of increased economic capabilities and agency by participating in the labour markets on equal terms with others. It allows persons with disabilities to live life in dignity with respect to their rights at work and beyond
16. Entrepreneurship is recognised as an important driver of job creation, inclusive economic growth, and innovation with the potential to reduce inequalities, increase social inclusion and expand opportunities in the labour market for persons with disabilities. Entrepreneurship may allow persons with disabilities to have more flexibility, autonomy, and independence in managing their time, working schedule and personal circumstances. Importantly, entrepreneurship activities foster skills that increase self-confidence, self-respect, and autonomy.
17. Persons with disabilities are overrepresented in the informal employment sector and consequently are highly exposed to employment losses. The dearth of research and data on the entrepreneurship of persons with disabilities has a direct consequence on policy making.
18. The rise of new forms of work, characterised by the use of digital or online labour platforms, may be appealing for its lack of structural and attitudinal barriers that exist in traditional employment settings for persons with disabilities. Provided that the online platform is accessible, in compliance with article 9 of the Convention, platform work can provide a secondary source of income for persons with disabilities. Accessible and inclusive platforms also enable businesses to attract a wider pool of qualified talent: that of persons with disabilities.

16 June 2022

Session 5 – Participation of persons with disabilities in climate action, disaster risk reduction and resilience against natural disasters

19. Co-chaired by Ms. Bogna Ruminowicz, Permanent Mission of Poland, Vice President of the Conference and Mr. Jose Maria Viera, Civil Society Representative.
20. This session considered that failure to develop and adopt more accessible and inclusive climate adaptation and mitigation policies and emergency preparedness, response, and recovery practices in consultation with persons with disabilities and their representative organisations results in such barriers being further compounded when emergencies occur.
21. In addition to being more exposed to the impacts of climate change, persons with disabilities may also be adversely affected by a State's response to climate change. For example, if a policy to reduce carbon emissions is designed without consultation with representative organisations of persons with disabilities, then increasing the price of fuel to encourage more frequent use of public transportation would be discriminatory against persons with disabilities if public transportation is not accessible to them. The green and digital transitions can give rise to similar barriers but can also present great opportunities to rebuild society in a way that is more accessible, inclusive, and resilient. Gaps remain when it comes to fully realising the participation of persons with disabilities in climate action, disaster risk reduction and resilience against natural disasters.
22. It is crucial to secure the meaningful, informed and effective participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organisations in climate change mitigation and adaptation at all levels, and to strengthen the capacities of persons with disabilities to respond to climate change by ensuring their ability to gain access to information about climate change and its impacts, as well as their participation in related decision-making processes and their enhanced social protection and climate resilience.

Close of the conference

23. Chaired by H.E. Mr. Jukka Salovaara, Permanent State Secretary of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and President of the Conference, Finland.
24. The programme for the 15th session of COSP is attached at appendix 2.

COSP15 side events

25. In addition to the main conference, there are a very significant number of side events, many of which were held online, in line with Covid19 advice. Only Governments, UN agencies, and accredited civil society organizations (CSOs) can conduct side-events at sessions of the Conference of States Parties to the CRPD.
26. The side events are closely related to the work of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and have as the main focus the theme for the session.
27. The delegation participated in a number of side events including
- Building capacity to implementation accessibility policies
 - Role of sport and cultural life in building inclusive and participatory societies for persons with disabilities- post Covid context
 - Deinstitutionalism and inclusion for Jordan's Disability Sector
 - Universal Design: Making our buildings, products, and environments accessible to everyone (Permanent Mission of Ireland to the United Nations)

Conclusion

The Committee wish to thank Ambassador Byrne Nason and the staff of the Permanent Mission of Ireland to the United Nations.

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

Appendix

Appendix 1 - Terms of reference of the Joint Committee

Orders of Reference - Dáil Éireann

(1) That a Select Committee consisting of 9 Members be appointed by Dáil Éireann to form the Joint Committee on Disability Matters to consider all disability matters including monitoring the implementation (by Ireland) of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.

(2) That the Select Committee on Disability Matters shall consider and report on-

(a) the 'Implementation Plan' for the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and national strategies including the National Disability Inclusion Strategy and sector strategies for the purpose of-

- (i) ensuring implementation plans are configured to advance the UNCRPD while delivering outcomes for persons with disabilities in their lived experience and planning into the future;
- (ii) making recommendations which align the plans and strategies of Ireland's international obligations;
- (iii) monitoring progress of the drafting and initiation of required and relevant legislation;
- (iv) engaging with Ministers and the Secretaries General of relevant Government departments regarding implementation measures and budgetary measures;
- (v) aligning the UN Sustainable Development Goals with the provisions of the UNCRPD;
- (vi) supporting the embedding of a rights-based approach to disability as provided by the UNCRPD within Ireland's economy, society, and culture;
- (vii) reviewing Ireland's Report/s to the UNCRPD Committee;
- (viii) monitoring and ensuring the timely implementation of the Optional Protocol of the UNCRPD;

(b) the effectiveness of-

- (i) all national processes established to implement the UNCRPD;
- (ii) the National Framework for Monitoring the implementation of the Convention including engagement with the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission and the National Disability Authority.

(3) For the purposes of paragraph (2) the Committee shall-

- (a) engage with persons with disabilities, family carers, Disabled Persons Organisations, service providers and advocates in the Committee's work;
- (b) consider other topics that the disability community identifies as key as agreed by the Committee;
- (c) have regard to Concluding Observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN Committee) with respect to Ireland's periodic reports, review the Government response to the Observations of the UN Committee and make its own recommendations with respect to same.

(4) The Joint Committee shall have the powers defined in Standing Order 96, other than paragraphs (3) to (9) inclusive thereof;

(5) The Chairman of the Dáil Select Committee shall also be Chairman of the Joint Committee

Orders of Reference - Seanad Éireann

(1) That a Select Committee consisting of 5 Members to be appointed by Seanad Éireann to form the Joint Committee on Disability Matters to consider all disability matters including monitoring the implementation (by Ireland) of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.

(2) That the Select Committee on Disability Matters shall consider and report on-

(a) the 'Implementation Plan' for the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and national strategies including the National Disability Inclusion Strategy and sector strategies for the purpose of-

- (i) ensuring implementation plans are configured to advance the UNCRPD while delivering outcomes for persons with disabilities in their lived experience and planning into the future;
- (ii) making recommendations which align the plans and strategies of Ireland's international obligations;
- (iii) monitoring progress of the drafting and initiation of required and relevant legislation;
- (iv) engaging with Ministers and the Secretaries General of relevant Government departments regarding implementation measures and budgetary measures;
- (v) aligning the UN Sustainable Development Goals with the provisions of the UNCRPD;
- (vi) supporting the embedding of a rights-based approach to disability as provided by the UNCRPD within Ireland's economy, society, and culture;
- (vii) reviewing Ireland's Report/s to the UNCRPD Committee;
- (viii) monitoring and ensuring the timely implementation of the Optional Protocol of the UNCRPD;

(b) the effectiveness of-

- (i) all national processes established to implement the UNCRPD;
- (ii) the National Framework for Monitoring the implementation of the Convention including engagement with the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission and the National Disability Authority.

(3) For the purposes of paragraph (2) the Committee shall-

- (a) engage with persons with disabilities, family carers, Disabled Persons Organisations, service providers and advocates in the Committee's work;
- (b) consider other topics that the disability community identifies as key as agreed by the Committee;
- (c) have regard to Concluding Observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN Committee) with respect to Ireland's periodic reports, review the Government response to the Observations of the UN Committee and make its own recommendations with respect to same.

(4) The Joint Committee shall have the powers defined in Standing Order 72, other than paragraphs (3) to (9) inclusive thereof;

(5) The Chairman of the Dáil Select Committee shall also be Chairman of the Joint Committee

Appendix 2 - Programme of the 15th Session of the Conference of State Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

[Programme of the 15th Session of the Conference of State Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities link here](#)

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