



European Union
Statement

WHO

76th World Health Assembly

(21-30 May 2022)

Item 16.4 – The highest attainable standard of health for persons with disabilities

Geneva, 27 May 2023

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EU Statement

Chair,
Director General,
Excellencies,
Colleagues,

I am delivering this statement on behalf of the EU and its 27 Member States.

The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Ukraine, Republic of Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina*, the potential candidate country Georgia, the EFTA country Norway, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Armenia align themselves with this statement.

EU and its MS welcome the report noting it is the first report in over ten years and brings to attention the rights of persons with disabilities highlighting that an estimated 1.3 billion persons live with worldwide a mental or physical disabilities today. Many persons with disabilities continue to die earlier, have poorer health, and face challenges and limitations in their everyday life

* North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

Acknowledging Article 25 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), the EU highlights the importance ensuring their right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health without discrimination. To that end the Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030 reaffirms that persons with disabilities have the right to high-quality healthcare, including health-related rehabilitation and prevention. This includes the need to address specific inequalities that persons with disabilities face in accessing cancer prevention, early detection and care. The strategy shows the commitment of the EU to the implementation of the UNCRPD.

The EU calls for the leadership role of Ministries of Health in ensuring equal and universal access to all health services, including during health emergencies for every person with disability to gender-sensitive health services, vaccination services and NCD screening and prevention, taking into consideration sexual and reproductive health and rights in accordance with the Beijing Platform for Action and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), the outcomes of their review conferences and article 34 of the new EU Consensus on Development.

We call for disability-specific health services to include specialized and differentiated intensive rehabilitation services for persons with complex rehabilitation needs.

We call for public health authorities to take into account experiences and perspectives of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in all health-related matters, including by actively facilitating their full and meaningful participation in the planning and implementation of programmes, policies and in decision-making processes.

We encourage MS to take steps, working in cooperation with WHO to implement the recommendations and actions proposed in the new Global Report, also called

for by the WHA Resolution 74.8 on the highest attainable standard of health for persons with disabilities.

I thank you.