



Just4All

Good Practices for ‘access to justice’ of persons with disabilities in the European Union



This report was published as part of the [Just4All](#) project, which aims to improve access to justice for persons with disabilities through the training of legal professionals.



All underlined text is linked to its online reference.
You must be connected to the internet to access the links.

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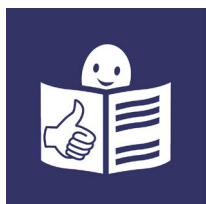
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Executive Summary



If you want to **read this executive summary**
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(468 Ko PDF)

Just4All is a joint European project led by Fundación ONCE in partnership with the European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD), the European Disability Forum (EDF), Thomson Reuters Aranzadi, and Universidad Carlos III de Madrid (UC3M). The aim is to promote access to justice of persons with disabilities through the training of legal practitioners.

This report compiles a range of inclusive practices by legal professionals across the European Union who aim to be accessible to persons with disabilities. It is divided into five sections:

- Access to Justice - Accessible communication, built environment, and first contact with the police.
- Litigation - Accessible practices when legal action is sought and/or undertaken.
- Support for offenders with disabilities - Support throughout the penitentiary system for offenders with disabilities.
- Specialized Knowledge- Learning tools for legal professionals to learn to make their practices more accessible.
- Disability Advocacy - Examples of advocacy which can be undertaken by legal professionals and in collaboration with national entities.

While this report highlights good practices, there appears to be a systemic failure in the provision of reasonable accommodation across member states (which is in breach of the CRPD) and little incentive for decision makers to provide already existing solutions to access justice. This results in a limited number of persons with disabilities being able to benefit from them. The practices in the report may be used as guidance for the coordination and allocation of resources to extend access to justice to persons with disabilities.

This work is a combination of submissions as part of the project, practices discussed at the seminars on 'Gaps in the training of legal practitioners' and 'Barriers of access to justice of persons with disabilities', and desktop research on inclusive practices for access to justice for persons with disabilities across the European Union.

Introduction

The [Just4All project](#), launched in November 2018, aims to increase the access to justice of persons with disabilities through the training of legal practitioners.

Co-ordinated by Fundación ONCE, it brings together the European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD), the European Disability Forum (EDF), Thomson Reuters Aranzadi and Universidad Carlos III de Madrid (UC3M).

Following a series of seminars and workshops, the final outputs of the project will include a Massive Online Course (MOOC) for legal professionals on how to make their practices more accessible. This will be available in all EU languages.

This publication presents practices of reasonable accommodation undertaken across various EU member states, by public and private entities, at different stages of access to justice.

Acronyms

- CRPD – United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- DPO –Organisation of Persons with Disabilities
- ECHR – European Convention on Human Rights
- EU – European Union

Access to justice

According to international and European human rights law, EU Member States must guarantee everyone the right to go to court, or to an alternative dispute resolution body, and to obtain a remedy when their rights are violated. This includes the right to:

- a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial court
- receive legal advice, be represented and defended during a case
- legal aid if a victim cannot represent themselves in court and cannot pay for a lawyer
- have a case decided within a reasonable time and obtain adequate remedy

[Factsheet on Access Fundamental Rights Agency \(FRA\)](#)

To ensure access to justice, everyone must be able to understand information, enter and navigate the environments where access to justice is sought, and reasonable accommodations must be provided throughout from the first contact with authorities, often the police.

Accessible communication

Lead questions: Could any person needing legal assistance understand it? Could any person needing legal assistance be understood?

All information should be provided in accessible formats (which include but are not be limited to):

- **Plain language:** Method of presenting written information designed to be understood the first time it is read or heard.
- **Easy-to-Read and understand:** Method of presenting written information to make it easier to understand.
- **Large print:** Versions of text with larger font
- **Braille:** Form of written language in which characters are represented by raised dots that are felt with the fingertips.
- **Audio:** Audio files of text being read out loud
- **Sign Language interpretation:** In person or by video
- **Visual:** Photos and pictograms to illustrate text

The following are symbols used to indicate the availability of assistance:



The information symbol indicates the location of accessible material.



[Easy-to-Read](#) and understand



Closed captioning is subtitles which can be turned off.



Open captioning is subtitles which cannot be turned off.



Telephone typewriter (TTY) is a machine used by and with D/deaf and hard of hearing people.



Volume control telephone.



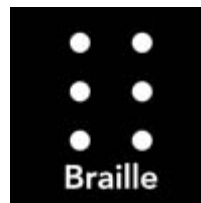
Assistive listening systems transmit amplified sound through hearing aids, headsets or other devices.



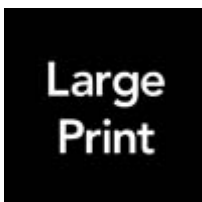
Sign language interpretation.



Audio description is a voice over that describes a video.



Braille.



Documents available with larger font.

[A 2017 comparative study on accessible letters of right in Europe](#) found that despite [Directive 2012/13/EU](#) 'on the right to information in criminal proceedings' being in force, there remains a common complaint that Letters of Rights are drafted in inaccessible language.

Accessibility service for persons with intellectual disabilities (2016)

ANFAS – Navarran association of persons with intellectual disabilities and their families - Spanish DPO

Three actions were taken through this service:

1. Adaptation of citizens' rights to Easy-to-Read, through a sign which has been placed in all courts in Navarra
2. An Easy-to-Read guide to Parliament and on the law of the improvement of the judicial system in Navarra, elaborated in collaboration with the Parliament of Navarra
3. An agreement was signed with the high court of Justice to adjust sentencing to Easy-to-Read.

PULSE – Participation Usagers Loi Structures Etablissements (2013-)

Association des Paralysés de France (APF) Handicap – French DPO

PULSE is a group of professionals working within the APF structure in the field of disability in charge of working on the elaboration of Easy-to-Read documents. These are available in an editable format which can be modified and adapted to suit the needs of people and institutions wishing to make use of it.

Adaptation to Easy-to-Read (2016)

FADEMGA – Spanish DPO

In 2016 a service of judicial advice which was available to families of persons with intellectual disabilities (PWID) since 2005 was extended to the PWID themselves. An Easy-to-Read guide was elaborated and published in 2017. It explains the judicial modification of aptitude to work, guardianship, other persons and measures of support that exist, their rights and the internments.

Handylex.org

Italian Union Fighting Muscular Dystrophy – Italian DPO

This website provides information on disability legislation (and legislation concerning the Third sector) through accessible information sheets available on an intuitive platform. The

documents are based on the most frequent questions on the subjects, and there is a navigation option based on the most frequently searched information keys.

Accessible environment

Lead questions: Could any person needing this service be in here? Could they get here?

All buildings should be designed and built with accessibility in mind. When they are not, inaccessible environments should be flagged and the institution in question should take steps to make them accessible.

Police stations, legal aid centres, law cabinets, court houses, correctional facilities, rehabilitation centres, etc. should all be accessible to accommodate everyone including members of the judiciary with disabilities.

In 2019, [a group of lawyers visited the Paris High Court, inaugurated in 2018](#), and made the following observations:

- “The revolving doors have space for a single person. How do I (ride the elevator) come in if I am blind? Nobody can come in with me.”
- “It is impossible to move alone through the courthouse. There are no ways of knowing where one is, no identifiable welcome screens for those visually impaired, let alone braille”
- “The elevator has no audio signals, it is very unpleasant”
- “Spaces for disabled people are relegated to the back of courtrooms or to the front behind the lawyer’s bench”
- “When I plead, the stand is often too large and I cannot place myself on the bench with my colleagues as the space is too narrow”
- “Tools must be operational, it is not just about investing. You must also train staff”
- “We are leaving but there are still many elements to evoke such as visual interpretation, or sign language. It is non-existent”

The observations were made through the initiative that follows:

Accessibility commandos (2019)

[Droit Pluriel](#) and the [Accessibility Commission of the Bar](#) – French DPO and national institution commission

Les Commandos de l'Accessibilite was an accessibility evaluation visit carried out at the Paris High Court (France) on the 28th of February by a group of lawyers with and without disabilities. The group was followed by members of the press and subsequently [articles were published about this visit](#).

At the time of the publication of this report, the building remains inaccessible. Pictured below is the group standing in front of Article 1 of the Declaration of Human Rights at the Paris High Court.



Access to the administration of justice in Cantabria for persons with disabilities (2018)

[CERMI Cantabria](#) – Spanish DPO

An assessment and proposals on the accessibility of court buildings in Cantabria (Spain) was carried out between February and September 2018 by CERMI Cantabria in collaboration with all the regional judicial institutional authorities. There was an initial analysis of the applicable accessibility regulations, followed by an extensive methodology design before interviews and visits were carried out at eight judicial parties as well as the dependencies of the national police in Santander and Torrelavega, and the Civil Guard in Campogiro (Santander). A 185-page report in Spanish details the methodology as well as the accessibility evaluation results and proposals for improvements.

Adjusted police contact

Lead questions: Is every person safe in police custody? Are the police equipped to accommodate different communication needs?

The police are the first point of contact in case of abuse and/or an emergency. They must be able to safely assist and/or detain any person regardless of access needs.



In the photo above, Alice Jorge shows how Belgian police cars are not equipped to assist or safely detain electric wheelchair users.

If persons with disabilities cannot be safely assisted or detained by the police, this can jeopardize the entire judicial process and result in disproportional and/or unfair criminalization.

Some people with disabilities may be reluctant to approach the police for help for a number of reasons, including the lack of training on approaching persons with disabilities, or accommodating appropriately.

[Most recently, during the Gilets Jaunes protests in France, the police have been accused of disproportionately responding to protesters in wheelchairs.](#)

[According to a witness](#), the officer ripped away the glasses and mask of a non-aggressive man in a wheelchair who was attempting to get his material back. Street medics intervened to tend to the teargas burns on his face.

Appropriate adult

UK Charity

According to [the 2019 report There to Help 2](#) by the [National Appropriate Adult Network](#) (NAAN, UK charity) more than 100,000 vulnerable adults per year are detained and interviewed without an appropriate adult present.

An appropriate adult is a term which designates a person whose role it is to safeguard the interests, rights, entitlements and welfare of a vulnerable person detained or questioned by the police, through appropriate support.

A lack of support for vulnerable adults in police custody may lead a failure to detect a disability and the need to accommodate for it, hindering a fair interview process which can and has in some cases resulted in unfair and/or disproportionate criminalization.

[Access to justice: procedural accommodations for people with intellectual disabilities \(2019\)](#)

Plena Inclusion – Spanish DPO

In their good practices report, Plena Inclusion includes five Easy-to-Read documents in the Annexes: The steps to reporting a crime to the police, a crime reporting form (pictured on the left), a guide on being detained, a detention records, and rights while in detention.



[Guide on police intervention on persons with intellectual disabilities \(2012\)](#)

Fundacion A La Par, Fundacion MAPFRE, Civil Guard – Spanish DPO, non-profit and law enforcement

Comprehensive guide for police officers on how to intervene when a person with an intellectual disability is involved.

Contact through apps or hotlines

Making alternative methods of emergency contact possible can

- assist vulnerable people who may need to mask their communication for safety
- provide the opportunity for non-verbal methods of communication
- notify the police as to the specific needs of the person in need of assistance

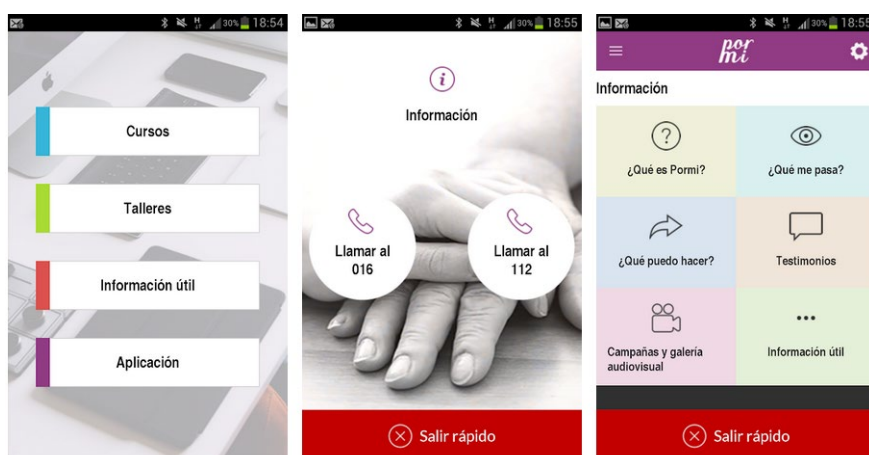
[PorMi – sexual violence reporting app \(2017\)](#)

CERMI Mujeres and Fundación Vodafone España – Spanish DPO and International Telecommunications company

PorMi is a mobile application (app) to report sexual violence. It is aimed at women with disabilities. Through this app they can contact the authorities and watch video testimonies on accessing justice. The app is designed to arouse minimal suspicion from abusers. Emergency numbers can be called straight from it and there is a quick exit button at the bottom.

[You can watch the launch event video here \(38min\)](#)

[You can watch its presentation to the Spanish senate here \(9min\)](#)



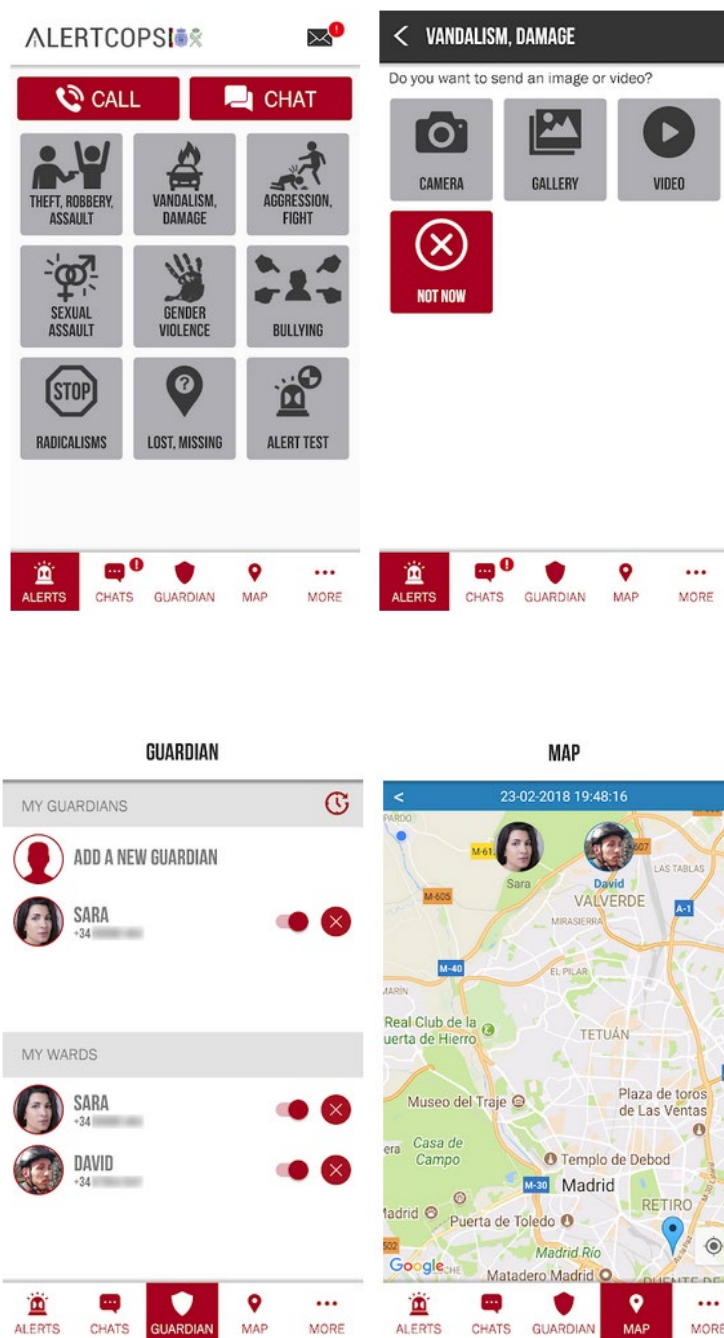
[AlertCops app \(2019\)](#)

Spanish Secretary of State for Security, Ministry of Interior

“AlertCops is a complementary channel. You can send alerts with images or videos to the nearest emergency center, chat directly with a support agent or receive security news and notifications sent by public security services.

You can also share your position with those people you want or with the public security center that provide this service.”

The app provides an accessible interface through which vulnerable persons may request assistance from their guardians and/or the police.



3977 Hotline (2014-)

3977 Federation against abuse - French non-profit supported by the Ministry of Health

Free alert mechanism for violence against disabled people and/or the elderly. It consists of a phoneline open from Monday to Friday from 9h to 19h, and a network of over 1200 volunteers present in 77 departments. They provide:

- No judgement and guaranteed anonymity
- An analysis through questions asked about the context of the situation
- Information on how the caller could proceed and which partners they can be referred to. They may assist throughout police contact.

Litigation

Conventions that protect the rights of Persons with Disabilities in the EU

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)

Article 8

Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

European Convention on Human Rights (1953)

Article 6 – the right to a fair trial

1. In the determination of his civil rights and obligations or of any criminal charge against him, **everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal established by law.** Judgment shall be pronounced publicly but the press and public may be excluded from all or part of the trial in the interest of morals, public order or national security in a democratic society, where the interests of juveniles or the protection of the private life of the parties so require, or the extent strictly necessary in the opinion of the court in special circumstances where publicity would prejudice the interests of justice.
2. **Everyone charged with a criminal offence shall be presumed innocent until proven guilty according to law.**
3. Everyone charged with a criminal offence has the following minimum rights:
 - a. to be informed promptly, in a language which he understands and in detail, of the nature and cause of the accusation against him;
 - b. to have adequate time and the facilities for the preparation of his defense;
 - c. to defend himself in person or through legal assistance of his own choosing or, if he has not sufficient means to pay for legal assistance, to be given it free when the interests of justice so require;
 - d. to examine or have examined witnesses against him and to obtain the attendance and examination of witnesses on his behalf under the same conditions as witnesses against him;
 - e. to have the free assistance of an interpreter if he cannot understand or speak the language used in court

Articles 13 – Right to an effective remedy

Everyone whose rights and freedoms as set forth in this Convention are violated shall have an effective remedy before a national authority notwithstanding that the violation has been committed by persons acting in an official capacity

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1976)

Article 2.3

Each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes:

(a) To ensure that any person whose rights or freedoms as herein recognized are violated shall have an effective remedy, notwithstanding that the violation has been committed by persons acting in an official capacity;

(b) To ensure that any person claiming such a remedy shall have his right thereto determined by competent judicial, administrative or legislative authorities, or by any other competent authority provided for by the legal system of the State, and to develop the possibilities of judicial remedy;

(c) To ensure that the competent authorities shall enforce such remedies when granted.

Article 14

1. All persons shall be equal before the courts and tribunals. In the determination of any criminal charge against him, or of his rights and obligations in a suit at law, everyone shall be entitled to a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal established by law.

The press and the public may be excluded from all or part of a trial for reasons of morals, public order (*ordre public*) or national security in a democratic society, or when the interest of the private lives of the parties so requires, or to the extent strictly necessary in the opinion of the court in special circumstances where publicity would prejudice the interests of justice; but any judgement rendered in a criminal case or in a suit at law shall be made public except where the interest of juvenile persons otherwise requires or the proceedings concern matrimonial disputes or the guardianship of children.

2. Everyone charged with a criminal offence shall have the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law.

3. In the determination of any criminal charge against him, everyone shall be entitled to the following minimum guarantees, in full equality: (a) To be informed promptly and in detail in a language which he understands of the nature and cause of the charge against him;

- a. To have adequate time and facilities for the preparation of his defense and to communicate with counsel of his own choosing;
 - b. To be tried without undue delay;
 - c. To be tried in his presence, and to defend himself in person or through legal assistance of his own choosing; to be informed, if he does not have legal assistance, of this right;
 - d. and to have legal assistance assigned to him, in any case where the interests of justice so require, and without payment by him in any such case if he does not have sufficient means to pay for it;
 - e. To examine, or have examined, the witnesses against him and to obtain the attendance and examination of witnesses on his behalf under the same conditions as witnesses against him;
 - f. To have the free assistance of an interpreter if he cannot understand or speak the language used in court;
 - g. Not to be compelled to testify against himself or to confess guilt.
4. In the case of juvenile persons, the procedure shall be such as will take account of their age and the desirability of promoting their rehabilitation.
5. Everyone convicted of a crime shall have the right to his conviction and sentence being reviewed by a higher tribunal according to law.
6. When a person has by a final decision been convicted of a criminal offence and when subsequently his conviction has been reversed or he has been pardoned on the ground that a new or newly discovered fact shows conclusively that there has been a miscarriage of justice, the person who has suffered punishment as a result of such conviction shall be compensated according to law, unless it is proved that the non-disclosure of the unknown fact in time is wholly or partly attributable to him.
7. No one shall be liable to be tried or punished again for an offence for which he has already been finally convicted or acquitted in accordance with the law and penal procedure of each country.

EU Charter of Fundamental Rights (2000)

Article 47 - Right to an effective remedy and to a fair trial

Everyone whose rights and freedoms guaranteed by the law of the Union are violated has the right to an effective remedy before a tribunal in compliance with the conditions laid down in this Article.

Everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal previously established by law. Everyone shall have the possibility of being advised, defended and represented.

Legal aid shall be made available to those who lack sufficient resources in so far as such aid is necessary to ensure effective access to justice.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2008)

Article 13

1. States Parties shall ensure effective access to justice for persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others, including through the provision of procedural and age-appropriate accommodations, in order to facilitate their effective role as direct and indirect participants, including as witnesses, in all legal proceedings, including at investigative and other preliminary stages.
2. In order to help to ensure effective access to justice for persons with disabilities, States Parties shall promote appropriate training for those working in the field of administration of justice, including police and prison staff.

While states may be legally bound by these conventions, in practice it remains difficult for persons with disabilities to enforce their rights as legal systems remain inadequate.

Throughout this report we will explore ways in which various legal operators are making procedural accommodations for persons with disabilities across the EU.

Access points

Vulnerable persons may not always be able to travel to seek legal assistance due to mobility barriers, lack of funds, or a restricted freedom, such as involuntary institutionalization.

In those cases, it is useful to provide access points within reach of persons in need of assistance.

Some people are institutionalised against their will. It is necessary to provide them with legal assistance so that they have the opportunity to defend their rights.



“Nee! Niet doen! Ik wil mezelf niet verliezen! Maak me niet verder in de war!” [“No! Don't! I don't want to lose myself! Don't confuse me further!”] from My psychiatric doll – forced treatments by Jolijn Santegoeds, 2010

[Read the testimony of forced treatment by survivor of psychiatry Jolijn Santegoeds](#)

Emergency legal assistance within psychiatric hospitals (2011-)

Conseil Départemental d'Accès au Droit and Barreau de Lille – French national institutions

Launched in 2011 across psychiatric hospitals in Lille, a three-hour permanency by a specialized lawyer once a month. Two hours for appointments and one hour for walk-in consultations. The service is free and patients do not need to disclose why they are consulting with the lawyer.

Strategic litigation

Strategic litigation is the identification and pursuit of legal cases as part of a strategy to promote human rights. It focuses on an individual case in order to bring about broader social change. These cases set important legal precedents by publicly exposing injustices, raising awareness and bringing about changes in legislation, policy and practice. Strategic litigation can have a lasting impact on a large number of people at the national, regional or international level.

Definition by [Trial International](#)

[Watch a video by the Validity Litigation Director on Stankov v. Bulgaria \(2min30\)](#)

[Watch the lecture ‘Disabling Legal Barriers’ by Professor Oliver Lewis \(60min\)](#)

Supranational Mechanisms

European Court of Human Rights

The [European Convention on Human Rights](#) guarantees civil and political rights.

The [European Court of Human Rights](#) monitors compliance with the European Convention on human rights.

You can be a private individual or legal entity (company or association) which has directly and personally been the victim of the alleged violation. National remedies **must be exhausted** throughout which **complaints must have been raised**. You have only **six months** from the date of the final decision at domestic level to lodge an application.

European Committee of Social Rights

The [European Social Charter](#) guarantees social and economic rights.

The [European Committee of Social Rights](#) monitors compliance with the European Social Charter.

This happens through two mechanisms:

- [The State Reporting system](#) – to be regularly submitted by states for evaluation by the committee
- [The Collective Complaints Procedure](#) – Can be lodged through social partners and NGOs who hold participatory status at the Council of Europe. The complaints may only be collective and there is no obligation of prior exhaustion of national remedies.

[Court of Justice of the European Union \(CJEU\)](#)

Since the establishment of the Court of Justice of the European Union in 1952, its mission has been to ensure that "the law is observed" "in the interpretation and application" of the Treaties. As part of that mission, the Court of Justice of the European Union:

- reviews the legality of the acts of the institutions of the European Union,
- ensures that the Member States comply with obligations under the Treaties, and
- interprets European Union law at the request of the national courts and tribunals.

Support for offenders with disabilities

Lead questions: Are offenders with disabilities safe within the penitentiary? Can offenders with intellectual disabilities understand the penitentiary process?

In many prisons, offenders with psychosocial disabilities and those with intellectual disabilities are placed in the same facilities and treated the same.

[Watch 'A cada lado' documentary by Plena Inclusion with the Ministry of health, social services and equality on four persons with intellectual disabilities and their experience of the criminal process \(in Spanish\)](#)

According to the [Factsheet – Persons with disabilities and the ECHR of July 2019](#), there have been 10 cases brought and successfully fought through the European Court of Human Rights on the conditions of detention, where penitentiaries were found to be in violation of Article 3 of the ECHR – Prohibition of inhuman or degrading treatment.

Comprehensive facilitation of the judicial system for persons with disabilities (1995-)

Plena Inclusion – Spanish DPO

“Our Access to justice Project has three dimensions:

1. Crime prevention and access to justice: prevent people with intellectual disabilities from committing crime and ensuring equal access to justice. Through: Creation of a facilitators network: by training them and providing resources, tools and mechanisms, so they can support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in a legal procedure; Access to justice trainings throughout Spain by people with and without disabilities, addressed to legal agents, including police, and other stakeholder; Creating and disseminating a guide of good practices in procedure and legal adjustments; A legal advisor network was created of lawyers specialized in disability issues.
2. Support to prisoners with intellectual disabilities: which aim is to provide support to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities that are in prisons. All the activities developed within this dimension want to increase quality of life and to minimize the possibility that they will commit crime again. For this purpose our professional's team work side by side with the prisons administration.
3. Reinsertion: Post-sentencing reintegration into the society through community-based services. Our team is committed to do so, by advising and searching the available resources.”

Specialized knowledge

When services are developed without persons with disabilities present, and/or without taking their needs into account, they are not accessible and inclusive of their needs. In order to make them accessible and inclusive, persons delivering those services must undergo training on how to adapt their services, and how to use accessible resources.

This process is most effective when it directly involves persons with disabilities from the outset.

[The Advocate's Gateway \(2012-\)](#)

The Advocate's Gateway (TAG) – UK volunteer management committee

Free access to practical, evidence-based guidance on vulnerable witnesses and defendants. TAG was founded in 2012. It is an independent body run by a volunteer management committee chaired by Professor Penny Cooper. TAG's main aims are to promote the maintenance of the highest ethical and professional standards in the questioning of people who are vulnerable in justice settings and to provide practitioners with evidence-based guidance and support in the form of toolkits. TAG's toolkits have been widely endorsed by senior judges and by professional bodies.

[Watch "A Question of Practice" short training film here](#)

[Access the Toolkits here](#)

[Positive Practice, Positive Outcomes \(2011\)](#)

UK Department of Health and Ministry of Justice

This handbook provides information, practical advice, sign-posting and best practice examples for criminal justice professionals working with offenders with learning disabilities and learning difficulties.

See also: [People with learning disabilities and the criminal justice system - Useful information \(2012\)](#) by the **foundation for people with learning disabilities – UK Charity**

[Training for lawyers and other legal practitioners \(2016\)](#)

Academy of European Law (ERA) – Public foundation based in Germany

Six seminars per year aimed at legal and policy practitioners focusing on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

The project is financed by the EU REC project (2014-2020) and aims at spreading the knowledge about the UNCRPD and EU disability law among lawyers, members of the judiciary and persons working on policy issues related to persons with disabilities. The trainings are interactive and consist of presentations and practical case studies/workshops in two languages per training (with simultaneous interpretation), whereby English is always one of the languages of the seminar together with a second European language. One of the seminars is live streamed in English and International Sign language. This allows the trainings to be accessible in different language formats to participants coming from different EU Member States.

[The Equal Treatment Bench Book \(2018\)](#)

UK Judicial College

This publication provides guidance for the judiciary on how to make the court experience more accessible for parties and witnesses who may face difficulty participating. It provides a guide on naming systems and terminology as well as tips on communicating with persons with intellectual disability, persons who speak English as a second language, through interpreters, etc.

[Dignity at Trial – Enhancing Procedural Safeguards for Suspects with Intellectual and Psychosocial Disabilities \(2018\)](#)

Ludwig Boltzman Institute of Human Rights, Bulgarian Helsinki Committee, League of Human Rights, Mental Health Perspective, and Peace Institute – International study

This handbook evaluates current safeguard procedures (or lack thereof) across Europe in the treatment of suspects with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities, as well as providing guidance on enhancing those procedures. It focuses on the assessment mechanisms by the police, the judiciary, penitentiary staff and health and psychological support workers, medical experts, police doctors, prison doctors, and medical expert opinion.

Disability Advocacy

Justice and Disability Forum (2003)

Spanish joint national and DPO inter-institutional agreement

The forum is composed of the Spanish General Council of the Judiciary; the Ministry of Justice; the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality; the State Attorney General's Office; the General Council of Spanish Lawyers; the General Council of Procurators of Spain; the General Council of Notaries; the College of Registrars of the Mercantile Property and of Movable Property of Spain; the General Council of Official Associations of Social Graduates; Spanish Committee of Representatives of People with Disabilities -CERMI-; and by Fundación ONCE.

Actions undertaken by the Forum:

- [The forum provides training activities organized or participated by the Forum, to promote the specialization of judicial bodies, prosecutor's offices and legal defense.](#)
- A pilot project aimed at translating judicial resolutions into Easy-to-Read was launched
- 'Disability delegates' were introduced. They are members of the Judicial Career in charge of coordinating and promoting non-jurisdictional actions for the adequate protection of the rights of persons with disabilities in the judicial bodies attached to a specific Court Superior of Justice.
- An annual awards ceremony which aims to recognize the work of people, companies, media and institutions in favor of the rights of people with disabilities and raise awareness in society

Disability Right Defenders

"Network of individuals and organizations with an interest in disability rights and disability law. The purpose of the network is to spread and deepen legal expertise about disability rights among disabled persons, disabled people's organization, lawyers and law schools."

[Join closed Facebook group](#)

The content shared in the facebook-group is summarized in a newsletter four times a year.

[Read July 2019 newsletter](#)

The Law as A Tool (2016-2019)

The Law as a Tool (In Swedish: Med lagen som verktyg) is a both the name of an [Independent Living Institute](#) project (2016 - 2019) and a Swedish organization spreading awareness and legal expertise on discrimination based on disability and defending the rights of people with disabilities.

Conclusion

Most practices presented in this document can be adapted and modified to suit different national contexts and resources available. There appears to be a systemic failure in the provision of reasonable accommodation, (which is in breach of the CRPD) and little incentive for decision makers to provide already existing solutions to access justice, resulting in a limited number of persons with disabilities being able to benefit from those practices.

More space must be given to persons with disabilities within the institutions meant to be holding others accountable, meaning that the institutions themselves must look inward at their own culture of exclusion, and at how they could be incorporating more persons with disabilities into their workforce to make it more representative of our communities.

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