# EPR Taskforce on the right to Habilitation and Rehabilitation

21 September 2026, 15:00-17:00 CEST Brussels time

Online, Teams

## Meeting goals

Through this Taskforce, EPR aims to create a structured and collaborative space where its members, together with external experts, can jointly explore how the right to habilitation and rehabilitation under Article 26 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) is understood, interpreted and implemented in practice across different national contexts in Europe.

This is the first of a series of three online meetings that will take place in Q3 and Q4 2026. The outcomes of the discussions will be integrated in a series of key messages EPR Secretariat will put together.

At this first meeting, EPR members will learn more about the content of Article 26 of the UN CRPD and its interpretation, according to the 2019 thematic study on Article 26 published by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

On 11-12 March 2025, the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities reviewed the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) by the EU through the so-called 'Constructive Dialogue' with State parties (more information available here). Based on this review, on 17 April, the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities published the "Concluding observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of the European Union" (available here), highlighting significant structural gaps in the EU's approach to habilitation and rehabilitation. On Article 26, the Committee raised concerns about the absence of dedicated EU-level strategies on habilitation and rehabilitation, persistent inequalities in the availability, affordability and quality of services across Member States, and the negative impact of budgetary measures on access to tailored services. In response, it called on the EU to strengthen and increase funding and integrate rehabilitation into cross-border healthcare frameworks; support Member States through an action plan on affordable and accessible rehabilitation, and exchange of good practices; and promoting a compulsory training on specific and evidence-based habilitation strategies for autism and adopting quality assessment systems for habilitation services focused on inclusion, participation and users' quality of life. This Taskforce meeting will be an opportunity to examine the concluding observations in more detail and facilitate an exchange on appropriate and coordinated next steps at EU level.

The meeting will also be a platform for EPR members to actively engage with the speakers by asking questions and sharing information about their services.

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More specifically, this meeting will aim at:

- Discussing the right to habilitation and rehabilitation with UN experts and EPR members.
- Exchange in a small group of EPR members on aligning services to persons with disabilities with UNCRPD Article 26;
- Develop recommendations for approaches, actions, policies that foster the right to habilitation and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities.

## AGENDA

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| **15:00 – 15:15** | **Welcome and Tour de Table**<br>Participants and speakers introduce themselves, their role and their organisation. |
| **15:15 – 16:00**<br>(30 presentation + 15 Q&A) | **Presentation: Right to Habilitation and Rehabilitation, analysis of UN CRPD Article 26 and OHCHR 2019 Thematic Study**<br>Prof. Dr. Markus Schefer, member of the UNCRPD Committee<br>Followed by Q&A |
| **16:00 – 16:50** | **Habilitation & Rehabilitation in practice: Implementing Article 26 and the Thematic Study**<br>Exchange amongst EPR members about the applicability of Article 26 and the OHCHR's thematic study in the day-to-day work of service providers for persons with disabilities. |
| **16:50 – 17:00** | **Conclusions & Next Steps**<br>Sharing reflections and identifying recommendations at EU level. |

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