

EPR and European Union initiatives for the disability sector, rehabilitation and social services of excellence

8 December 2025

Alicia Gomez Campos
EPR Secretary General



**Co-funded by
the European Union**



European Platform for Rehabilitation

EPR is a network of service providers to people with disabilities
committed to high quality service delivery.

Our Motto

Learning and
Innovating Together

Our Vision

A society where every person can
co-create quality services that bring
about equal opportunities for all,
social inclusion and quality of life

Our Mission

To build the capacity of our
members to provide sustainable,
high-quality services in a
competitive environment through
mutual learning and training

30 MEMBERS

15 EU countries
2 non-EU countries
(UK and Norway)

Who are our members?



- Private not-for-profit or public organisations that deliver or support organisations service providers to persons with disabilities and rehabilitation services from any European country .
- Provide high-quality services, engage in actions for continuous improvement and development and innovation.
- High-level of expertise in relevant fields for other EPR members.
- EPR members are committed to quality principles:
 - Underpinning the EQUASS system (rights-based, person-centred; co-produced, meeting the wishes of the user and developing together their life project)
 - Implementation of the UN CRPD

EPR members



University
Rehabilitation Institute
Republic of Slovenia



Ι.Π.Α.Π.
ΙΔΡΥΜΑ ΠΡΟΣΤΑΣΙΑΣ
& ΑΠΟΚΑΤΑΣΤΑΣΗΣ ΠΑΙΔΙΩΝ
& ΝΕΩΝ ΜΕ ΝΟΗΤΙΚΗ ΥΣΤΕΡΗΣΗ

EPR Membership



- Two types of memberships: Observer / Full member
- Observer: a year with full access to EPR services at half price
- Full member: access to EPR services and voting rights full price
- Our pricing depends upon the GDP of the country
- Permanent observer: actors of the ecosystem who are not in the EU or not service providers
- Looking at expanding to Universities to better link our work to research

Maximising the value of EPR membership



-  Sharing of priorities and interests for international exchange
-  Willingness to share good practice
-  Centre Coordinator that can facilitate engagement
-  Applying for subsidized opportunities to engage
-  Internal system of communication / engagement
-  Core group of professionals involved

EPR Structures



General Assembly

Decision-making body in charge of EPR strategic, financial & organisational frameworks. Formed by members' Chief Executives/ Directors with voting rights.

Board of Directors

Representative body, nominated by the General assembly. Supervises all EPR activities and executes General assembly's decisions.

Centre Coordinators

Direct link between EPR and member organisations. Role to disseminate in their organization EPR-related information and implement GA decisions.

EPR Secretariat

Responsible for the development and implementation of the network's activities. Based in Brussels.

Disability and Rehabilitation



- Upholding the UNCRPD understanding of disability
- Broad and holistic understanding of the meaning of rehabilitation
- Working with individuals with a disability and others in vulnerable situations
- Empower them and enable them to access their rights
- Be included in all aspects of life
- Have the best quality of life as possible

Rehabilitation Services



- Prevention and early intervention
- Medical rehabilitation
- Social care, support and housing
- Social rehabilitation
- Vocational rehabilitation
- Vocational education and training
- Employment support



Key EPR areas of work

- VET, Vocational rehabilitation, skills
- Employment support and integration
- Technology-based rehabilitation
- Digital transformation – Digital skills
- Mental health
- Independent living
- Young people with disabilities
- Organisational development, capacity building

Needs assessment → work programme & matchmaking

EPR Strategic Objectives 2026 - 2029



1. EPR enables Innovation in Service Provision
2. EPR is a consistently growing, stable and sustainable network
3. EPR promotes technology as an enabler of effective and efficient services that ensure inclusion, independent living, and rehabilitation
4. EPR demonstrates leadership in supporting transitions in education, employment, independent living, and rehabilitation
5. EPR is a point of reference for Quality Standards across Social Services of Excellence for persons with disabilities
6. EPR grows its policy influence through targeted contributions and strategic partnerships

OUR ACTVITIES

- Development and coordination of European projects
- Working groups
- Study visits (EPR members)
- Trainings
- Conferences at European and national level
- European policies: monitoring, analysis and contribution and information
- Research and publications
- Newsbulletin



Working Groups & Networks



Youth

Mental Health

Digital Skills

Employment

INTEREHA

Funding

Policy

Communications

Ageing

ICF

EPR Working Groups Study Visits



INTEREHA WG, November 2025, Valladolid, Spain

EPR Study Visits – 2 per year



Visit on Inclusion, AFID, October 2025, Lisbon, Portugal

EPR work on EU funded projects & support to members on Funding programs



- Funding alerts & tailor-made info
- Matchmaking between EPR members
- Application support & drafting; Specialisation in communication & policy
- Funding Working Group – information on EU funding programs
- Project's Lab – development of joint proposals
- Capacity building training workshops (Use of AI for project development, 12th December; Quality assurance in projects – 16th December, online)

EPR work on EU funded projects & support to members on Funding programs



- In 2025 EPR submitted 14 applications to Horizon Europe as partners & 8 Erasmus Plus.
- Currently involved in: 4 Erasmus +; 1 HE; 1 ESF+
- EPR coordinated project 'Equal Treatment' on access to healthcare for persons with intellectual disabilities has won an Award at the Zero Project Conference 2026
 - Greek partners: EEA Margarita; RECEBI



Zero Project

EPR work on Policy



- Provide recommendations to the European Commission based on our members' expertise and work on the ground.
- Write briefings to inform and disseminate key EU policies related to the sector.
- Develop studies & papers on specific topics of interest to help implement the Disability Strategy and other key policy frameworks (European Care Strategy, Social Economy Action plan).
- Joint work in alliances and networks (i.e. Influence negotiations on future EU budget to protect social expenditure).

Policy Engagement – *Employment and Quality Jobs, Skills, Artificial Intelligence, Public Procurement...*

PARTNERSHIPS & RECENT COLLABORATION



**Inclusive Labour Market
Alliance**

Care Alliance



EPR's research and analysis publications



Pathways to Independent Living

Pathways to Preparedness

Briefings and papers – e.g. *Ethical use of AI*

Studies (rights-based service delivery; Independent Living)



EPR in 2024 & 2025 Public Events Highlights



- **EPR Prize 2025 & Public Affairs** on comprehensive support to Independent Living
“Women in ON mode” program by ONCE Foundation, Spain, supporting women with disabilities victims of gender-based violence

EPR communications



- Online campaigns via social media & upcoming podcast – *Quality Services, European Pillar of Social Rights*
- Newsbulletins – *Focus on members' developments & EPR work, and EU news and insights*



EPR in 2024 & 2025 Public Events Highlights



- Annual Conference on **AI and new technologies for inclusion**: Google, Samsung and more



EPR in 2024 & 2025 Public Events Highlights



- Annual Conference on

**Leading the change in
rehabilitation: towards future-
proof services**

EPR Annual Conference 2026



Paris, France 4-5 June



EPR work on Quality of life and continuous improvement – quality assurance



- Quality Assurance system EQUASS
- QIAT - Quality of Life Impact Assessment Tool



QUALITY-OF-LIFE IMPACT OF
CARE, EDUCATION & TRAINING

EU Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030



- Implement the UN CRPD
- One of its priorities is decent quality of life and living independently
- Key “flagship” initiatives include:
 - Framework for Social Services of Excellence for Persons with Disabilities (expected in 2024 not published yet)
 - Disability Employment Package (6 initiatives, 2023-2025)
 - Guidelines for Independent Living (2024)

Builds on the previous European Quality Framework for Social Services

- Specialised services and mainstream services that:
 - ✓ embrace quality/excellence principles
 - ✓ are fully accessible
 - ✓ are efficiently integrated
 - ✓ guarantee that human rights are promoted, in line with UNCRPD
- Enhance the attractiveness of jobs in this area including through upskilling and reskilling of service providers

Draft principles

1. Respect of human rights,
2. Independent living,
3. Person-centred approach,
4. Empowerment,
5. Accessibility, universal design and reasonable accommodation,
6. (QoL) outcome orientation,
7. Integration/comprehensiveness,
8. Co-production,
9. Skilled workforce
10. Continuous improvement.

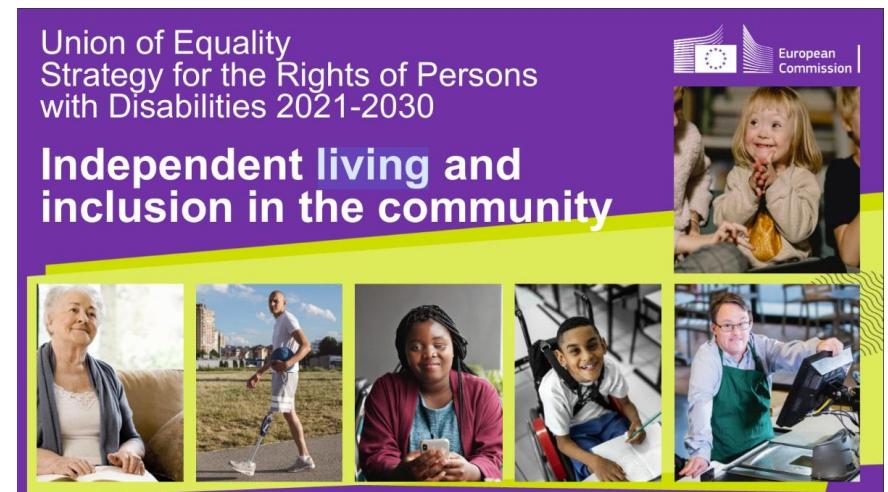
Disability-proofed quality assurance

- Accessible QA mechanisms and tools
- Adapted QA methodologies
- Human rights awareness

Guidance on Independent Living



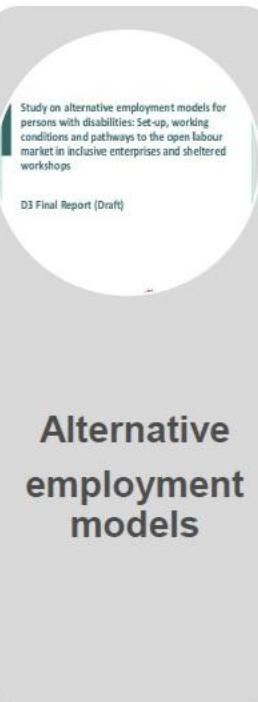
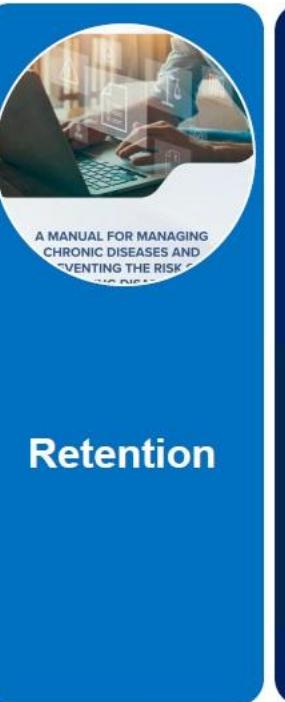
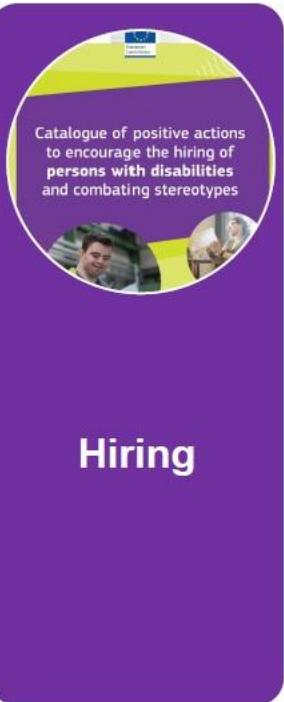
- Policy orientation for the use of EU funds based on Art 19 of the UN CRPD
- Aims at achieving a redirection of investments from segregating settings to accessible non segregated places and community based services for persons with disabilities
- Strategic framework
- Breaking barriers for inclusion in the community
- Person-centred approaches, quality in services, consultation with users
- Shift from medical care model to a human rights approach to disability



Employment Package



- Quality employment for persons with disabilities is rare
- Temporary contracts
- Only 33 per cent of persons with disabilities in the EU have full time work





INTERESTED IN EPR? GET IN TOUCH!

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