Habilitation and Rehabilitation Taskforce

Concept Note

Background

The European Platform for Rehabilitation (EPR) is a network of service providers working with people with disabilities committed to high-quality service delivery.

EPR upholds the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) understanding of disability, that it is "an evolving concept", that "persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others", and that "impairment is a valued aspect of human diversity". EPR considers that disability is not an individual's intrinsic feature but a result of that individual's interaction in an environment, as noted in the International Classification of Functioning.

EPR has a broad and holistic understanding of the meaning of rehabilitation and takes this into account in the activities of the network.

- For EPR, rehabilitation includes all activities working with individuals with a disability and others in vulnerable situations to empower them and enable them to access their rights, be included in all aspects of life and have the best possible quality of life. It encompasses all services that work to achieve this and throughout a person's life.
- EPR considers that rehabilitation services include prevention and early intervention, medical rehabilitation, social care, support and housing and social rehabilitation, vocational rehabilitation, vocational education and training; employment support.

Considering EPR's longstanding commitment to the full and effective implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD), the EPR Secretariat is organising a **Taskforce for service providers with a specific focus on Article 26 of the UN CRPD on "habilitation and rehabilitation".**

Taskforce objective

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. The Taskforce will facilitate the exchange of experiences, challenges and promising practices among service providers, enabling participants to analyse concrete examples of implementation and identify common barriers and success factors. Based on these discussions, the Taskforce will contribute to strengthening the role of services for persons with disabilities as key enablers of equal participation and quality of life and will develop recommendations for service providers, as well as for EU and national policymakers. In particular, it will formulate policy recommendations on how the European Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities can better support the implementation of Article 26 and how rehabilitation programmes can be further aligned with this Article.

This event receives financial support from the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation "EaSI" (2014-2020). For further information please consult: http://ec.europa.eu/social/easi

Practical Information

The Taskforce will convene **three online meetings** over **Q3 and Q4 2026**. Exact dates are still to be confirmed. All meetings will be held via **Microsoft Teams** and will have a duration of **two hours**.

Across the three meetings, the Taskforce will address a series of thematic areas related to the implementation of Article 26 of the UNCRPD:

- **Meeting 1 (21 September 2026):** Setting the scene by exploring the **content of Article 26 of the UN CRPD and its interpretation**, including a focus on the 2019 thematic study on Article 26 published by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).
- **Meeting 2 (26 October 2026): Examination of EU-level initiatives that support the implementation of Article 26**, alongside a discussion on potential recommendations for further action within the European Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to strengthen its contribution to implementation.
- **Meeting 3 (23 November 2026):** A thematic session dedicated to developing recommendations for service providers and for EU and national policymakers on **aligning habilitation and rehabilitation programmes with Article 26.**

Taskforce Output

The outcomes of the discussions held during the meetings of the Taskforce will be **integrated in a series of key messages the EPR Secretariat will include in a publication**, which will be presented at the EPR Public Affairs Event in December 2026.

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