

# Government Implementation of the Standard Rules As Seen By Member Organizations of World Federation of the Deaf - WFD

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Australian Association of the Deaf, Australia  
Österreichischer Gehörlosenbund, Austria  
Deutscher Gehörlosen-bund E.V., Germany  
Greek Federation of the Deaf, Greece  
Deaf Association of New Zealand, New Zealand  
Norges Døveforbund, Norway  
Swedish National Association of the Deaf, Sweden  
National Association of the Deaf, USA

#### **Middle East and North Africa**

Association of the Deaf, Egypt

### **Countries in transition**

The Hungarian National Association of the Deaf, Hungary  
Latvian Association of the Deaf, Latvia  
Polish Association of the Deaf, Poland  
Byelorussian Association of the Deaf, Republic of Belarus  
Slovak Union of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Slovak Republic  
Ukraine Society of the Deaf, Central Board (USD CB), Ukraine

### **Latin America and the Caribbean**

National Association of the Deaf, Belize  
National Federation of the Deaf, Brazil  
WFD, Costa Rica  
Federacion Venezolana de Sordos, Venezuela

### **Sub-Saharan Africa**

Association Nationale des Sourds du Benin, Benin  
Association Nationale des Deficients Auditif du Burkina Faso, Burkina Faso  
The Gambia Association of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Gambia  
Association Nationale des Sourds de Cote d'Ivoire, Ivory Coast  
Kenya National Association of the Deaf, Kenya  
Deaf Federation of South Africa (DEAFSA), South Africa  
Swaziland National Association of the Deaf, Swaziland  
Association des Sourds du Togo, Togo  
Association Nationale des Sourds du Zaire, Zaire  
Association of the Deaf, Zimbabwe

### **South, East Asia and the Pacific**

Macau Deaf Association, Macau  
Organization of the Deaf, Malaysia

## **Introduction**

This report analyses the replies to the questionnaire sent not only to the governments of the UN Member States, but also to 600 national NGO's within the disability field. The number of responses from the NGO's was not as high as from the governments of the Member States, representing, however, a very interesting material. In this report I will separate, among the total of 163 replies from NGO's, the 31 replies from World Federation of the Deaf (WFD).

Part I of this report presents and analyses the results from the NGO's belonging to WFD, which have answered the questionnaire. Each table corresponds to a specific question in the questionnaire (the number of the question is marked). For each question, after the presentation of the results, comparisons are made between a) the results from the

organization in question and the results from the total of NGO's responding to the questionnaire, and b) the results from the organization in question and the replies from the governments. In this way we can locate issues where convergence, or divergence, of views exists, between the particular NGO's and all the NGO's having responded to the questionnaire, and between the particular NGO's and the governments.

The information in Part II is presented in rather a detailed form, in order to expose the collected data of the responding NGO's.

The decision to send the questionnaire not only to governments of the Member States, but also to NGO's within the disability field proved to be worthwhile. The different perspectives and views indicate a more complex picture of the degree of achievement of each country as to the implementing of the Standard Rules. When the government and one, or many, NGO's give the same answers there is a guarantee for the reliability of the received data, but when, on the other hand, the answers differ many questions arise. For instance: Who knows what about whom? Does the organization for the blind know the conditions for the mentally disabled? Is there a trend that governments give an idealizing description, while NGO's give a pessimistic one? The comparisons in this report are not aiming at indicating the greatest possible differences, but at finding the greatest possible achievements with the standards, set out by the Rules. Yet, attention has to be paid to cases where the answers from one and the same country are not concordant. For several questions, the difference between the percentages reported by WFD organizations and governments is ten percent or more. What do such differences tell us?

The answers differ, now and then, on specific details on very essential issues, like what kind of services that are available, and what persons with disabilities are entitled to. That the answers differ, on issues such as the role of the co-ordinating committee, is rather evident, since it is a question of assessing, of evaluating a process between two or more parties. But in case of divergent answers about social and economic rights questions arise. Is there an information gap even among the most prominent spokesmen for persons with disabilities? Do organizations have too small resources in order to keep themselves well-informed? Or do the disability organizations work rather separately from each other; concentrating on their own, specific disability group, due to the complexity of the matter, that is 'disability' is it a too big an issue to keep record of?

The divergence is of course in many cases the result of a different perspective due to different roles: The government is the actor implementing policies within a wide range of issues, while NGO's are experts in a specific field, actors who therefore very well know what is happening in a limited area. The answer from the NGO can thus sometimes be the verification, or falsification, of the answer from the government. The government answer giving a more optimistic view than the answer from the NGO's could depend on the fact that - being the responsible part for the implementation of policies, conventions and rules, such as the Standard Rules - the government wants to demonstrate that it has carried out its obligations.

By elaborating the specific replies of different NGO's, comparing the answers with the NGO's as a whole - a rather common procedure - and with the governments, one trait has emerged, rather unexpectedly: that specific NGO's diverge on one or many issues with the NGO's in general but converge with the answer from the government. In order to explain this, and other interesting findings, further monitoring is needed.

Distribution of NGOs belonging to WFD, according to regions

<b>Regions</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
South, East Asia and the Pacific	2	6,5
Industrialized countries	8	25,8
Latin America and the Caribbean	4	12,9
The Middle East and North Africa	1	3,2
Sub-Saharan Africa	10	32,3
Countries in transition	6	19,4
Total	31	100,0

Answers from WFD organizations came from all regions. The region with the highest rate of responses is the Sub-Saharan Africa, followed by the industrialized countries. The Middle East and North Africa as well as South, East Asia and the Pacific are the regions with the lowest rates of responses.

## General Policy

Table 1 (Question No. 1)

Number of WFD organizations reporting an officially recognized disability policy:

<b>Disability policy expressed in:</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
Having an officially recognized policy	25	83,3
Not having an officially recognized policy	5	16,7
Law	14	46,7
Guidelines adopted by the Government	14	46,7
Guidelines adopted by a disability council	13	43,3
Policy adopted by political parties	6	20,0
Policy adopted by NGO's	13	43,3

Total 30, No answer 1

As Table 1 shows, the majority of WFD organizations are reporting an officially recognized disability policy. The majority of WFD organizations are reporting that disability policy is expressed in law and in guidelines, adopted by the government. The replies from the NGOs generally exhibit the same pattern. There are no clear differences in the percentages, compared with NGOs in general, except that the percentage reported by WFD organizations concerning the disability policy expressed in law is lower. There are clear differences when compared with the percentages reported by governments. WFD organizations report a lower percentage concerning disability policy expressed in law, in guidelines adopted by the government and in guidelines adopted by a disability council but a higher percentage concerning the policy adopted by NGOs.

Table 2 (Question No. 2)

The emphasis of disability policy

Emphasis in national policy	Number of WFD org. indicating respective emphasis				
	1	2	3	4	5
Prevention	3	8	4	3	3
Rehabilitation	11	5	3	4	-
Individual support	3	2	7	2	7
Accessibility measures	2	5	6	5	3
Anti-discrimination law	8	1	1	4	6

1 = very strong emphasis, 5 = very weak emphasis

According to WFD organizations, the strongest emphasis is on rehabilitation, while the weakest emphasis is on anti-discrimination law and accessibility measures. The same pattern prevails as with the NGOs in general and almost the same even when compared to governments.

Table 3 (Question No. 3)

Government action to convey the message of full participation

Conveying the message of full participation	Frequency	Valid Percent
WFD organizations reporting Gvt. action	11	35,5
WFD organizations reporting no Gvt. action	20	64,5

Total 31, No answer 0

As Table 3, shows there are 20 organizations out of 31 providing information on this issue, reporting that the governments have not done anything to initiate or support information campaigns conveying the message of full participation, since the adoption of the Rules. There is no great differences in percentages reported, when compared with the NGOs in general. There are, however, clear differences, when compared with the percentages reported by governments. The majority of WFD organizations are reporting no government action to convey the message of full participation, while 81% of the governments are reporting such action.

## Legislation

Table 4 (Question No. 4)

Types of legislation to protect the rights of persons with disabilities

Types of legislation	Frequency	Valid Percent
Special legislation	11	37,9
General legislation	9	31,0
Special and general legislation	9	31,0

Total 29, No answer 2

As Table 4 shows the most common type of legislation, according to the WFD organizations, is the using of special legislation. The second most frequent type of legislation is general legislation, applicable to all citizens, as well as a combination of

different, also when compared with the percentages reported by governments. WFD organizations report a considerably lower percent of countries using a combination of special and general legislation.

Table 5 (Question No. 5)  
Mechanisms to protect citizenship rights

<b>Judicial/no-judicial mechanisms</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
Due process	17	68,0
Recourse procedure	8	32,0
Ombudsman	6	24,0
Governmental body (administrative)	12	48,0
Expert bodies	8	32,0
Arbitration/conciliation body	6	24,0

Total 25, No answer 6

As Table 5 shows, the majority of WFD organizations are reporting that mechanisms have been adopted to protect the rights of persons with disabilities. The most frequent judicial mechanism adopted is legal remedy through courts, while the most frequent non-judicial mechanism is a governmental body (administrative). There is a clear difference concerning the existence of special agencies dealing with anti-discrimination issues, where the percentages reported by WFD organizations are higher than the percentages reported by governments. There is a difference also regarding the percentage reported as to the existence of an ombudsman. The percentage reported by WFD organizations is lower, compared with the one reported by NGOs in general. There are clear differences, when compared with the percentages reported by governments. On the following mechanisms WFD organizations are reporting a higher percentage: recourse procedure, expert bodies and arbitration/conciliation body.

Table 6 (Question 6)  
Civil and political rights of persons with disabilities

<b>WFD organizations reporting that general legislation does not apply with respect to:</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
Education	1	4,0
Employment	4	16,0
The right to marriage	10	40,0
The right to parenthood/family	11	44,0
Political rights	8	32,0
Access to court-of-law	5	20,0
Right to privacy	6	24,0
Property rights	8	32,0

Total 25, No answer 6

As Table 6 shows, a considerable number of WFD organizations report that general legislation does not apply to persons with disabilities with respect to: the right to parenthood/family, the right to marriage, political rights, access to court-of-law, the right to privacy and property rights. General legislation is applicable in almost all countries with

respect to the right of education. It is also interesting to note that general legislation, in 84% of the countries, applies with respect to the right of employment in 84% of the countries. The same pattern prevails as generally with the NGOs, with minor differences in the percentages reported. There are clear differences, when compared with the percentages reported by governments. WFD organizations report a higher percentage concerning the right to marriage, the right to parenthood/family, political rights and property rights.

Table 7 (Question No. 7)  
Economic and social rights of persons with disabilities

<b>WFD organizations reporting that the following benefits are not guaranteed by law:</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
Health/medical care	6	23,1
Rehabilitation	5	19,2
Financial security	14	53,8
Employment	12	46,2
Independent living	17	65,4
Participation in decisions affecting themselves	17	65,4

Total 26, No answer 5

According to WFD organizations, the following rights are less often guaranteed by law to persons with disabilities: independent living, employment, participation in decisions affecting themselves and the right to financial security. The right being most frequently guaranteed by law is the right to rehabilitation, though almost in 19% of the countries this is not the case. Regarding the right to employment and compared with question no. 6, it is obvious that general legislation is not a sufficient guarantee for rights of disabled persons. Though in 84% of the countries there are no legal hindrances for disabled persons with regard to the right to employment, only 54% of the countries have this right guaranteed by law. There are no clear differences compared with the NGOs in general, except regarding the right to financial security (the percentage reported by the NGOs in general is lower). There are clear differences, when compared with the percentages reported by governments. WFD organizations report a higher percentage regarding the following benefits: health/medical care, financial security, employment, independent living and participation in decisions affecting themselves.

Table 8 (Question No. 8)  
New legislation concerning disability since the adoption of the Rules

<b>Legislation on disability</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
WFD reporting enactment of new legislation	5	17,9
WFD reporting no enactment of new legislation	23	82,1

Total 28, No answer 3

As Table 8 shows, the majority of WFD organizations are reporting that no new legislation concerning disability has been enacted, since the adoption of the Rules. In 18% of the countries, however, enactment of new legislation is reported. There are clear differences compared with the percentages reported by the NGOs in general, where the percentage of no enactment of new legislation is considerably lower. There are also clear differences, when compared with the percentages reported by governments. WFD organizations report a lower percentage regarding enactment of new legislation.

## Accessibility

Table 9 (Question No. 9)

Regulations to ensure accessibility in the built environment

<b>WFD organizations reporting that:</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
Accessibility standards exist	12	48,0
Accessibility standards do not exist	13	52,0

Total 25, No answer 6

As Table 9 indicates, 52% of WFD organizations are reporting that no accessibility standards exist. This is a clear difference compared with NGOs in general, reporting that accessibility standards exist. WFD organizations report a lower percentage than those reported by governments, concerning regulations to ensure accessibility in the built environment.

Table 10 (Question No. 10)

Accessibility of the built environment

<b>WFD organizations reporting accessibility in:</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
Public places	10	83,3
Outdoor environment	8	66,7
Transportation	9	75,0
Housing	7	58,3
Accessibility standards do not exist	13	52,0

Total 25, No answer 6

As Table 10 indicates, the majority of WFD organizations are reporting that there are accessibility standards concerning public places, while accessibility standards concerning housing exist to a lesser extent. The main difference, compared with the NGOs in general is that the percentage for transportation reported by WFD organizations is higher. There are clear differences compared with the percentages reported by the governments. WFD organizations report a lower percentage regarding accessibility in public places and the outdoor environment but a higher percentage concerning accessibility in transportation.

Table 11 (Question No. 11)

Supervision of the accessibility in the built environment

<b>Accessibility in the built environment is observed by:</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
National authority	9	45,0
Local Governments	9	45,0
The constructor	1	5,0
The organizers/providers of the activities	1	5,0
No responsible body exists	6	30,0

Total 20, No answer 11

As Table 11 shows, 30% of WFD organizations are reporting that no responsible body exists to observe the accessibility in the built environment. Accessibility in the built environment, when existing, is most frequently observed by a national authority and by

local governments. The same pattern prevails in replies compared with the NGOs in general. There are, however, clear differences in the percentages reported by WFD organizations concerning local governments, the constructor, the organizers/providers of the activities which are lower compared with those reported by NGOs generally. There are clear differences with the percentages reported by the governments. WFD organizations report a lower percentage concerning supervision of the accessibility in the built environment by a national authority, local governments and the constructor.

Table 12 (Question No. 12)

Measures to facilitate accessibility of the built environment

<b>Government measures promoted:</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
Levelling off pavements	12	54,5
Marking parking areas	12	54,5
Installing automatic doors, lifts and accessible toilets	12	54,5
Ensure accessibility in public places	13	59,1
Improving accessibility in housing	8	36,4
Financial incentives/support for accessibility measures	6	27,3
Special lighting/contrast colours for visually impaired	4	18,2
Provision of specially adapted motor vehicles	7	31,8

Total 22, No answer 9

According to WFD organizations the following measures to facilitate accessibility in the built environment are the most frequently promoted: levelling off pavements, marking parking areas and the accessibility in public places. The measure being least of all promoted is special lighting/contrast colours for visually impaired. There are no differences in the percentage reported, when compared with the NGOs in general, except regarding provision of specially adapted motor vehicles, where the percentage reported by WFD organizations is lower. There are clear differences regarding some measures, when compared with the percentages reported by governments. WFD organizations report a lower percentage concerning the following measures: marking parking areas, providing financial incentives/support for accessibility measures, using special lighting/contrast colours for visually impaired, and providing specially adapted motor vehicles.

Table 13 (Question No. 13)

Special transport system

<b>Special transport is available for:</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
Medical treatment	13	92,9
Education	14	100,0
Work	11	78,6
Recreational purpose	11	78,6
No special transport system exists	13	48,1
Special transport exists	14	51,9

Total 27, No answer 4

There are 48% of WFD organizations reporting that no special transport system exists. When existing, it is available, in most countries, for education and medical treatment. The main difference, when compared with the percentage reported by NGOs in general, is that

fewer WFD organizations are reporting the existence of special transports. This is also the main difference, when compared with the percentages reported by governments.

Table 14 (Question No. 14)  
Adaptation of the built environment

<b>Obstacles reported by WFD when building accessible environments:</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
Attitudinal factors	12	48,0
Economic/budgetary factors	20	80,0
Technical factors	7	28,0
Geographical and climatic factors	3	12,0
Lack of legislation and regulations	14	56,0
Lack of planning and design capacity	12	48,0
Lack of knowledge, research and information	11	44,0
Lack of user participation	10	40,0
Lack of co-operation from other organizations	9	36,0
Lack of enforcement mechanism	14	56,0

Total 25, No answer 6

As Table 14 shows, the three main obstacles reported by WFD organizations when building accessible environments, are economic/budgetary factors, lack of legislation and regulations and lack of enforcement mechanism. There are clear differences compared with the NGOs in general, regarding the importance of attitudinal factors and lack of planning and design capacity, where WFD organizations are reporting a lower percentage for the former and a higher one for the later. There are clear differences regarding some obstacles, when compared with the percentages reported by governments. WFD organizations report a lower percentage regarding geographical and climatic factors but a higher percentage regarding lack of legislation and regulations, lack of planning and design capacity, lack of user participation and lack of co-operation from other organizations.

Table 15 (Question No. 15)  
Disability awareness component

<b>Disability awareness in the training:</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
There is a disability awareness component	5	20,8
There is not a disability awareness component	19	79,2

Total 25, No answer 7

The majority of WFD organizations are reporting that a disability awareness component is not incorporated in the training of planners, architects and construction engineers. The same pattern prevails compared with the NGOs in general, but there are clear differences in the percentage reported. WFD organizations report a lower percentage concerning the existence of a disability awareness component in the training, when compared with the percentages reported by governments.

Table 16 (Question No. 16)  
Status of sign language

<b>The status of sign language as reported by WFD organizations:</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
Recognized as the official language	11	36,7
As the first language in education	4	13,3
As the main means of communication	4	13,3
No officially recognized status	11	36,7

Total 30, No answer 1

As Table 16 indicates, 37% of WFD organizations report that sign language has no officially recognized status, while 37% of the WFD organizations also report that sign language is recognized as the official language of deaf people. There is a clear difference, compared with the NGOs in general. NGOs are reporting that sign language in 29% of the countries, has no officially recognized status. This can be taken as a verification of the hypothesis that the answers sometimes diverge, because of lack of insight into the conditions of each disability group. There are minor differences, when compared with the percentages reported by governments.

Table 17 (Question No. 17)  
Accessibility measures in media

<b>Accessibility measures in media</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
Reporting accessibility measures	17	56,7
Reporting no accessibility measures	13	43,3

Total 30, No answer 1

As Table 17 shows, the majority of WFD organizations are reporting that there are accessibility measures to encourage media to make their information services accessible for persons with disabilities. The percentage reported here, regarding the existence of accessibility measures in media, is higher when compared with the one reported by the NGOs in general. There are no differences in the percentage reported, when compared with those reported by the governments.

Table 18 (Question No. 18)  
Accessibility measures in public information services

<b>Public information services</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
Accessibility measures in information	9	31,0
No accessibility measures in information	20	69,0

Total 29, No answer 2

The majority of the WFD organizations, however, report that there are no government measures to make other forms of public information services accessible for persons with disabilities. There is no clear difference compared with the percentage reported by the NGO's in general, but clear differences, when compared with the percentages reported by governments. WFD organizations report a lower percentage concerning accessibility in public information services.

Table 19 (Question No. 19)  
Access to information and communication

<b>Services to facilitate information/communication</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
Literature in Braille/tape	16	57,1
News magazines on tape/Braille	10	35,7
Sign language interpretation for any purpose	12	42,9
Sign language interpretation for major events	7	25,0
Easy readers for persons with mental disabilities	2	7,1
None	7	25,0

Total 28, No answer 3

As Table 19 indicates, there are 25% of WFD organizations reporting that no services at all are provided in order to facilitate information and communication between persons with disabilities and others. The services most frequently provided are literature in Braille/tape and sign language interpretation, for any purpose, while less often services, such as easy readers for persons with disabilities, are provided. The main difference here is that WFD organizations are reporting a higher percentage regarding sign language interpretation for any purpose but a lower percentage regarding literature in Braille/tape, news magazines on tape/Braille and easy readers for persons with mental disabilities. There are clear differences, when compared with the percentages reported by governments. WFD organizations report a lower percentage regarding all of the above mentioned services, except for sign language interpretation for any purpose.

## Organizations of Persons With Disabilities

Table 20 (Question No. 20)

National umbrella organization

<b>National umbrella organization</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
There is a umbrella organization	24	82,8
There is no umbrella organization	5	17,2

Total 29, No answer 2

As Table 20 shows, the majority of the WFD organizations are reporting that there is an umbrella organization of organizations of persons with disabilities. There are differences in the percentage reported compared with those reported by the NGOs in general. WFD organizations report a higher percentage on the existence of an umbrella organization. There are no clear differences, when compared with the percentages reported by governments.

Table 21 (Question 21)

Participation in policy making

<b>Participation in policy-making</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
WFD organizations reporting participation	10	33,3
WFD organizations reporting no participation	20	66,7

Total 30, No answer 1

As Table 21 shows, 67% of the WFD organizations report that there are no legal

compared with the percentage reported by the NGOs in general. There are, however, great differences compared with the percentages reported by governments. WFD organizations report a lower percentage concerning participation in policy making.

Table 22 (Question 22)

Consultations with organizations of persons with disabilities

<b>Organizations are consulted:</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
Never	6	19,4
Sometimes	16	51,6
Often	8	25,8
Always	1	3,2

Total 31, No answer 0

Table 22 shows that a majority of the organizations report that consultations sometimes take place, while 19% of the WFD organizations are reporting that consultations with organizations of persons with disabilities, when laws, regulations and/or guidelines with a disability aspect are being prepared, never take place. The main difference in percentage compared with NGOs in general is that WFD organizations are reporting a lower percentage, when consultations are always taking place, compared with the percentage reported by the NGOs in general. There are clear differences, when compared with the percentages reported by governments. WFD organizations report a higher percentage, when organizations are never/sometimes consulted but a lower percentage, when they are always consulted.

Table 23 (Question 23)

Level of consultations

<b>Level of consultations</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
National	23	92,0
Regional	6	24,0
Local	8	32,0

Total 25, No answer 6

Table 23 shows that consultations, when taking place, occur most frequently at the national level. Great differences appear in the percentage reported concerning the regional and local levels, when compared with the one reported by NGOs in general. When compared with the percentages reported by the governments, WFD organizations report a lower percentage regarding consultations on the regional and local levels.

Table 24 (Question 24)

Support to organizations of disabled people

<b>Kind of support</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
Financial	21	75,0
Organizational/logistic	8	28,6
No support at all	4	14,3

Total 28, No answer 3

The majority of the WFD organizations are reporting that the government gives financial support to organizations of persons with disabilities. However 14% of the WFD

organizations report that no support at all is given to organizations of persons with disabilities. Minor differences appear when compared with the percentage reported by the NGOs in general. When compared with the percentages reported by governments, WFD organizations report a lower percentage regarding organizational/logistic support.

Table 25 (Question 25)  
Participation in political and public life

Areas of political and public life	Number of countries reporting participation		
	Limited	Some	Great
Government	23	1	1
Legislatures	23	1	-
Judiciary	21	1	1
Political parties	21	1	5
NGO's	8	3	16

1 and 2 = limited extent

3 = some extent

4 and 5 = great extent

Table 25 shows that the majority of WFD organizations are reporting that persons with disabilities to a very limited extent, participate in government, legislatures, judicial authorities and political parties but participate to a great extent in NGOs. The same pattern prevails as that reported by the NGOs in general, as well as with the one reported by governments.

Table 26 (Question 26)  
The role of organizations

Areas in which organizations are involved	Frequency	Valid Percent
Advocating rights and improved services	28	90,3
Mobilize persons with disabilities	26	83,9
Identify needs and priorities	27	87,1
Participate in the planning, implementation	16	51,6
Contribute to public awareness	24	77,4
Provide services	21	67,7
Promote/organize income generating activities	19	61,3

Total 31, No answer 0

Table 26 shows that organizations are foremost involved in advocating rights and improved services, mobilizing persons with disabilities and identifying needs and priorities. Organizations are reporting that the area in which they are least involved is participating in the planning, implementation and evaluation of services and measures concerning the lives of persons with disabilities and the promotion/organization of income generating activities. Nonetheless, the rates in all areas concerning organizational involvement are high implying that the WFD organizations apprehend their role to involve a wide range of tasks. The same pattern prevails as with NGOs in general, except regarding the contribution of NGOs to public awareness, where the percentage reported by WFD organizations is lower. When compared with the percentages reported by governments, WFD organizations report a lower percentage regarding two areas: participation in the planning, implementation and evaluation of services and programmes

and contribution to public awareness.

## Co-ordination of Work

Table 27 (Question 27)  
Co-ordinating committee

<b>Co-ordinating committee</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
There is a co-ordinating committee	19	61,3
There is no co-ordinating committee	12	38,7

Total 31, No answer 0

Table 27 shows that the majority of the organizations are reporting the existence of a co-ordinating committee. However, 39% report that there is no co-ordinating committee. Minor differences appear in the percentage reported, when compared with NGOs in general. There are clear differences, when compared with the percentages reported by governments. WFD organizations report a lower percentage regarding the existence of a co-ordinating committee.

Table 28 (Question 28)  
Where the co-ordinating committee is reporting

<b>The co-ordinating committee is reporting to:</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
A particular Ministry	15	75,0
The Prime Minister's office	1	5,0
Other	4	20,0
There is no co-ordinating committee	12	38,7

Total 33, No answer 0

According to the WFD organizations, the authority to which the co-ordinating committee is usually reporting, is the Ministry of Social Affairs or any other Ministry. Minor differences appear in the percentage reported, when compared with NGO's in general. When compared with the percentages reported by governments, WFD organizations indicate a lower percentage concerning reports to the Prime Minister's office.

Table 29 (Question 29)  
Representation in the co-ordinating committee

<b>Representatives of:</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
Ministries	15	88,2
Organizations of persons with disabilities	14	82,4
Other NGO's	7	41,2
Private sector	5	29,4
There is no co-ordinating committee	12	38,7

Total 29, No answer 2

According to the WFD organizations, the co-ordinating committee usually includes representatives from Ministries and from organizations of persons with disabilities. Representatives from other NGOs and from the private sector are not so often included in

the co-ordinating committee. The same pattern prevails when compared with the NGOs in general, with only minor differences in the percentage reported. When compared with the percentages reported by governments, WFD organizations report a lower percentage concerning the representation in the co-ordinating committee of the NGOs and from the private sector.

Table 30 (Question 30)  
Participation in policy-development

<b>Involvement of the co-ordinating committee</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
Participation in policy development	15	88,2
No participation in policy-development	2	11,8
There is no co-ordinating committee	12	38,7

Total 31, No answer 2

Table 30 shows that 88% of the WFD organizations are reporting that the co-ordinating committee is expected to participate in policy development. There are only minor differences in the percentage reported, when compared with those reported by the NGOs in general. There are no clear differences, when compared with the percentages reported by the governments.

Table 31 (Question 31)  
Participation in performance of other tasks

<b>Involvement of the co-ordinating committee</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
Reporting performance of other tasks	9	69,2
Reporting no performance of other tasks	4	30,8
There is no co-ordinating committee	12	38,7

Total 25, No answer 6

69 percent of WFD organizations are reporting that the committee is expected to perform other tasks. The percentage reported by the NGOs in general is lower. There are clear differences, when compared with government responses. WFD organizations report a lower percentage regarding the involvement of the co-ordinating committee in performance of other tasks.

Table 32 (Question 32)  
Effects of the establishment of the co-ordinating committee

<b>Effects</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
Improved co-ordination of programmes	10	55,6
Improved legislation	5	27,8
Improved integration of responsibility	7	38,9
Better dialogue in the disability field	9	50,0
More accurate planning	4	22,2
More effective use of resources	5	27,8
Improved promotion of public awareness	8	44,4
Too early for assessment	6	33,3
There is no co-ordinating committee	12	38,7

Total 30, No answer 1

According to the WFD organizations, the establishment of the co-ordinating committee has had the following effects: improved co-ordination of measures/programmes and better dialogue in the disability field. 33% of the NGOs report that it is too early for an assessment regarding the effects of the co-ordinating committee. There are only minor differences in the percentage reported, when compared with NGOs in general, except regarding improvement of legislation, the percentage reported by WFD organizations being lower. There are clear differences, when compared with the percentages reported by the governments. WFD organizations report a lower percentage regarding all of the above listed effects of the establishment of the co-ordinating committee.

Table 33 (Question 33)

Effects of the adoption of the Standard Rules

<b>The effects of the Standard Rules</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>
WFD organizations reporting rethinking	11	57,9
WFD organizations reporting no rethinking	6	31,6
Too early for assessment	2	10,5

Total 19, No answer 12

Table 33 shows that 58% of the WFD organizations are reporting that the adoption of the Standard Rules has led to a rethinking of the approach to disability policy. The percentage reported by WFD organizations on the issue that the adoption of the Standard Rules has not led to a rethinking is lower than that reported by the NGOs in general (32%). There are clear differences, when compared with the percentages reported by governments.

There are a number of areas, where divergent views continue to exist, on a number of important issues, between WFD organizations and governments. Divergence in views is two times higher between WFD organizations and governments than between WFD organizations and NGOs in general.

There are also a number of areas, where divergent views continue to exist, on a number of important issues, between WFD organizations, NGOs in general and governments. Divergence does not occur over the whole range of variables in these areas, but in most of them.

The following are the areas where divergence in views is most apparent: the civil and political rights of persons with disabilities, economic and social rights of persons with disabilities, measures taken by the governments in order to facilitate accessibility in the built environment, the obstacles reported to facilitate accessibility in the built environment, participation in political and public life, the effects of the establishment of the co-ordinating committee and the effects of the adoption of the Standard Rules.

There are also a number of questions where WFD organizations and government responses converge, namely the status of sign language (16), accessibility measures in media (17) and the national umbrella organizations (20). The fact that one group of NGO's - representing one specific disability group - and all NGO's in general are of the same opinion is not unexpected, neither that all NGO's are of another opinion than the governments; but the fact that country representatives of one disability organization held the similar view as the governments is worth observing.

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## **Industrialized countries**

### Australia

#### Australian Association of the Deaf, Australia

##### **General policy**

The officially recognized disability in Australia is expressed in law, in guidelines adopted by a National Disability Council, in policy adopted by political parties and in policy adopted by NGOs. According to the Government, disability policy in Australia is expressed in two laws, which underpin the disability policy. The Disability Services Act of 1986 provides a framework for developing support services, designed to increase individuals independence, and the Disability Discrimination Act, enacted in 1992, which recognizes that people with a disability are equals before the law and makes discrimination on the grounds of disability unlawful. The emphasis in this policy - in descending scale - is on: anti-discrimination law, accessibility measures, individual support, rehabilitation, prevention.

Since the adoption of the Standard Rules, the government has not done anything to initiate or support information campaigns, conveying the message of full participation. According to the Government, educational materials have been developed to raise the awareness of

public servants to the needs of people with disabilities. A series of posters, pamphlets, information guides and a staff training kit, including video, have been produced and distributed. Marketing strategies for promoting the employment of disabled people in the open labour market have been undertaken with employment support agencies, funded by the federal Government. Funding has been provided to create Special Employment Placement Officer positions in a range of large corporations to enable them to identify jobs and arrange large-scale placement for people with a disability.

## **Legislation**

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by special legislation. The judicial mechanism adopted to protect the rights of persons with disabilities is due process (legal remedy through the courts) and recourse procedure by a special agency, dealing with anti-discrimination issues. The non-judicial body available for that purpose is a special arbitration/conciliation body.

The only benefit guaranteed by law to persons with disabilities is health and medical care. According to the Government, even the benefits of financial security (income maintenance) and participation in decisions affecting themselves are guaranteed by law.

No new legislation has been enacted, since the adoption of the Standard Rules.

## **Accessibility**

There are laws and regulations to ensure accessibility of the built environment which establish national design standards requiring that public places, the outdoor environment and means of public transport and housing are made accessible. Accessibility in the built environment is observed by a national authority and by local governments. The following measures have been promoted by the government in order to facilitate accessibility in the built environment: levelling off pavements, installing lifts, accessible toilets, ensuring access to public places, installing special lighting for visually impaired and providing specially adapted motor vehicles. Special transport arrangements include taxi voucher schemes, plus free transport on bus and train. Special transport is available for medical treatment, education, work and for recreational purpose. The most difficult obstacles, when planning to build accessible environments, are attitudinal factors, economic/budgetary factors, lack of planning and design capacity, lack of knowledge, research and information, lack of user participation, lack of co-operation from other organizations/institutions and lack of enforcement mechanism. There is no disability awareness component incorporated in the training of planners, architects and construction engineers. The Government states that a program is being developed, under the Commonwealth Disability Strategy, to ensure that planners, architects and construction engineers have access to adequate information on disability policy and measures to achieve accessibility.

Sign language for deaf people is recognized as the official language for deaf people. There are no government measures to encourage media and other forms of public information to make their services accessible for persons with disabilities. The Government states that all service providers, under the Disability Discrimination Act, are expected to provide non-discriminatory services to members of the public. The Commonwealth Disability Strategy provides specific obligations with which telecommunication carriers, major equipment manufacturers and broadcasting proprietors must comply, in relation to the provision of non-discriminatory services. Measures to make other forms of public information services accessible are addressed by the Commonwealth Disability Strategy.

The following services are provided in order to facilitate information and communication between persons with disabilities and other persons: literature in Braille/tape, news magazines on tape/Braille and sign language interpretation, being available for major events only. According to the Government, even easy readers for persons with mental disabilities are provided.

### **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

There is no national umbrella organization. According to the Government, there is a national umbrella organization (The National Caucus of Disability Consumer Organizations). There are no legal provisions mandating the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy-making or to work with governmental institutions. Organizations of persons with disabilities are often consulted, when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. Consultations occur at the national level. The government financially supports existing or new organizations of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities participate to a very limited extent in government, legislatures, judicial authorities and political parties, but to a great extent in NGOs. The role of disabled persons' organizations is to advocate rights and improved services, mobilize persons with disabilities, identify needs and priorities, participate in the planning, implementation and evaluation of services and measures, contribute to public awareness, provide services and promote/organize income generating activities.

### **Co-ordination of work**

There is a national co-ordinating committee, reporting to the Department of Community Services and Health. According to the Government, there are three main co-ordinating bodies at the Federal level. The committee includes representatives of the Ministries of Finance, Justice, Health and Social Affairs and of organizations of persons with disabilities. The government expects the co-ordinating committee to participate in policy development. The establishment of the co-ordinating committee has led to improved co-ordination of measures/programmes, improved legislation, improved integration of responsibility and a better dialogue in the disability field.

The association is not sure whether the adoption of the Rules has led to a rethinking of the approach to disability policy. According to the Government, the adoption of the Standard Rules has reinforced the Australian Government's commitment to the rights of people with a disability to participate in all areas of public life.

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## **Austria**

### **Österreichischer Gehörlosenbund, Austria**

#### **General policy**

The officially recognized disability policy is expressed in law. According to the Government, disability policy is expressed in guidelines adopted by the Government. The

emphasis in this policy - in descending scale - is on rehabilitation, prevention, individual support, accessibility measures, anti-discrimination law.

Since the adoption of the Rules, the government has not done anything to convey the message of full participation.

## **Legislation**

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by special legislation. According to the Government, the rights of disabled people are protected by a combination of special and general legislation. The judicial mechanism adopted to protect the rights of persons with disabilities is recourse procedure by a special agency, dealing with anti-discrimination issues. The non-judicial mechanisms include: an ombudsman, a governmental body (administrative), independent expert bodies and a special arbitration/conciliation body. According to the Government, non-judicial mechanisms include a patient's attorney for people with mental disabilities being admitted in a hospital or psychiatric department.

General legislation applies to persons with different disabilities with respect to education, employment, access to court of law, right to privacy and property rights. According to the Government, general legislation applies to persons with disabilities with respect to education, employment and political rights. The following benefits are guaranteed by law to persons with disabilities: health and medical care, training, rehabilitation and counselling, financial security and employment. According to the Government, the only benefit guaranteed by law to disabled people is health and medical care.

No new legislation concerning disability has been enacted, since the adoption of the Rules.

## **Accessibility**

There are rules to ensure accessibility of the built environment which establish national design standards requiring that public places, the outdoor environment, means of public transportation, housing are made accessible. According to the Government there are no standards requiring that means of public transport are made accessible. Accessibility in the built environment is observed by a national authority. The following measures have been promoted by the government in order to facilitate accessibility in the built environment: levelling off pavements, marking parking areas, installing automatic doors, lifts and accessible toilets, ensuring access to public places, improving accessibility in housing and providing financial incentives/support for accessibility measures in housing. According to the Government, even provision of specially adapted motor vehicles and installing traffic lights with acoustic signals for blind persons are provided. Special transport is available for medical treatment and education. According to the Government, special transport is available also for work and for recreational purpose. The most difficult obstacles, when planning to build accessible environments, are attitudinal factors, lack of knowledge, research and information, lack of user participation and lack of enforcement mechanism. The Government also regards economic/budgetary factors to be an obstacle, when planning to build accessible environments. There is no disability awareness component incorporated in the training of planners, architects and construction engineers. According to the Government, there is such a component.

Sign language has no officially recognized status, is not used as the first language in education of deaf people and is not recognized as the main means of communication between deaf persons and others. According to the Government, sign language for deaf people is recognized as the main means of communication between deaf persons and

others. There are limited government measures to encourage media to make their information services accessible to persons with disabilities, but there are no measures to make other forms of public information services accessible for persons with disabilities.

### **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

There is a national umbrella organization. There are legal provisions mandating the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy-making and to work with governmental institutions. Organizations of persons with disabilities are sometimes consulted, when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. According to the Government, organizations are always consulted. Consultations occur at the national level. The government gives financial support to organizations of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities participate to a very limited extent in government, legislatures, political parties and NGOs. The role of organizations of persons with disabilities is to advocate rights and improved services, mobilize persons with disabilities, identify needs and priorities, contribute to public awareness and provide services. Organizations do not participate in the planning, implementation and evaluation of services and measures concerning the lives of persons with disabilities, nor do they promote/organize income generating activities. According to the Government, the role of organizations in Austria is to advocate rights and improved services, mobilize persons with disabilities and to identify needs and priorities.

### **Co-ordination of work**

The co-ordinating committee is reporting to the Ministry of Social Affairs. The committee includes representatives solely from organizations of persons with disabilities. According to the Government, the committee also includes, representatives from several Ministries, from the employers and employees' associations, from the Central Association of Austrian Insurance Institutions as well as members of the political parties. The government expects the committee to participate in policy development and to assist individual disability organisations. It is too early for an assessment about the effects of the co-ordinating committee. According to the Government, the effects of the establishment of the co-ordinating committee are improved co-ordination of measures/programmes in the disability field, improved legislation, a better dialogue in the disability field and improved promotion of public awareness.

Very little has been done to improve the life situation of deaf people. According to the Government, the principles of the Austrian national disability policy are in accordance with the principles in the Standard Rules.

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## Germany

### Deutscher Gehörlosen-bund E.V., Germany

#### **General policy**

There is an officially recognized disability policy which is expressed in law, in guidelines adopted by a national disability council, in policy adopted by political parties and in policy adopted by NGOs. According to the Government, disability policy in Germany is expressed in law and in policy adopted by the political parties. The emphasis in the disability policy is on: rehabilitation, prevention, individual support, accessibility measures, anti-discrimination law.

Since the adoption of the rules, the government has not done anything to initiate or support information campaigns, conveying the message of full participation. The Government states that it has supported the translation of the Standard Rules into German as well as their publication and distribution among organizations.

## **Legislation**

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by a combination of special and general legislation. The judicial mechanisms for that purpose are: due process and recourse procedure by a special agency, dealing with anti-discrimination issues. The administrative and other non-judicial bodies aiming at the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities are: a governmental body and independent expert bodies. According to the Government, judicial mechanisms include only due process (legal remedy through courts).

General legislation is deemed to apply with respect to: education, employment, the right to marriage, the right to parenthood/family, political rights, access to court-of-law, the right to privacy and to property rights. The following benefits are guaranteed by law to persons with disabilities: medical/health care, training, rehabilitation and counselling, financial security and employment. According to the Government, even the benefits of independent living and participation in decisions affecting themselves are guaranteed by law.

No new legislation has been enacted, since the adoption of the Rules. According to the Government, however, a law has been enacted in which prohibition of discrimination is acknowledged as a fundamental right.

## **Accessibility**

There are laws and regulations to ensure accessibility in the built environment requiring that schools, hospitals, clinics, community centres, rehabilitation centres, theatres etc. are made accessible. Means of public transportation and housing are made accessible. A national authority has the supervisory function to ensure that accessibility in the built environment is observed. According to the Government accessibility is observed by local governments and by the Constructor. The government has promoted the following measures in order to facilitate accessibility in the built environment: marking parking areas, installing automatic doors, installing or widening lifts and installing accessible toilets, providing financial support for the costs of adapting private buildings to the needs of persons with disabilities, installing special lighting for visually impaired, and providing specially adapted motor vehicles and visual signs for deaf. According to the Government, the only measures which have been promoted in order to facilitate accessibility in the built environment are: installing or widening lifts and installing accessible toilets, improving accessibility in housing and providing financial support for the costs of adapting private buildings. There are special transport arrangements for persons with disabilities, enabling them to travel free of charge or to a reduced price. Transport is available for the following services: medical treatment, education, work and for recreational purpose.

Sign language is not recognized as the official language of deaf people. However, it is used as the first language in education of deaf people and is recognized as the main means of communication between deaf persons and others. There are government measures to encourage media to make their information services accessible for persons with disabilities. The following services are provided in order to facilitate information and communication between persons with disabilities and others: literature in Braille/tape, news magazines on tape/Braille and sign language interpretation for major events.

### **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

There is a national umbrella organization. According to the Government, there is no national umbrella organization. There are no legal provisions mandating representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy-making. According to the Government, there are legal provisions mandating the representatives of disabled people to participate in policy-making and to work with governmental institutions. Sometimes the views of organizations of persons with disabilities are taken into account, when laws and regulations are being prepared. When this is the case it occurs at both national, regional and local levels. The government provides financial support to existing and new organizations of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities participate to a very limited extent in government, to some extent in legislatures and judiciary and to a great extent in political parties and NGOs. The organizations of persons with disabilities have the following role: to mobilize persons with disabilities, to identify needs and priorities, to participate in the planning, implementation and evaluation of services and measures concerning the lives of disabled people and to contribute to public awareness. According to the Government, organizations advocate rights and improved services and they also provide services.

### **Co-ordination of work**

No national co-ordinating committee or any similar body exists. According to the Government, there is a national co-ordinating committee. It includes representatives of Ministries, of organizations of persons with disabilities, of other NGOs and the private sector. The committee is expected to participate in policy-making but not to perform other tasks. The effects of the establishment of the committee are: improved co-ordination of measures/programmes, improved legislation, improved integration of responsibility, a better dialogue in the disability field, more effective use of resources and improved promotion of public awareness.

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## Greece

### Greek Federation of the Deaf, Greece

#### **General policy**

The officially recognized disability policy is expressed in law, in guidelines adopted by the government, in policy adopted by political parties and in policy adopted by NGOs. The

emphasis in this policy - in descending scale - is on rehabilitation, prevention, anti-discrimination law, accessibility measures and individual support.

Since the adoption of the Rules, the government has not done anything to convey the message of full participation. The Government, however, states having taken the following actions: relevant spots on TV and various events relating to the International Day of Disabled Persons. A recent law (1995) provides for TV and Radio time to be allocated for awareness raising messages. The proposed legislation recognizes the International Day of the Disabled.

## **Legislation**

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by special legislation and general legislation.

General legislation applies to persons with different disabilities with respect to education, employment, the right to marriage, the right to parenthood family, political rights, access to court of law, the right to privacy and property rights. The following benefits are guaranteed by law to persons with disabilities: health and medical care, training, rehabilitation and counselling, financial security, employment and independent living. According to the Government, even the benefit of participation in decisions affecting themselves is guaranteed by law.

No new legislation concerning disability has been enacted, since the adoption of the Rules.

## **Accessibility**

Sign language for deaf people has no officially recognized status. There are government measures to encourage media to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities. But there are no government measures to make other forms of public information services accessible to persons with disabilities.

## **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

There is a national umbrella organization (The National Confederation of Disabled Persons). There are legal provisions mandating the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy-making and to work with governmental institutions. Organizations of persons with disabilities are sometimes consulted, when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. Consultations occur at the national level. According to the Government, consultations take place also at the regional and local levels. The government financially supports existing or new organizations of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities participate to a very limited extent in government, legislatures, political parties, but to a great extent in judicial authorities and NGOs. The role of organizations of persons with disabilities is to advocate rights and improved services, mobilize persons with disabilities, identify needs and priorities, participate in the planning, implementation and evaluation of services and measures concerning the lives of persons with disabilities, contribute to public awareness, provide services and promote/organize income generating activities.

## **Co-ordination of work**

There is no national co-ordinating committee or any similar body.

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## New Zealand

### Deaf Association of New Zealand, New Zealand

#### **General policy**

The officially recognized disability policy in New Zealand is expressed in guidelines adopted by the government. According to the Government disability policy is expressed in law, in guidelines adopted by the government and in guidelines adopted by the national disability council. The emphasis in this policy - in descending scale - is on individual support, rehabilitation, accessibility measures, prevention and anti-discrimination law.

The government has not initiated or supported information campaigns conveying the message of full participation, since the adoption of the Standard Rules. The Government states having supported the following for conveying the message of full participation: the Health and Disability Act; the Human Rights Act; the development of the Disability Support Services Strategy; and the Health and Disability Code of Rights.

#### **Legislation**

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by special legislation. According to the Government, the rights of persons with disabilities are protected by a combination of special and general legislation. The judicial mechanisms adopted to protect the rights of persons with disabilities include: due process (legal remedy through courts) and recourse procedure by a special agency, dealing with anti-discrimination issues. Non-judicial bodies include an Ombudsman and a special arbitration/conciliation body.

General legislation applies to persons with different disabilities with respect to: education, employment, political rights, the right to privacy and property rights. According to the Government, general legislation also applies with respect to: the right of marriage, the right to parenthood/family and access to court-of-law. Only the benefit of financial security is guaranteed by law to persons with disabilities. According to the Government, even the benefits of health and medical care, independent living and participation in decisions affecting themselves are guaranteed by law.

The Human Rights Act has been enacted, since the adoption of the Standard Rules.

#### **Accessibility**

There are laws and regulations to ensure the accessibility of the built environment requiring that public places (schools, hospitals community centres etc.) are made accessible. According to the Government, there are standards requiring that the outdoor environment and means of public transportation also are made accessible. Accessibility in the built environment is observed by local governments. According to the Government,

accessibility is also observed by a national authority and by the constructor. The following measures have been promoted by the government to facilitate accessibility in the built environment: marking parking areas, installing lifts and accessible toilets, ensuring access to public places and improving accessibility in housing. According to the Government even levelling off pavements and the provision of specially adapted motor vehicles are provided in order to facilitate accessibility in the built environment. Special transport arrangements include half price taxis (total mobility) available for medical treatment, education, work and for recreational purpose. The most difficult obstacles, when planning to build accessible environments, are attitudinal factors and economic/budgetary factors.

Sign language for deaf people has no officially recognized status, but is recognized as the main means of communication between deaf persons and others. According to the Government, sign language for deaf people is not even recognized as the main means of communication between deaf persons and others. There are no government measures to encourage media and other forms of public information to make their services accessible for persons with disabilities. According to the Government, there are such measures. None of these services - literature in Braille/tape, news magazines on tape/Braille, sign language, easy readers - are automatically provided. Some government departments, however, may provide some of these services, the provision being done at their discretion. According to the Government, all of the above mentioned services are provided in order to facilitate information and communication between persons with disabilities and others.

### **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

There is no national umbrella organization. DPA is a lobby group for all organizations, but is not really an umbrella. There are no legal provisions mandating the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy-making or to work with governmental institutions. Disability organizations are often consulted, when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. Consultations occur at both the national, regional and local level. The government financially supports existing and new organizations of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities participate to a very limited extent in government, legislatures, judiciary and political parties but to a great extent in NGOs. The role of disabled persons organizations is to advocate rights and improved services, mobilize persons with disabilities, identify needs and priorities, participate in the planning, implementation and evaluation of services and measures, contribute to public awareness, provide services and promote/organize income generating activities.

### **Co-ordination of work**

There is no national co-ordinating committee or any similar body.

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## Norway

### Norges Döveforbund, Norway

#### **General policy**

The officially recognized disability policy is expressed in guidelines adopted by the government, in guidelines adopted by a national disability council, in policy adopted by political parties and in policy adopted by NGOs. According to the Government, disability policy is also expressed in law.

Since the adoption of the Rules, the government has taken action in order to convey the message of full participation.

## **Legislation**

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by a combination of special legislation and general legislation. The only mechanism available to protect the rights of persons with disabilities is independent expert bodies (non-judicial). According to the Government, the judicial mechanism available to protect the rights of persons with disabilities is due process (legal remedy through courts). The non-judicial mechanisms include an Ombudsman.

The following benefits are guaranteed by law to persons with disabilities: health and medical care, training, rehabilitation and counselling and financial security. According to the Government, even the benefit of participation in decisions affecting themselves is guaranteed by law to disabled persons.

No new legislation concerning disability has been enacted, since the adoption of the Rules.

## **Accessibility**

There are rules to ensure accessibility of the built environment requiring that public places, land, sea and air transportation are made accessible. According to the Government, there are standards requiring that even the outdoor environment and housing are made accessible. Accessibility in the built environment is observed by local governments. There are special transport arrangements for persons with disabilities available for medical treatment, education, work and for recreational purpose.

Sign language is recognized as the official language for deaf people. The following services are provided in order to facilitate information and communication between persons with disabilities and others: literature in Braille/tape, news magazines on tape/Braille and sign language interpretation for major events. According to the Government, even easy readers for persons with mental disabilities are provided.

## **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

There are two national umbrella organizations. Disability organizations are often consulted, when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. Consultations occur at both the national and local levels. The government gives financial support to existing or new organizations of persons with disabilities. The role of organizations of persons with disabilities is to advocate rights and improved services, mobilize persons with disabilities, identify needs and priorities and contribute to public awareness. According to the Government, organizations also participate in the planning, implementation and evaluation of services and measures and promote/organize income generating activities.

## **Co-ordination of work**

The national co-ordinating committee is reporting to the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs. According to the Government, the co-ordinating committee is reporting to the Prime Minister's office. The committee includes representatives of organizations of persons with disabilities, of other NGOs and from the private sector. According to the Government the co-ordinating committee also include representatives from several Ministries. The government expects the committee to participate in policy development.

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# Sweden

## Swedish National Association of the Deaf, Sweden

### **General policy**

The officially recognized disability policy is expressed in guidelines adopted by the government. According to the Government, disability policy is also expressed in law, in policy adopted by political parties, and in policy adopted by NGOs. The emphasis in this policy - in descending scale - is on anti-discrimination law, individual support, accessibility measures and rehabilitation. According to the Government, anti-discrimination law is the least emphasized aspect.

Since the adoption of the Standard Rules, the message of full participation has been conveyed by the Handicap Ombudsman and through seven conferences on the UN Standard Rules, at a national level.

### **Legislation**

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by a combination of special legislation and general legislation. There are no judicial mechanisms to protect the rights of persons with disabilities. The non-judicial body for that purpose is the Ombudsman. According to the Government, the judicial mechanism available to protect the rights of persons with disabilities is due process (legal remedy through courts). Non-judicial mechanisms include: an Ombudsman, a governmental body (administrative) and national/regional supervision.

General legislation applies to persons with different disabilities with respect to education, employment, the right to marriage, the right to parenthood/family, political rights, access to court-of-law, the right to privacy and to property rights. The following benefits are guaranteed by law to persons with disabilities: training, rehabilitation and counselling, financial security, employment, independent living, participation in decisions affecting themselves. According to the Government, even the benefit of health and medical care is guaranteed by law.

No new legislation concerning disability has been enacted, since the adoption of the Rules. According to the Government, the following laws have been enacted since the adoption of

the Rules: the Act concerning Support Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairment and the Assistance Benefit Act, the Act concerning the Disability Ombudsman, the Act concerning Pilot Project with Parental Influence on school attendance of children with mental retardation and an amendment in the Act concerning Suitable Public Transport to Persons with Disabilities laying down that the needs of persons with disabilities must be taken into consideration in planning and implementing the transports.

## **Accessibility**

The association answers only questions related to deaf people.

Sign language for deaf people is recognized as the official language of deaf people, it is used as the first language in education of deaf people, and is recognized as the main means of communication between deaf persons and others. There are government measures to encourage media and other forms of public information to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities. Sign language interpretation is available for any purpose in order to facilitate information and communication between persons with disabilities and others.

## **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

There is a national umbrella organization. There are legal provisions mandating the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy-making and to work with governmental institutions. Organizations of persons with disabilities are always consulted, when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. Consultations occur at the national level. The government financially supports existing or new organizations of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities participate to a very limited extent in legislatures and judicial authorities, to some extent in political parties and to a great extent in government and NGOs. The role of organizations of persons with disabilities is to advocate rights and improved services, mobilize persons with disabilities, identify needs and priorities, participate in the planning, implementation and evaluation of services and measures concerning the lives of persons with disabilities, contribute to public awareness, provide services and to a limited extent promote/organize income generating activities.

## **Co-ordination of work**

There is a body similar to a national co-ordinating committee reporting to the Swedish Labour Market Board (AMS). The committee only includes representatives of the Ministries of Employment and Education. The government expects the co-ordinating committee to participate in policy development or to perform other tasks. The establishment of the co-ordinating committee has led to a better dialogue in the disability field. According to the Government, there is no national co-ordinating committee.

It is too early to answer whether the adoption of the Rules has led to a rethinking of the approach to disability policy.

# National Association of the Deaf, USA

## **General policy**

The officially recognized disability policy is expressed in law, in guidelines adopted by the government, in guidelines adopted by the National Disability Council and in policy adopted by NGOs. According to the Government, disability policy is expressed in law. The emphasis - in descending scale - in this policy is on anti-discrimination law, accessibility measures, individual support, rehabilitation, prevention.

Since the adoption of the Standard Rules, the government has taken the following measures in order to convey the message of full participation: public service announcements, media awareness efforts, information materials, outreach education and training (grassroots), employer training awareness, etc.

## **Legislation**

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by special legislation and general legislation. The judicial mechanisms adopted to protect the rights of persons with disabilities include: due process (legal remedy through courts) and recourse procedure by a special agency, dealing with anti-discrimination issues. Non-judicial mechanisms include an Ombudsman, a governmental body (administrative), independent expert bodies and a special arbitration/conciliation body. The National Association of the Deaf states, however, that many of these services are inaccessible for deaf/hard of hearing people,

General legislation - unless you count the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as general legislation - does not apply to persons with different disabilities with respect to: education, employment, the right to marriage, the right to parenthood/family, political rights, access to court-of-law, the right to privacy or to property rights. The following benefits are guaranteed by law to persons with disabilities: health and medical care (partially), training, rehabilitation and counselling, financial security, independent living, participation in decisions affecting themselves (to a certain degree), the right to be free from discrimination on the basis of disability. According to the Government, only the benefits of health and medical care and financial security are guaranteed by law.

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 has been enacted, since the adoption of the Standard Rules.

## **Accessibility**

There are laws and regulations, up to a certain point according to the Association, for ensuring accessibility of the built environment which establish national design standards requiring that public places, the outdoor environment, land, sea, air (not all airports are accessible) transportation and housing are made accessible. Accessibility in the built environment is observed by a national authority and by local governments. The enforcement, however, is weak insofar as accessibility needs of deaf/hard of hearing persons are concerned according to the Association. The following measures have been promoted by the government to facilitate accessibility in the built environment: levelling off pavements, marking parking areas, installing automatic doors, lifts, accessible toilets,

ensuring access to public places, improving accessibility in housing providing financial incentives/support for accessibility measures in housing, installing special lighting and using contrast colours for visually impaired and providing specially adapted motor vehicles. The association adds that the government has facilitated access but many programmes and places are still not fully accessible, especially with regard to the communication needs of deaf/hard of hearing people. Special transport arrangements include: a city/county bus system available for the purpose of medical treatment, education, work (to a limited degree) and for recreational purpose. The most difficult obstacles, when planning to build accessible environments, are attitudinal factors, economic/budgetary factors, technical factors and lack of enforcement mechanism. There is no awareness component incorporated in the training of planners, architects and construction engineers. Whenever there is such a component, such awareness, according to the Association, is not uniformly applied or required. According to the Government, there is a disability awareness component incorporated in the training of planners, architects and construction engineers.

As the status of sign language for deaf people the Association states that: "recognition is far more the case on the statutory (state) level than federal". According to the Government, sign language is recognized as the main means of communication between deaf persons and others. The government measures to encourage media to make their services accessible for persons with disabilities are very limited with regard to the needs of deaf people. The new Telecommunications Act of 1996 will further such access opportunities. There are other government services to make other forms of public information services accessible to persons with disabilities. These include closed captioning of television programmes (prime time) and media activities (to a limited degree). The following services are provided in order to facilitate information and communication between persons with disabilities and other persons: literature in Braille/tape, news magazines on tape/Braille (limited) and sign language interpretation is available, up to a point, for any purpose. Sign language services are available under the ADA for objective communication in employment and by state and local governments and public communications.

### **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

A national umbrella organization was recently (1996) formed, the American Association of People with Disabilities. The National Association of Deaf represents the interests of deaf and hard of hearing Americans (28 millions) in the USA. According to the Government, there is no national umbrella organization of persons with disabilities but several groups who might be considered as leaders in their fields. The provisions, if any are very limited mandating the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy-making or to work with governmental institutions. Disability organisations are often consulted when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. Consultations, when they take place, occur at the national level. The government gives financial and organizational/logistic support to organizations of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities participate to a very limited extent in government, legislatures, judiciary, political parties and to a great extent in NGOs. The role of disabled persons organizations is to advocate rights and improved services, mobilize persons with disabilities, identify needs and priorities, participate in the planning, implementation and evaluation of services and measures, contribute to public awareness and provide services. According to the Government, organizations also promote/organize income generating activities.

### **Co-ordination of work**

According to the Association, there is actually no single point of contact or department or entity responsible for disability affairs. The issues have usually been addressed in various ways via various national councils or commissions. The co-ordinating committees report to the President. The Committees include representatives of several Ministries, of organizations of persons with disabilities, other NGOs, and from the private sector. The government expects the committee to participate in policy development. Expectations to perform other tasks vary according to the specific council/commission. The establishment of the co-ordinating committee has had the following effects: improved co-ordination of measures/programmes in the disability field, improved legislation, improved integration of responsibility, a better dialogue in the disability field, more accurate planning, more effective use of resources and improved promotion of public awareness. As the question of the adoption of the Rules has led to a rethinking of the approach to disability policy the Association states that disability policy affairs have been on the rise for the last five years. Many more people with disabilities representing persons with disabilities, than ever in history, are now in presidential appointed positions in government. There is more sharing of information and resources among disability organizations and a greater consumer awareness and involvement in government policy, for the dealing of matters at all levels.

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## **Middle East and North Africa**

### **Egypt**

#### **Association of the Deaf, Egypt**

##### **General policy**

The officially recognized disability policy is expressed in law, and in guidelines adopted by the government. The emphasis in this policy is on rehabilitation, individual support, prevention, anti-discrimination law and accessibility measures.

Since the adoption of the Rules, the government has conveyed the message of full participation through mass media campaigns.

##### **Legislation**

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by special legislation. According to the Government, the rights of persons with disabilities are protected both by general and special legislation. There is no judicial mechanism to protect the rights of persons with disabilities. There is, however, a governmental body (administrative) for that purpose. According to the Government, the only mechanisms that exist for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities is due process (legal remedy through the courts).

General legislation applies to persons with different disabilities with respect to education, employment, access to court of law and property rights. According to the Government general legislation applies to persons with disabilities with respect to education, employment and the right to marriage. The following benefits are guaranteed by law to

persons with disabilities: health and medical care, training, rehabilitation and counselling and employment. According to the Government, even the benefit of independent living is guaranteed by law to persons with disabilities.

No new legislation concerning disability has been enacted, since the adoption of the Rules.

### **Accessibility**

There are no rules to ensure accessibility of the built environment. According to the Government, there are laws and regulations to ensure accessibility of the built environment. There are no special transport arrangements for persons with disabilities. According to the Government, there is special transport available for medical treatment, education, work and for recreational purpose. The most difficult obstacles, when planning to built accessible environments, are lack of legislation and regulation, lack of planning and design capacity, lack of knowledge, research and information and lack of user participation. There is no disability awareness component incorporated in the training of planners, architects and construction engineers.

Sign language is used as the first language in education of deaf people. According to the Government, sign language for deaf people is recognized as the official language of deaf people. There are government measures to encourage media and other forms of public information to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities. The following services are provided in order to facilitate information and communication between persons with disabilities and others: literature in Braille/tape and news magazines on tape/Braille.

### **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

There is a national umbrella organization. According to the Government, there is no national umbrella organization in which all the organizations of persons with disabilities are represented. There are no legal provisions mandating the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy making or to work with governmental institutions. Organizations of persons with disabilities are never consulted, when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. According to the Government, organizations are sometimes consulted. The government gives organizational/logistic support to organizations of persons with disabilities. The Government states giving financial support to organizations of disabled people. Persons with disabilities participate to a very limited extent in government, legislatures, judicial authorities, political parties and to some extent in NGOs. The role of organizations of persons with disabilities is to identify needs and priorities and to provide services.

### **Co-ordination of work**

The co-ordinating committee is reporting to the Ministry of Social Affairs. It includes representatives of several Ministries and of other NGOs. The government expects the committee to participate in policy development. It is too early for an assessment concerning the effects of the establishment of the co-ordinating committee. According to the Government, the establishment of the co-ordinating committee has had the following effects: improved co-ordination of measures/programmes in the disability field, improved legislation, improved integration of responsibility, a better dialogue in the disability field, more accurate planning, more effective use of resources and improved promotion of public awareness.

The adoption of the Rules has not led to a rethinking of the approach to disability policy. According to the Government, the adoption of the Rules has led to such a rethinking.

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## **Countries in transition**

# Hungary

## The Hungarian National Association of the Deaf, Hungary

### **General policy**

There is no officially recognized disability policy. According to the Government the officially recognized disability policy in Hungary is expressed in law and in guidelines adopted by the Government. The emphasis - in descending scale - is on: anti-discrimination law, prevention, rehabilitation, individual support, accessibility measures.

Since the adoption of the Rules the government has not done anything to initiate or support information campaigns, conveying the message of full participation.

### **Legislation**

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by general legislation. The judicial mechanism adopted is due process (legal remedy through courts). The non-judicial mechanism is a special arbitration/conciliation body. According to the Government, the non-judicial bodies also include an Ombudsman.

General legislation applies to persons with different disabilities with respect to education, employment and access to court-of-law. According to the Government, general legislation applies to persons with disabilities also with respect to the right to marriage, the right to parenthood/family, political rights, the right to privacy and property rights. The following benefits are guaranteed by law to persons with disabilities: health and medical care, training, rehabilitation and counselling. According to the Government, even the benefits of financial security, and participation in decisions affecting themselves are guaranteed by law.

No new legislation concerning disability has been enacted, since the adoption of the Rules.

### **Accessibility**

There are no rules to ensure accessibility of the built environment. According to the Government, there are standards concerning accessibility in the built environment requiring that public places and the outdoor environment are made accessible. Accessibility in the built environment is observed by local governments. According to the Government, no responsible body exists for observing the accessibility in the built

environment.

Sign language for deaf people has no officially recognized status, is not used as the first language in education of deaf people, and is not recognized as the main means of communication between deaf persons and others. According to the Government, sign language for deaf people is used as the first language in education of deaf people and recognized as the main means of communication between deaf persons and others. There are no government measures to encourage media and other forms of public information to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities. The only service provided in order to facilitate information and communication between persons with disabilities and others is sign language interpretation. According to the Government, even literature in Braille/tape is provided.

### **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

There is a national umbrella organization. There are no legal provisions mandating the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy-making or to work with governmental institutions. Organizations of persons with disabilities are sometimes consulted, when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. Consultations occur at the national level. The government financially supports existing or new organizations of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities participate to a very limited extent in government, legislatures, judicial authorities and political parties. The role of organisations of persons with disabilities is to advocate rights and improved services, mobilise persons with disabilities, identify needs and priorities and provide services.

### **Co-ordination of work**

There is no national co-ordinating committee or any similar body.  
The adoption of the Rules has not led to a rethinking of the approach to disability policy.

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## Latvia

### **Latvian Association of the Deaf, Latvia**

No reply was received from the Government of Latvia.

### **General policy**

The officially recognized disability policy in Latvia is expressed in law. The emphasis in this policy is on rehabilitation. Since the adoption of the Rules, the government has not done anything to initiate or support information campaigns, conveying the message of full participation.

### **Legislation**

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by special legislation. The judicial mechanism adopted to protect the rights of persons with disabilities is due process (legal remedy through courts). There are no administrative or other non-judicial bodies for that purpose. General legislation applies to persons with different disabilities with respect to education and the right to marriage. The following benefits are guaranteed by law to persons with disabilities: health and medical care, training, rehabilitation and counselling and independent living. No new legislation concerning disability has been enacted, since the adoption of the Rules.

### **Accessibility**

There are no laws, regulations and/or guidelines to ensure accessibility of the built environment. No measures have been promoted to facilitate accessibility in the built environment. There are no special transport arrangements for persons with disabilities. There is no disability awareness component incorporated in the training of planners, architects and construction engineers.

Sign language for deaf people has no officially recognized status, is not used as the first language in education of deaf people, nor recognized as the main means of communication between deaf persons and others. There are government measures to encourage media to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities but no government measures to encourage other forms of public information to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities. The following services are provided to facilitate information and communication between persons with disabilities and others: literature in Braille, news magazines on tape/Braille and sign language interpretation being available only for major events.

### **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

There is no national umbrella organization of persons with disabilities. There are no legal provisions mandating the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy-making or to work with governmental institutions. Organizations of persons with disabilities are never consulted, when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. Persons with disabilities participate to a very limited extent in government, legislatures, judicial authorities, but to a great extent in political parties and NGOs. The role of disabled persons organisations is to advocate rights and improved services, mobilize persons with disabilities, identify needs and priorities and participate in the planning, implementation and evaluation of services and measure concerning the lives of persons with disabilities.

### **Co-ordination of work**

There is no national co-ordinating committee or any similar body.  
The adoption of the Rules has not led to a rethinking of the approach to disability policy.

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Poland

# Polish Association of the Deaf, Poland

## **General policy**

The officially recognized disability policy is expressed in law, in guidelines adopted by the government, in guidelines adopted by the national disability council and in policy adopted by NGOs. Disability policy equally emphasizes prevention, rehabilitation, individual support, accessibility measures and anti-discrimination law.

Since the adoption of the Rules, the government has not done anything to initiate or to support information campaigns, conveying the message of full participation. The Government states that it has supported the following actions conveying the message of full participation: the Standard Rules were translated into Polish and disseminated, the principles of co-operation between the Government and the NGOs were approved by the Government and disseminated, propagation in mass-media, mainly in the press and the publication of articles on the issues related to full participation of disabled persons.

## **Legislation**

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by special legislation. According to the Government, the rights of persons with disabilities are protected both by general and special legislation. The judicial mechanisms adopted to protect the rights of persons with disabilities include due process (legal remedy through courts) and recourse procedure by a special agency, dealing with anti-discrimination issues. Non-judicial mechanisms include an Ombudsman and a governmental body (administrative). According to the Government judicial mechanisms do not include recourse procedure by a special agency, dealing with anti-discrimination issues.

General legislation applies to persons with different disabilities with respect to education, employment, the right to marriage, the right to parenthood/family, political rights, access to court-of-law, the right to privacy and property rights. The following benefits are guaranteed by law to persons with disabilities: health and medical care, training, rehabilitation and counselling, financial security, employment, independent living and participation in decisions affecting themselves.

No new legislation concerning disability has been enacted, since the adoption of the Rules.

## **Accessibility**

There are rules to ensure accessibility of the built environment requiring that land, sea and air transportation, and housing are made accessible. According to the Government, there are no standards requiring that means of public transport are made accessible but standards requiring that public places and the outdoor environment are made accessible. Accessibility in the built environment is observed by a national authority, by local governments and by the constructor. The following measures have been promoted by the government in order to facilitate accessibility in the built environment: levelling off pavements, marking parking areas, installing automatic doors, lifts and accessible toilets, ensuring access to public places, improving accessibility in housing, providing financial incentives/support for accessibility measures in housing, installing special lighting for visually impaired and providing specially adapted motor vehicles. There are special transport arrangements available for medical treatment, education, work and for recreational purpose. The most difficult obstacle when planning to build accessible

environments, is economic/budgetary factors. According to the Government, even attitudinal factors are a main obstacle, when planning to build accessible environments. There is a disability awareness component incorporated in the training of planners, architects and construction engineers.

Sign language for deaf people has no officially recognized status, nor is it used as the first language in education of deaf people, but is recognized as the main means of communication between deaf persons and others. According to the Government, sign language for deaf people is also recognized as the official language for deaf people and is used as the first language in education of deaf people. There are government measures to encourage media to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities, but no measures to encourage other forms of public information to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities. The following services are provided in order to facilitate information and communication between persons with disabilities and others: literature in Braille/tape, news magazines on tape/Braille and sign language interpretation, being available for any purpose. According to the Government, sign language interpretation is available only for major events.

### **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

There is a national umbrella organization in which all organizations of persons with disabilities are represented. There are legal provisions mandating the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy-making and to work with governmental institutions. According to the Government, there are no such legal provisions.

Organizations of persons with disabilities are sometimes consulted, when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. Consultations occur at both the national, regional and local levels. Persons with disabilities participate to a very limited extent in government, legislatures, judicial authorities and political parties. The role of disabled persons organisations is to advocate rights and improved services, mobilize persons with disabilities, identify needs and priorities, participate in the planning, implementation and evaluation of services and measures concerning the lives of persons with disabilities, contribute to public awareness, provide services and to promote/organize income generating activities.

### **Co-ordination of work**

The national co-ordinating committee is reporting to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. The government expects the committee to participate in policy development. The establishment of the co-ordinating committee has had the following effects: improved co-ordination of measures/programmes, improved legislation, improved integration of responsibility, a better dialogue in the disability field, more accurate planning, more effective use of resources and improved promotion of public awareness. According to the Government, no co-ordinating committee has been established yet.

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## **Belarus**

**Byelorussian Association of the Deaf, Republic of Belarus**

No reply was received from the Government of Belarus.

## **General policy**

The officially recognized disability policy is expressed in law, in guidelines adopted by the government, in policy adopted by political parties and in policy adopted by NGOs. The emphasis in this policy is on anti-discrimination law, rehabilitation, individual support, prevention and accessibility measures.

In order to convey the message of full participation the government has conducted broad investigations concerning disability matters and taken measures for distribution of information and knowledge on matters of persons with disabilities.

## **Legislation**

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by special legislation and general legislation. The judicial mechanism adopted to protect the rights of persons with disabilities is due process (legal remedy through courts). Administrative and other non-judicial bodies include the permanent commission of the supreme soviet of the Republic of Belarus on veteran's and persons with disabilities problems, the Ministry of Labour of the Republic of Belarus, the Ministry of Social Welfare of the Republic of Belarus and the Belarussian Association of the Deaf.

General legislation applies to persons with disabilities with respect to education, employment, right to marriage, the right to parenthood/family, political rights, access to court-of-law, the right to privacy and property rights. The following benefits are guaranteed by law to persons with disabilities: health and medical care, training, rehabilitation and counselling, financial security, employment, independent living and participation in decisions affecting themselves.

The law on the prevention of disability and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities has been enacted, since the adoption of the Rules.

## **Accessibility**

There are rules to ensure accessibility in public places, the outdoor environment, public transport and housing. Accessibility in the built environment is observed by a national authority and by local governments. The following measures have been promoted by the government in order to facilitate accessibility in the built environment: ensuring access to public places, improving accessibility in housing and providing financial incentives/support for adapting housing to the needs of persons with disabilities. Special transport arrangements include: a free pass in public transport, special transporting means of enterprises of Belarussian Association of the Deaf and the right to use special transporting means. Special transport is available for medical treatment, education, work and for recreational purpose. The most difficult factors, when planning to build accessible environments, are economic/budgetary factors and technical factors. There is a disability awareness component incorporated in the training of planners, architects and construction engineers.

Sign language for deaf people is recognized as the official language for deaf people. There are government measures to encourage media and other forms of public information to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities, e.g. access to all kinds of press,

news and other TV broadcasting, with interpreting for the deaf. The only service provided to facilitate information and communication between persons with disabilities and others is sign language interpretation for any purpose.

### **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

There is a national umbrella organization. There are legal provisions mandating the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy-making and to work with governmental institutions. Organizations of persons with disabilities are often consulted, when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. Consultations occur at the national and local level. The government gives financial, organizational/logistic support and provides sport and recreational buildings to the existing or new organizations of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities participate to a very limited extent in government, legislatures, judicial authorities but to a great extent in political parties and NGOs. The role of organisations of persons with disabilities is to advocate rights and improved services, mobilize persons with disabilities, identify needs and priorities, participate in the planning, implementation and evaluation of services and measures, provide services and promote/organize income generating activities.

### **Co-ordination of work**

The national co-ordinating committee is reporting to the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus. The committee includes representatives of many Ministries, of organisations of persons with disabilities, from the Charity and Health Foundation and the Red Cross Society of the Republic of Belarus. The government expects the committee to participate in policy development and to perform other tasks, such as helping in elaboration of effective measures for prevention of disability, in the developing of various forms of social and customer service for persons with disabilities, in the creation of social and economic conditions granting them equal opportunities in society, in the developing of measures for rise of employment level of persons with disabilities and in the assistance in developing of international co-operation on the problems of disabled people. The establishment of the co-ordinating committee has led to improved co-ordination of measures/programmes, improved integration of responsibility and a better dialogue in the disability field. The State policy of the Republic of Belarus towards the Deaf people was formed and developed during 65 years. Its direction lies in ensuring equalisation of opportunities and equal participation of deaf people in society, realisation of the right of education, medical and other kinds of service, vocational training and job placement.

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## **Slovak Republic**

### **Slovak Union of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Slovak Republic**

No reply was received from the Government of Slovak Republic.

## **General policy**

The officially recognized disability policy is expressed in law and in guidelines adopted by the government. The emphasis in this policy is on anti-discrimination law, prevention, accessibility measures, rehabilitation and individual support.

The government has initiated and supported information campaigns, conveying the message of full participation.

## **Legislation**

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by special legislation. The judicial mechanism available to protect the rights of persons with disabilities is due process (legal remedy through courts). The non-judicial is a governmental body (administrative). General legislation applies to persons with different disabilities with respect to: education, employment, the right to marriage, the right to parenthood/family, political rights, access to court-of-law, the right to privacy and property rights. The following benefits are guaranteed by law to persons with disabilities: health and medical care, training, rehabilitation and counselling, financial security and employment.

In 1995, the "Sign Language Deaf Law" was approved by the Slovak Parliament.

## **Accessibility**

There are rules to ensure accessibility of the built environment requiring that public places and the outdoor environment are made accessible. Accessibility in the built environment is observed by a national authority and by local governments. The following measures have been promoted by the government in order to facilitate accessibility in the built environment: levelling off pavements, marking parking areas, installing automatic doors, lifts and accessible toilets, ensuring access to public places, providing financial incentives/support for accessibility measures in housing, installing special lighting and using contrast colours for visually impaired and providing specially adapted motor vehicles. Special transport systems for persons with disabilities are available for medical treatment, education, work and recreational purpose. The most difficult obstacles when planning to build accessible environments, are economic/budgetary factors and lack of legislation and regulations. There is a disability awareness component incorporated in the training of planners, architects and construction engineers.

Sign language for deaf people is recognized as the official language of deaf people, is used as the first language in education of deaf people and is recognized as the main means of communication between deaf persons and others. There are government measures to encourage media to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities but no government measures to make other services accessible to persons with disabilities. The following services are provided in order to facilitate information and communication between persons with disabilities and others. literature in Braille/tape, news magazines on tape/Braille and sign language interpretation being available for any purpose.

## **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

There is a national umbrella organization "the Slovak Humanitarian Council", including over 100 organizations of people with disabilities. There are legal provisions mandating the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy-making and to work

with governmental institutions. Organizations of persons with disabilities are often consulted, when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. Consultations occur at the national level. The government financially supports existing or new organizations of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities participate to a very limited extent in government, legislatures and judicial authorities but to a great extent in political parties and NGOs. The role of organizations of persons with disabilities is to advocate rights and improved services, mobilize persons with disabilities, identify needs and priorities, participate in the planning, implementation and evaluation of services and measures, contribute to public awareness, provide services and promote/organize income generating activities.

### **Co-ordination of work**

The national co-ordinating committee is reporting to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. The committee includes representatives of many Ministries and of organizations of persons with disabilities. The government expects the co-ordinating committee participate in policy development but not to perform other tasks. The establishment of the co-ordinating committee has had the following effects: improved co-ordination of measures/programmes in the disability field, improved legislation, improved integration of responsibility, a better dialogue in the disability field, more accurate planning, more effective use of resources and improved promotion of public awareness.

The adoption of the Rules has led to a rethinking of the approach to disability policy.

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## Ukraine

### Ukraine Society of the Deaf, Central Board (USD CB), Ukraine

#### **General policy**

The officially recognized disability policy in Ukraine is expressed in law, in guidelines adopted by the government and in guidelines adopted by a national disability council. According to the Government, disability policy is expressed in law, in orders of the President, in statements of the Parliament and in State programmes. The emphasis in this policy is on anti-discrimination law, rehabilitation, prevention, individual support and accessibility measures.

The government has not done anything to initiate or support information campaigns conveying the message of full participation. The Government states that it has supported such information campaigns.

#### **Legislation**

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by special legislation. There is no

judicial mechanism available to protect the rights of persons with disabilities. The non-judicial mechanism for that purpose is a governmental body (administrative).

The answers pertain to the deaf only.

General legislation apply with respect to education, employment, access to court-of-law, the right to privacy and property rights. The following benefits are guaranteed by law to persons with disabilities: health and medical care, training, rehabilitation and counselling, financial security, employment, independent living and participation in decisions affecting themselves.

No new legislation concerning disability has been enacted since the adoption of the Rules.

### **Accessibility**

There are no rules to ensure accessibility of the built environment. The only measure promoted to facilitate accessibility in the built environment is the provision of specially adapted motor vehicles. However, measures to facilitate accessibility are taken only when developing special projects for disabled, including housing. Persons with disabilities have the right to use transport free of charge. The most difficult obstacles, when planning to build accessible environments, are economic/budgetary factors, lack of planning and design-capacity and lack of enforcement mechanism. There is no disability awareness component incorporated in the training of planners, architects and construction engineers.

Sign language for deaf people is not recognized as the official language of deaf people, and is not used as the first language in education of deaf people. It is, however, recognized as the main means of communication between deaf persons and others. There are government measures to encourage media to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities. There are no measures to encourage other forms of public information to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities. The following services are provided in order to facilitate information and communication between persons with disabilities and others: literature in Braille and sign language interpretation being available for any purpose.

### **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

The interests of Ukraine deaf persons and of deaf regional organizations are protected by the Ukrainian society of the Deaf, with the status of a nation-wide deaf organization. There are no legal provisions mandating the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy-making or to work with governmental institutions. Organizations of persons with disabilities are often consulted, when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. Consultations occur at the national, regional, and local level. The government financially supports existing or new organizations of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities participate to some extent in NGOs. They do not participate at all in government, legislatures, judicial authorities or political parties. The role of organisations of persons with disabilities is to advocate rights and improved services, mobilize persons with disabilities and identify needs and priorities.

### **Co-ordination of work**

The national co-ordinating committee is reporting to the Vice-Prime-Minister. The committee includes representatives of many ministries and of organizations of persons with disabilities. The co-ordinating committee is expected to participate in policy

development but not to perform other tasks. The establishment of the co-ordinating committee has led to improved co-ordination of measures/programmes.

The adoption of the Rules has led to a rethinking of the approach to disability policy.

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## **Latin America and the Caribbean**

### **Belize**

#### **National Association of the Deaf, Belize**

No reply was received from the Government of Belize.

#### **General policy**

The officially recognized disability policy is expressed in law and in policy adopted by NGOs.

The emphasis in this policy is on prevention, accessibility measures, rehabilitation, individual support and anti-discrimination law.

Since the adoption of the Rules, the government has not done anything to convey the message of full participation.

#### **Legislation**

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by a combination of special legislation and general legislation. There are no judicial mechanisms to protect the rights of persons with disabilities. Administrative and other non-judicial bodies include independent expert bodies.

General legislation applies to persons with different disabilities with respect to education, employment, political rights, access to court of law and the right to privacy. The following benefits are guaranteed by law to persons with disabilities: health and medical care, training, rehabilitation and counselling and participation in decisions affecting themselves.

No new legislation concerning disability has been enacted, since the adoption of the Rules.

#### **Accessibility**

There are no rules to ensure accessibility of the built environment. The following measures have been promoted by the government in order to facilitate accessibility in the built environment: levelling off pavements, marking parking areas, installing lifts and accessible toilets and ensuring access to public places. There are no special transport arrangements for persons with disabilities. The most difficult obstacles, when planning to build accessible environments, are economic/budgetary factors, technical factors, geographical and climatic factors, lack of legislation and regulations, lack of planning and

design-capacity, lack of knowledge, research and information, lack of user participation, lack of co-operation from other organizations/institutions and lack of enforcement mechanism. There is no disability awareness component incorporated in the training of planners, architects and construction engineers.

Sign language is recognized as the official language of deaf people, is used as the first language in education of deaf people, is recognized as the main means of communication between deaf persons and others. There are no government measures to encourage media to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities but government measures to encourage other forms of public information to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities, e.g. by way of libraries, museums, schools and churches.

### **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

There are legal provisions mandating the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy-making and to work with governmental institutions. Organizations of persons with disabilities are often consulted when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. Consultations occur at the national level. The government financially supports existing or new organizations of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities participate to a very limited extent in government, legislatures, judicial authorities and political parties but to a great extent in NGOs. The role of organizations of persons with disabilities is to advocate rights and improved services, identify needs and priorities, contribute to public awareness and provide services.

### **Co-ordination of work**

There is no national co-ordinating committee or any similar body.

The adoption of the Rules has not led to a rethinking of the approach to disability policy.

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## **Brazil**

### **National Federation of the Deaf, Brazil**

No reply was received from the Government of Brazil.

### **General policy**

The officially recognized disability policy is expressed in guidelines adopted by the national disability council and in policy adopted by NGOs. The emphasis in this policy - in descending scale - is on rehabilitation, prevention, accessibility measures, anti-discrimination law, and individual support. Since the adoption of the Rules, the government has not taken any action in order to convey the message of full participation.

### **Legislation**

General legislation applies to persons with different disabilities with respect to: education, employment, the right to marriage, the right to parenthood/family, political rights, access to court-of-law, the right to privacy and property rights. No new legislation concerning disability has been enacted, since the adoption of the Rules.

### **Accessibility**

There are rules to ensure accessibility in the built environment. The only measure which has been promoted by the government in order to ensure accessibility in the built environment is marking parking areas. The most difficult obstacles, when planning to build accessible environments, are economic/budgetary factors, lack of legislation and regulations and lack of enforcing mechanism. There is no disability awareness component incorporated in the training of planners, architects and construction engineers.

Sign language for deaf people has no officially recognized status. It is not used as the first language in education nor as the main means of communication. There are no government measures to encourage media and other forms of public information to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities. Literature in Braille is the only service provided in order to facilitate information and communication between persons with disabilities and others.

### **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

There is a national umbrella organizations. There are no legal provisions mandating the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy making or to work with governmental institutions. Disability organizations are sometimes consulted, when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. The government gives support for projects to existing or new organizations of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities participate to a very limited extent in government, legislatures, judiciary, political parties and to a great extent in NGOs. The role of organizations of persons with disabilities is to advocate rights and improved services, mobilize persons with disabilities, identify needs and priorities, participate in the planning, implementation and evaluation of services and measures concerning the lives of persons with disabilities, contribute to public awareness and promote income generating activities.

### **Co-ordination of work**

The national co-ordinating committee is reporting to the Ministry of Justice. The committee includes representatives of many Ministries. The government expects the committee to perform other tasks. The effect of the establishment of the co-ordinating committee is improved promotion of public awareness.

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## **Costa Rica**

### **WFD, Costa Rica**

No reply was received from the Government of Costa Rica.

## **General policy**

Since the adoption of the rules the government has not done anything to convey the message of full participation.

## **Legislation**

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by a combination of special legislation and general legislation. The judicial mechanism adopted to protect the rights of persons with disabilities includes due process (legal remedy through the courts) and recourse procedure by a special agency, dealing with anti-discrimination issues. Non-judicial bodies include: an Ombudsman, a governmental body (administrative) and independent expert bodies. General legislation applies to persons with different disabilities with respect to education, access to court of law and right to privacy.

## **Accessibility**

The only measure which has been promoted by the government in order to facilitate accessibility in the built environment is marking parking areas. There is no special transport for persons with disabilities. The most difficult obstacles, when planning to build accessible environments are economic/budgetary factors, geographic and climatic factors, lack of legislation and regulations, lack of planning and design capacity, lack of user participation, lack of co-operation from other organisations/institutions and lack of enforcement mechanism. There is no disability awareness component incorporated in the training of planners, architects and construction engineers.

Sign language has no officially recognized status. There are no government measures to encourage media and other forms of public information to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities. The following services are provided in order to facilitate information and communication between persons with disabilities and others: literature in Braille/tape, news magazines on tape/Braille, sign language interpretation being available for any purpose and easy readers for persons with mental disabilities.

## **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

There is no national umbrella organization. There are no legal provisions mandating the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy-making or to work with governmental institutions. Organizations of persons with disabilities are sometimes consulted, when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. The government gives financial and organizational/logistic support to organizations of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities participate to a very limited extent in government, legislatures, judicial authorities, and political parties, and to a great extent in NGOs. The role of organizations of persons with disabilities is to advocate rights and improved services, mobilize persons with disabilities and promote/organize income generating activities. Organizations do not identify needs and priorities, participate in the planning, implementation and evaluation of services and measures, contribute to public awareness or provide services.

## **Co-ordination of work**

The co-ordinating committee is reporting to the Prime Ministers office. The government expects the committee to participate in policy development and to perform other tasks. The effects the establishment of the co-ordinating committee has had are: improved co-ordination of measures/programmes, improved legislation, improved integration of responsibility, more effective use of resources and improved promotion of public awareness.

The adoption of the rules has led to a rethinking of the approach to disability policy.

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## Venezuela

### Federacion Venezolana de Sordos, Venezuela

No reply was received from the Government of Venezuela.

#### **General policy**

The officially recognized disability policy is expressed in law, and in guidelines adopted by the national disability council. The emphasis in this policy is on rehabilitation, accessibility measures, prevention, anti-discrimination law and individual support.

Since the adoption of the Rules, the government has conveyed the message of full participation through mass media.

#### **Legislation**

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by special legislation. The judicial mechanisms adopted to protect the rights of persons with disabilities include: due process (legal remedy through the courts) and the national council for the integration of persons with disabilities. There are no administrative bodies for that purpose.

The following benefits are guaranteed by law to persons with disabilities: health and medical care, training, rehabilitation and counselling, employment and participation in decisions affecting themselves.

No new legislation concerning disability has been enacted, since the adoption of the Rules.

#### **Accessibility**

The following measures have been promoted by the government in order to facilitate accessibility in the built environment: levelling off pavements, marking parking areas, installing automatic doors. There are no special transport arrangements for persons with disabilities. The most difficult obstacles, when planning to build accessible environments, are attitudinal factors, economic/budgetary factors, and lack of enforcement mechanism. There is no disability awareness component incorporated in the training of planners, architects and construction engineers.

Sign language is recognized as the main means of communication between deaf persons and others. There are no government measures to encourage media and other forms of public information to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities. The following services are provided in order to facilitate information and communication between persons with disabilities and others: literature in Braille/tape and sign language interpretation for any purpose.

### **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

There is a national umbrella organization. There are no legal provisions mandating the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy-making or to work with governmental institutions. Organizations of persons with disabilities are sometimes consulted, when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. Consultations occur at the national level. The government gives financial support to organizations of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities participate to a very limited extent in judicial authorities, political parties and NGOs. The role of organisations of persons with disabilities is to advocate rights and improve services, identify needs and priorities, participate in the planning, implementation and evaluation of services and measures, contribute to public awareness, provide services and to promote/organize income generating activities.

### **Co-ordination of work**

The co-ordinating committee is reporting to the Ministry of Family. It includes representatives of the Ministries of Health and Social Affairs, of Employment, of Education, as well as from organizations of persons with disabilities, other NGOs, from the private sector, and from the Confederation of Workers of Venezuela. The government expects the committee to participate in policy development and to perform other tasks, e.g. to create a register and to co-operate with similar organizations at the national and international level. It is too early for an assessment of the effects of the co-ordinating committee.

The adoption of the Rules has led to a rethinking of the approach to disability policy.

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## **Sub-Saharan Africa**

### **Benin**

#### **Association Nationale des Sourds du Benin, Benin**

No reply was received from the Government of Benin.

#### **General policy**

There is no officially recognized disability policy. Since the adoption of the Rules the government has not done anything to convey the message of full participation.

## **Legislation**

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by general legislation. No new legislation concerning disability has been enacted, since the adoption of the Rules.

## **Accessibility**

There are no rules to ensure accessibility of the built environment. There are no special transport arrangements for persons with disabilities. The most difficult obstacles, when planning to build accessible environments, are economic/budgetary factors, technical factors, lack of legislation and regulations, lack of planning and design capacity and lack of knowledge, research and information. There is no disability awareness component incorporated in the training of planners, architects and construction engineers.

Sign language is recognized as the official language of deaf people, is used as the first language in education of deaf people and is recognized as the main means of communication between deaf persons and others. There are no government measures to encourage media and other forms of public information to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities. None of the following measures are provided in order to facilitate information and communication between persons with disabilities and others: literature in Braille/tape, news magazines on tape/Braille, sign language interpretation or easy readers for persons with mental disabilities.

## **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

There is a national umbrella organization. There are no legal provisions mandating the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy-making or to work with governmental institutions. Organizations of persons with disabilities are sometimes consulted, when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. Consultations occur at the national level. No support is given by the government to existing or new organizations of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities participate to a very limited extent in government, legislatures, judicial authorities, political parties and NGOs. The role of organizations of persons with disabilities is to advocate rights and improved services, mobilize persons with disabilities, identify needs and priorities, contribute to public awareness and to promote/organize income generating activities.

## **Co-ordination of work**

There is no national co-ordinating committee or any similar body.

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# Burkina Faso

## Association Nationale des Deficients Auditif du Burkina

## Faso, Burkina Faso

No reply was received from the Government of Burkina Faso.

### **General policy**

There is no officially recognized disability policy.

Since the adoption of the Rules, the government has conveyed the message of full participation through national seminars on rehabilitation.

### **Legislation**

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by general legislation. There is no judicial mechanism to protect the rights of persons with disabilities. Non-judicial bodies include a special arbitration/conciliation body.

General legislation applies to persons with different disabilities with respect to education, employment, the right to marriage, the right to parenthood/family, political rights, access to court of law, the right to privacy and property rights. The following services are guaranteed by law to persons with disabilities: health and medical care, training, rehabilitation and counselling, employment, independent living and participation in decisions affecting themselves.

No new legislation concerning disability has been enacted, since the adoption of the Rules.

### **Accessibility**

There are no rules to ensure accessibility in the built environment. There are no special transport arrangements for persons with disabilities. The most difficult obstacles, when planning to build accessible environments, are economic/budgetary factors and lack of legislation and regulations. There is no disability awareness component incorporated in the training of planners, architects and construction engineers.

Sign language is used as the first language in education of deaf people and is used as the main means of communication between deaf persons and others. There are government measures to encourage media to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities but no measures to make other forms of public information services accessible to persons with disabilities. The following services are provided in order to facilitate information and communication between persons with disabilities and others: literature in Braille/tape and sign language interpretation being available for major events.

### **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

There is a national umbrella organization. There are no legal provisions mandating the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy-making or to work with governmental institutions. Organizations of persons with disabilities are often consulted, when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. Consultations occur at both the national, regional and local level. The government gives organizational/logistic support to organizations of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities participate to a very limited extent in government, legislatures, and judicial authorities but to a great extent in political parties and NGOs. The role of organizations of persons with disabilities

is to advocate rights and improved services, mobilize persons with disabilities, identify needs and priorities, participate in the planning, implementation and evaluation of services and measures concerning the lives of persons with disabilities, contribute to public awareness, provide services, and to promote/organize income generating activities.

### **Co-ordination of work**

There is no national co-ordinating committee or any similar body.

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## **Gambia**

### **The Gambia Association of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Gambia**

No reply was received from the Government of Gambia. The views of "The Gambia Association of the Visually Impaired" and "The Gambia Association of the Physically Disabled" have also been included.

### **General policy**

The officially recognized disability policy is expressed in guidelines adopted by a national disability council, and in policy adopted by NGOs. The emphasis in this policy is on rehabilitation and prevention.

Since the adoption of the Rules, the government has not done anything to convey the message of full participation.

### **Legislation**

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by general legislation. There is no judicial mechanism to protect the rights of persons with disabilities. The non-judicial body for that purpose is a governmental body (administrative).

General legislation applies to persons with different disabilities with respect to education, employment, the right to marriage, the right to parenthood/family, political rights, access to court of law, the right to privacy and property rights. No benefits are guaranteed by law to persons with disabilities.

No new legislation concerning disability has been enacted, since the adoption of the Rules.

### **Accessibility**

There are no rules to ensure accessibility of the built environment. No responsible body exists to observe accessibility in the built environment. No measures have been promoted by the government in order to facilitate accessibility in the built environment. Special

transport arrangements for persons with disabilities include a limited amount of free public bus tickets, lasting for 3 months and being distributed to persons with disabilities in the urban areas. The distribution takes place every 3 months on "first come first have"-basis. Special transport is available for medical treatment, education, work and for recreational purpose. The most difficult obstacles, when planning to build accessible environments are attitudinal factors, economic/budgetary factors, technical factors, lack of legislation and regulations, lack of planning and design capacity, lack of knowledge, research and information, lack of user participation and lack of enforcement mechanism. There is no disability awareness component incorporated in the training of planners, architects and construction engineers.

Sign language has no officially recognized status, is not used as the first language in education of deaf people and is not recognized as the main means of communication between deaf persons and others. There are no government measures to encourage media and other forms of public information to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities. No services are provided in order to facilitate information or communication between persons with disabilities and others.

### **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

There is a national umbrella organization. There are no legal provisions mandating the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy-making or to work with governmental institutions. Organizations are never consulted, when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. The government gives financial support (about 600 USD per year to each organization) to organizations of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities participate to a very limited extent in government, legislatures, judicial authorities, political parties and NGOs. The role of organizations of persons with disabilities is to advocate rights and improved services, mobilize persons with disabilities, identify needs and priorities, contribute to public awareness, provide services and promote/organize income generating activities.

### **Co-ordination of work**

The co-ordinating committee is reporting to the Ministry of Health and Welfare. It includes representatives from the Ministry of Health and Welfare, from organizations of persons with disabilities and from other NGOs. The government does not expect the co-ordinating committee to participate in policy development but to perform other tasks, e.g. to deal with disability issues. The establishment of the committee has had the following effects: improved integration of responsibility, a better dialogue in the disability field and improved promotion of public awareness.

The adoption of the Rules has led to a rethinking of the approach to disability policy.

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## Ivory Coast

Association Nationale des Sourds de Cote d'Ivoire, Ivory

## Coast

No reply was received from the Government of the Ivory Coast.

### **General policy**

The officially recognized disability policy is expressed in guidelines adopted by the government, and in policy adopted by NGOs. The emphasis in this policy is on individual support, rehabilitation, prevention, accessibility measures, and anti-discrimination law.

Since the adoption of the Rules, the government, by way of a project concerning legislation for persons with disabilities, has conveyed the message of full participation.

### **Legislation**

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by general legislation. The judicial mechanism adopted to protect the rights of persons with disabilities is due process, the non-judicial being a governmental body.

General legislation applies to persons with different disabilities with respect to education and property rights. The only benefit guaranteed by law to persons with disabilities is health and medical care.

### **Accessibility**

There are no rules to ensure accessibility of the built environment. Accessibility in the built environment is observed by a national authority. Special transport arrangements include subsidized public transport. Special transport is available for education. The most difficult obstacles, when planning to build accessible environments, are attitudinal factors, economic/budgetary factors, lack of legislation and regulations and lack of user participation.

Sign language has no officially recognized status nor is it recognized as the main means of communication between deaf persons and others, but is used as the first language in the education of deaf people. There are no government measures to encourage media and other forms of public information to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities.

### **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

There is a national umbrella organization. There are legal provisions mandating the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy-making and to work with governmental institutions. Organizations of persons with disabilities are sometimes consulted, when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. Consultations occur at the national level. The government gives organizational/logistic support to organizations of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities participate to a very limited extent in government, legislatures, judicial authorities, political parties but to some extent in NGOs. The role of organizations of persons with disabilities is to advocate rights and improved services, mobilize persons with disabilities and contribute to public awareness.

## **Co-ordination of work**

The national co-ordinating committee is reporting to the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs. It includes representatives of the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs and of organizations of persons with disabilities. The government expects the committee to participate in policy development. It is too early for an assessment concerning the effects of the establishment of the co-ordinating committee.

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# Kenya

## **Kenya National Association of the Deaf, Kenya**

No reply was received from the Government of Kenya.

### **General policy**

The officially recognized disability policy is expressed in law, and in guidelines adopted by the national disability council. The emphasis in this policy is on prevention, rehabilitation, accessibility measures, anti-discrimination law and individual support.

Since the adoption of the Rules the government has appointed a special committee to review the law related to disability. The committee is composed by able-bodied and disabled experts, leaders and advocates in the disability movement.

### **Legislation**

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by general legislation. The judicial mechanisms adopted to protect the rights of persons with disabilities include due process (legal remedy through the courts) and recourse procedure by a special agency, dealing with anti-discrimination issues. The non-judicial bodies include: a governmental body (administrative) and independent expert bodies.

General legislation applies to persons with different disabilities with respect to education, employment( not fully implemented, discrimination still exists), the right to marriage, the right to parenthood/family, access to court of law and the right to privacy. As regards political rights, disabled have a voting right but are excluded from holding elected posts. The following benefits are guaranteed by law to persons with disabilities: training, rehabilitation and counselling and employment (partially).

### **Accessibility**

No responsible body exists to observe accessibility in the built environment. The following measures have been promoted by the government in order to facilitate accessibility in the built environment: levelling off pavements, installing lifts and accessible toilets and ensuring access to public places. There are no special transport arrangements for persons with disabilities. The most difficult obstacles, when planning to build accessible environments, are attitudinal factors, economic/budgetary factors,

technical factors, lack of legislation and regulations, lack of planning and design capacity, lack of knowledge, research and information, lack of user participation, lack of co-operation from other organizations/institutions and lack of enforcement mechanism. There is no disability awareness component incorporated in the training of planners, architects and construction engineers.

Sign language has no officially recognized status, is not used as the first language in education of deaf people and is not recognised as the main means of communication between deaf persons and others. There are no government measures to encourage media and other forms of public information to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities.

### **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

There is a national umbrella organization. There are legal provisions mandating the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy-making and to work with governmental institutions. Organizations of persons with disabilities are sometimes consulted, when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. Consultations occur at the national level. The government gives financial and organizational/logistic support to organisations of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities participate to a very limited extent in government, legislatures, judicial authorities, political parties and NGOs. The role of organizations of persons with disabilities is to advocate rights and improved services, mobilize persons with disabilities, identify needs and priorities, contribute to public awareness, provide services and promote/organize income generating activities.

### **Co-ordination of work**

There is no national co-ordinating committee or any similar body.

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## **South Africa**

### **Deaf Federation of South Africa (DEAFSA), South Africa**

#### **General policy**

The officially recognized disability policy in South Africa is expressed in guidelines adopted by the government, in guidelines adopted by the National Disability Council and in policy adopted by NGOs. At the same time there is no officially recognized disability policy according to the DEAFSA. The emphasis in this national policy - in descending scale - is on anti-discrimination law, accessibility measures, rehabilitation, individual support and prevention.

Since the adoption of the Standard Rules the government has done the following in order to convey the message of full participation: introduced a disability representative in the Parliament, created a national Co-ordinating Committee on Disability and developed a

national integrated disability strategy (in the office of the President). According to the Government, no campaign was initiated in order to convey the message of full participation.

## **Legislation**

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by general legislation. According to the Government, there is no legislation at the present to protect the rights of persons with disabilities. The Government, however, is investigating a comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation. The judicial mechanism available to protect the right of persons with disabilities is due process (legal remedy through courts). Administrative and other non-judicial bodies do not exist.

General legislation applies to persons with different disabilities with respect to: education, employment, the right to marriage, the right to parenthood/family, political rights, access to court-of-law, the right to privacy and property rights. The following benefits are guaranteed by law to persons with disabilities: health and medical care, training, rehabilitation and counselling, financial security, employment, independent living and participation in decisions affecting themselves. According to the Government, few benefits are guaranteed in South Africa by law. There is medical care in the towns and in the big cities. Most rural areas have poor or no facilities. Income is guaranteed by means of a disability grant, subject to means test.

New legislation concerning disability has been enacted, since the adoption of the Standard Rules. According to the Government, no new legislation concerning disability has been enacted, since the adoption of the Rules.

## **Accessibility**

There are no laws and regulations - not for deaf people - to ensure accessibility of the built environment. According to the Government, there are laws and regulations to ensure accessibility of the built environment requiring that public places, the outdoor environment, and means of public transportation are made accessible. No responsible body exists to ensure accessibility in the built environment. No special measures for deaf people have been promoted by the government to ensure accessibility in the built environment. There are no special transport arrangements for persons with disabilities. The most difficult obstacles, when planning to build accessible environments, are attitudinal factors, lack of legislation and regulations, lack of planning and design-capacity, lack of knowledge, research and information, lack of user participation, lack of co-operation from other organizations/institutions and lack of enforcement mechanism. There is no disability awareness component incorporated in the training of planners, architects and construction engineers.

Sign language for deaf people has no officially recognized status, is not used as the official language of deaf people and is not recognized as the main means of communication between deaf persons and others. There are no government measures to encourage media and other forms of public information to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities. The Federation states that no services are provided in order to facilitate information and communication between persons with disabilities and others. According to the Government, the following services are provided in order to facilitate such information and communication: literature in Braille/tape, news magazines on tape/Braille and sign language interpretation being available for major events.

## **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

There is a national umbrella organization. Virtually all the different organizations of persons with disabilities are represented. There are no legal provisions mandating the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy-making or to work with governmental institutions. Disability organizations are sometimes consulted, when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. Whenever there are consultations, they take place at the national level. The support given by the government to existing and new organizations of persons with disabilities, is subsidies for social workers and grants for the national co-ordinating committee on disability. Persons with disabilities participate to a very limited extent in government, legislatures, judiciary system, political parties and to a great extent in NGOs. The role of disabled persons organizations is to advocate rights and improved services, mobilize persons with disabilities, identify needs and priorities, participate in the planning, implementation and evaluation of services and measures concerning the lives of persons with disabilities, contribute to public awareness, provide services and to promote/organize income generating activities.

## **Co-ordination of work**

The national co-ordinating committee is reporting to various state departments. The co-ordinating committee include representatives of the Ministries of Health and Social Affairs, of Employment, of Transport and of Education, from organizations of persons with disabilities, from other NGOs, from the private sector and of relevant professionals. The government expects the co-ordinating committee to participate in policy development and to perform other tasks. According to the Government, the co-ordinating committee is not expected to perform other tasks. It is too early for an assessment concerning the effects of the establishment of the co-ordinating committee. According to the Government, the establishment of the co-ordinating committee has had the following effects: improved co-ordination of measures/programmes in the disability field, improved integration of responsibility, a better dialogue in the disability field, more accurate planning and improved promotion of public awareness.

The Federation states that the adoption of the Standard Rules has led to a rethinking of the approach to disability policy.

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# Swaziland

## Swaziland National Association of the Deaf, Swaziland

No reply was received from the Government of Swaziland.

## **General policy**

There is no officially recognized policy.

Since the adoption of the Rules, the government has not done anything to convey the message of full participation.

## **Legislation**

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by special legislation and general legislation. The judicial mechanism to protect the rights of persons with disabilities is due process (legal remedy through the courts), the non-judicial being constituted of independent expert bodies.

The following benefits are guaranteed by law to persons with disabilities: health and medical care, training, rehabilitation and counselling.

No new legislation concerning disability has been enacted, since the adoption of the Rules.

## **Accessibility**

There are no rules to ensure accessibility of the built environment. No responsible body exists to observe accessibility in the built environment. There are no special transport arrangements for persons with disabilities. The most difficult obstacles, when planning to build accessible environments, are lack of planning and design capacity, lack of knowledge, research and information and lack of co-operation from other organisations/institutions. There is no disability awareness component incorporated in the training of planners, architects and construction engineers.

Sign language has no officially recognized status, is not used as the first language in education of deaf people and is not recognized as the main means of communication between deaf persons and others. There are government measures to encourage media to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities but no government measures to encourage other forms of public information to make their services accessible. None of the following services are provided in order to facilitate information and communication between persons with disabilities and others: literature in Braille/tape, news magazines on tape/Braille, sign language interpretation or easy readers for persons with mental disabilities.

## **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

There is a national umbrella organization. There are no legal provisions mandating the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy making or to work with governmental institutions. Organizations of persons with disabilities are never consulted, when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. Persons with disabilities participate to a very limited extent in political parties and NGOs. The role of organizations of persons with disabilities is to advocate rights and improved services, identify needs and priorities and promote/organize income generating activities.

The Standard Rules are a milestone for changes according to the organization.

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# Togo

# Association des Sourds du Togo, Togo

No reply was received from the Government of Togo.

## **General policy**

The officially recognized disability policy is expressed in guidelines adopted by the government. The emphasis in this policy is on rehabilitation, prevention, accessibility measures, individual support, and anti-discrimination law. Since the adoption of the Rules, the government has not done anything to convey the message of full participation.

## **Legislation**

The following benefits are guaranteed by law to persons with disabilities: training, rehabilitation and counselling, and employment. No new legislation concerning disability has been enacted, since the adoption of the Rules.

## **Accessibility**

There are no rules to ensure accessibility of the built environment. No responsible body exists to observe accessibility in the built environment. The only measure, which has been promoted by the government in order to facilitate accessibility in the built environment, is the ensuring of access to public places. There are no special transport arrangements for persons with disabilities. The most difficult obstacles when planning to build accessible environments, are attitudinal factors, economic/budgetary factors, technical factors, lack of legislation and regulations, lack of knowledge, research and information, lack of user participation and lack of co-operation from other organisations/institutions. There is no disability awareness component incorporated in the training of planners, architects and construction engineers.

Sign language is recognized as the official language of deaf people. There are government measures to encourage media and other forms of public information to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities. The only measure provided in order to facilitate information and communication between persons with disabilities and others is sign language interpretation for major events.

## **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

There is a national umbrella organization. There are no legal provisions mandating the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy-making or to work with governmental institutions. Organizations of persons with disabilities are sometimes consulted, when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. Consultations occur at the regional level. No support is given by the government to existing or new organizations of persons with disabilities. The role of organizations of persons with disabilities is to advocate rights and improved services, mobilize persons with disabilities and contribute to public awareness.

## **Co-ordination of work**

The co-ordinating committee is reporting to the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs. The committee includes representatives of the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs and of

organizations of persons with disabilities. The government expects the committee to participate in policy development. The establishment of the committee has had the following effects: improved co-ordination of measures/programmes and improved promotion of public awareness.

The adoption of the Rules has led to a rethinking of the approach to disability policy.

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## Zaire

### Association Nationale des Sourds du Zaire, Zaire

No reply was received from the Government of Zaire.

#### **General policy**

The officially recognized disability policy is expressed in guidelines, adopted by the national disability council.

Since the adoption of the Rules, the government has not done anything to convey the message of full participation.

#### **Legislation**

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by special legislation.

General legislation applies to persons with different disabilities with respect to education. The following benefits are guaranteed by law to persons with disabilities: health and medical care, training, rehabilitation and counselling.

No new legislation concerning disability has been enacted, since the adoption of the Rules.

#### **Accessibility**

There are rules to ensure accessibility of the built environment which establish national design standards requiring that public places, the outdoor environment, means of public transportation, and housing are made accessible. Accessibility in the built environment is observed by a national authority. The only measure, which has been promoted by the government in order to facilitate accessibility in the built environment, is the access to public places. There are special transport arrangements for persons with disabilities. Special transport is available for medical treatment, education and work but not for recreational purpose. The most difficult obstacles, when planning to build accessible environments are economic/budgetary factors, lack of planning and design capacity. There is no disability awareness component incorporated in the training of planners, architects and construction engineers.

There are no government measures to encourage media and other forms of public information services to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities. The

following services are provided in order to facilitate information and communication between persons with disabilities and others: literature in Braille/tape and sign language interpretation being available for any purpose.

### **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

There is a national umbrella organization. There are no legal provisions mandating the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy making or to work with governmental institutions. Organizations of persons with disabilities are sometimes consulted, when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. Consultations occur at the national level. The government gives financial support to organizations of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities participate to a very limited extent in political parties and NGOs. The role of organizations of persons with disabilities is to advocate rights and improved services, mobilize persons with disabilities, participate in the planning, implementation and evaluation of services and measures, contribute to public awareness, provide services and promote/organize income generating activities.

### **Co-ordination of work**

The co-ordinating committee is reporting to the Ministry of Social Affairs. The committee includes representatives of the Ministry of Social Affairs and of organizations of persons with disabilities. The establishment of the committee has led to better dialogue in the disability field. Its establishment has not led to improved co-ordination of measures/programmes, improved legislation, improved integration of responsibility, more accurate planning, more effective use of resources or to improved promotion of public awareness.

The adoption of the Rules has led to a rethinking of the approach to disability policy.

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## Zimbabwe

### **Association of the Deaf, Zimbabwe**

No reply was received from the Government of Zimbabwe.

### **General policy**

The officially recognized disability policy is expressed in guidelines adopted by a national disability council. The emphasis in this policy - in descending scale - is on accessibility measures, anti-discrimination law, rehabilitation, prevention and individual support. Since the adoption of the Rules, the government has not done anything to convey the message of full participation.

### **Legislation**

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by special legislation. The judicial mechanism adopted to protect the rights of persons with disabilities is due process (legal remedy through the courts). There is no non-judicial mechanism. No benefits are guaranteed by law to persons with disabilities. No new legislation concerning disability has been enacted, since the adoption of the Rules.

### **Accessibility**

There are no rules to ensure accessibility of the built environment. No responsible body exists to ensure accessibility in the built environment. The following measures have been promoted to ensure accessibility in the built environment: levelling off pavements, marking parking areas and improving accessibility in housing. There is no special transport for persons with disabilities. The most difficult obstacles, when building accessible environments, are attitudinal factors and lack of enforcement mechanism. There is a disability awareness component incorporated in the training of planners, architects and construction engineers. Sign language has no officially recognized status, is not used as the first language in education of deaf people and is not recognized as the main means of communication between deaf persons and others. There are government measures to encourage media to make their services accessible to persons with disabilities but no measures to encourage other forms of public information to make their services accessible. No services are provided in order to facilitate information or communication between persons with disabilities and others.

### **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

There is a national umbrella organization in which the organizations of the physically disabled, the blind and the deaf, and those with Down's syndrome are represented. There are no legal provisions mandating the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy making or to work with governmental institutions. Organizations of persons with disabilities are sometimes consulted, when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. Consultations occur at the local level. The government gives financial support to organizations of persons with disabilities (about 5% of the total budget of disabled persons organizations). Persons with disabilities participate to a very limited extent in government and political parties but to a great extent in NGOs. The role of organizations of persons with disabilities is to advocate rights and improved services, mobilize persons with disabilities, identify needs and priorities, contribute to public awareness, provide services and promote/organize income generating activities.

### **Co-ordination of work**

There is no national co-ordinating committee or any similar body.

The adoption of the Rules has led to a rethinking of the approach to disability policy.

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## **South, East Asia and the Pacific**

### **Macau**

## Macau Deaf Association, Macau

No reply was received from the Government of Macau.

### **General policy**

There is no officially recognized disability policy. Since the adoption of the Rules, the government has not done anything to convey the message of full participation.

### **Legislation**

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by general legislation. General legislation applies to persons with different disabilities with respect to education, employment, political rights and the right to privacy. No new legislation concerning disability has been enacted, since the adoption of the Rules.

### **Accessibility**

There are rules to ensure accessibility of the outdoor environment. Accessibility in the built environment is observed by the organizers/providers of services. The following measures have been promoted by the government to ensure accessibility in the built environment: levelling off pavements, marking parking areas, installing lifts and accessible toilets and providing specially adapted motor vehicles. There are no special transport arrangements for persons with disabilities. The most difficult obstacles, when planning to build accessible environments, are economic/budgetary factors, lack of legislation and regulations, lack of planning and design capacity, lack of knowledge, research and information, lack of co-operation from other organizations/institutions and lack of enforcement mechanism. There is no disability awareness component incorporated in the training of planners, architects and construction engineers.

Sign language has no officially recognized status. There are government measures to encourage media to make their services accessible for persons with disabilities, but no measures to encourage other forms of public information to make their services accessible. The only service provided in order to facilitate information and communication between persons with disabilities and others is sign language interpretation for major events.

### **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

There is no national umbrella organization. There are no legal provisions mandating the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy-making or to work with governmental institutions. Disability organizations are never consulted when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. The government gives financial support to existing or new organizations of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities participate to a very limited extent in government, legislatures, judicial authorities, political parties and NGOs. The role of organizations of persons with disabilities is to identify needs and priorities, contribute to public awareness and provide services.

## **Co-ordination of work**

There is no national co-ordinating committee.

The adoption of the Rules has led to a rethinking of the approach to disability policy.

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# Malaysia

## **Organization of the Deaf, Malaysia**

No reply was received from the Government of Malaysia.

### **General policy**

The officially recognized disability policy in Malaysia is expressed: in guidelines adopted by the government, in guidelines adopted by the national disability council and in policy adopted by NGOs. The strongest emphasis in this policy - in descending scale - is on rehabilitation, prevention, individual support and accessibility measures.

According to the Organization of the Deaf, the government has not done anything to initiate or support information campaigns, conveying the message of full participation.

### **Legislation**

The rights of persons with disabilities are protected by general legislation. The only mechanism available to protect the rights of persons with disabilities is due process (legal remedy through courts). There are no administrative or other non-judicial bodies for that purpose.

General legislation applies to persons with different disabilities with respect to: education, employment, the right to marriage, the right to parenthood/family and political rights. In their capacity as citizens, persons with disabilities are given the same rights as non-disabled citizens.

No new legislation concerning disability has been enacted, since the adoption of the Standard Rules.

### **Accessibility**

There are laws and regulations to ensure accessibility of the built environment requiring that public places, the outdoor environment, land, sea and air transportation are made accessible. Accessibility in the built environment is observed by local governments. The following measures have been promoted by the government to facilitate accessibility in the built environment: levelling off pavements, installing lifts and accessible toilets and ensuring access to public places. There are special transport arrangements for persons with disabilities - however not specified what they include - available for medical treatment, education and recreational purpose. Special transport is not available for work.

The most difficult obstacles, when planning to build accessible environments, are attitudinal factors, economic/budgetary factors, lack of legislation and regulations, lack of knowledge, research and information, lack of co-operation from other organizations/institutions and lack of enforcement mechanism. There is a disability awareness component incorporated in the training of planners, architects and construction engineers.

Sign language for deaf people has no officially recognized status, is not used as the first language in education of deaf people, or recognized as the main means of communication between deaf persons and others. There are government measures to encourage media and other forms of public information to make their services accessible for persons with disabilities. The following services are provided in order to facilitate information and communication between persons with disabilities and other persons: literature in Braille/tape and sign language interpretation being available for any purpose.

### **Organizations of persons with disabilities**

There is a national umbrella organization. There are no legal provisions mandating the representatives of persons with disabilities to participate in policy-making or to work with governmental institutions. Disability organizations are sometimes consulted, when laws and regulations with a disability aspect are being prepared. Whenever consultations, they take place at the national level. The government gives financial and organizational/logistic support to existing or new organizations of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities participate to a very limited extent in legislatures, judiciary, political parties, to some extent in government and to a great extent in NGOs. The role of organizations of persons with disabilities is to advocate rights and improved services, mobilize persons with disabilities, identify needs and priorities, participate in the planning, implementation and evaluation of services and measures, contribute to public awareness, provide services and promote/organize income generating activities.

### **Co-ordination of work**

There is a national co-ordinating committee reporting to the Ministry of National Unity and Social Development. The committee includes representatives of the Ministries of Finance, of Employment and of Education, and from organizations of persons with disabilities, from other NGOs and from the private sector. The government expects the co-ordinating committee to participate in policy development and to perform other tasks, for example the establishment of NGO training institutes. The establishment of the co-ordinating committee has had the following effects: improved co-ordination of measures/programmes, improved integration of responsibility, a better dialogue in the disability field, more accurate planning, more effective use of resources and improved promotion of public awareness.

The Organization of the Deaf cannot with certainty tell, whether the establishment of the Standard Rules has lead to a rethinking of the approach to disability policy.

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