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## **An Comhchoiste um na Nithe a Bhaineann le Míchumas**

An Comhchoiste um Nithe a Bhaineann le  
Míchumas: an Clár Oibre, 2023

Aibreán 2023

## **Joint Committee on Disability Matters**

Joint Committee on Disability Matters  
Work Programme 2023

April 2023



## Membership



**Holly Cairns**TD -  
SD



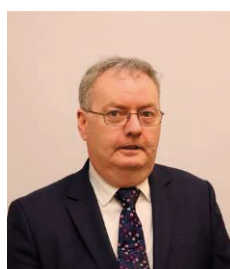
**Seán Canney** TD -  
IND



**Emer Higgins**TD -  
FG



**Neasa Hourigan** TD -  
GP



**Michael Moynihan**  
TD (Chair) - FF



**Jennifer Murnane**  
O'Connor TD - FF



**John Paul**  
Phelan TD - FG



**Pauline Tully** TD  
(Vice-Chair) - SF



**Dessie Ellis** TD -SF



**Senator Eileen**  
Flynn - IND



**Senator Erin**  
McGreehan - FF



**Senator Fiona**  
O'Loughlin - FF



**Senator Mary Seery**  
Kearney - FG

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## Introduction

The Joint Committee on Disability Matters was established following Orders of Dáil Éireann and of Seanad Éireann on 22 September 2020 and 25 September 2020 respectively. Standing Orders 100(4) (Dáil Éireann) and 77(4) (Seanad Éireann) require that “as soon as may be following its appointment and thereafter at annual intervals, each Select Committee shall prepare a work programme and shall lay such programme before Dáil/Seanad Éireann”.

## Remit of the Joint Committee on Disability Matters

In accordance with its Terms of Reference, the Joint Committee considered and made recommendations on its remit and reported on this in December 2020. The Joint Committee considered revised Terms of Reference and these revised Terms of Reference were agreed by Dáil Éireann on the 21 April 2021 and Seanad Éireann on the 24 May 2021 ([Appendix 1](#)).

## Public consultation

The Committee’s public consultation regarding the lived experience of people with disabilities on the issues that affect them and their families and/or carers informed the Terms of Reference and Work Programme. This aligns with Article 4 (3) of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) which specifically requires the consultation and active involvement of people with disabilities and their representative organisations in decision-making processes concerning issues relating to them.

## Key policy priorities

The Joint Committee shall aim for consensus, based on the human rights model of disability as outlined under the UNCRPD, on policy directions in respect of the following issues affecting people with disabilities as directed by its Terms of Reference.

The UNCRPD is a benchmark for the inclusion and participation of people with disabilities in society and as part of the Committees role in monitoring the Convention, the Committee has developed its Work Programme in line with emerging themes from the UNCRPD ([Appendix 2](#)).

The Joint Committee is also empowered to consider other policy issues, within its Terms of Reference over the period.

The Committee may hold public meetings under its Work Programme to monitor progress of the drafting and initiation of required and relevant legislation needed to implement the UNCRPD, as set out in the Terms of Reference.

### **General provisions and implementation of the UNCRPD**

- Monitoring the UNCRPD Implementation Plan including across Government departments, local government, and their interlinkages
- Examining the National Disability Inclusion Strategy actions
- Consideration of the need for a standard definition of disability
- EU funding reflecting the national ambition for the delivery of the UNCRPD
- Ratification of the Optional Protocol to the UNCRPD
- International Best Practice with input from the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Disability and the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals
- Examining systems to collect disaggregated data on disability
- Climate action and impact on the rights of people with disabilities

### **Equality and non-discrimination**

- Intersection of UNCRPD with Public Duty on Equality and Human Rights
- Achieving Equal Rights and Equity for Women with Disabilities
- Discrimination against people with disabilities across all groups of disabilities



## Accessibility

- Examining barriers for people with disabilities accessing housing, transport, and the built environment
- Consideration of the lack of personal transport schemes
- Accessibility of information and communications
- Universal Design Principles in housing, transport, and the built environment
- Disability and equality proofing
- Considering the role of local authorities in supporting people with disabilities in their communities
- Consideration of the impact of the lack of Changing Places Toilet Facilities

## Independent and adequate standard of living and social protection

- Independent living and community inclusion and examining pathways to move to an independent living framework
- Personal Assistant Service
- Cost of disability and tackling consistent poverty
- Examination of the barriers to social housing for those with intellectual disability
- Institutionalism and the inappropriate use of Congregated Settings

## Employment

- Increasing employment participation rates including Reasonable Accommodation measures
- Remote working for people with disabilities

## Education

- Consideration of how special education policy aligns with the UNCRPD
- Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act
- Transition pathways between education and employment

## Health and life

- Assessing service transformation and future service innovation
- Consideration of emerging disabilities
- Invisible Disability and the unmet needs
- Progressing Disability Services model
- Unsustainability of the provision of long-term informal care by elderly parents and carers
- Access to diagnosis and waiting times for children with disabilities
- Mental health and disability
- Examining the experience of parents with disabilities and those seeking equal access to reproductive healthcare

## Freedom from exploitation, violence, and abuse

- Safeguarding Persons at Risk of Abuse and exploitation of people with disability
- Sexual and gender-based violence against disabled women; causative and protective factors

## Autonomy and integrity

- Independent decision making and the right to have a choice
- Commencement of the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) (Amendment) Act, 2022 and the establishment of the Decision Support Service

## Participation in political, cultural, community and public life

- Accessibility and inclusivity in political life
- Participation in cultural, community and public life
- Representation of people with disability in decision making
- Supporting the participation of Disabled Persons' Organisations



## Awareness-raising

- Raising awareness
- Celebrating United Nations International Day of Persons with Disabilities and International Women's Day

## Access to justice

- Access to justice for people with disabilities in the Irish Criminal and Civil Justice System
- Accessibility and supports within the Irish Penal system

## Agreement of Work Programme

The Committee agreed to review its Work Programme on a regular basis. The inclusion of items in this Work Programme does not necessarily mean that a topic will be considered by the Committee within the timeline set out. Similarly, non-inclusion of a topic does not preclude the Committee from considering such areas.

This Work Programme for 2023 of the Joint Committee on Disability Matters was agreed by the Joint Committee at its meeting on 15 February 2023. In accordance with Standing Orders of Dáil Éireann and Seanad Éireann, it was agreed that the Work Programme be laid before both Houses of the Oireachtas. It was also agreed that the Work Programme would be published to the Committee's page on the Oireachtas website.



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Michael Moynihan, T.D.

Cathaoirleach

February 2023

## Appendix

### Appendix 1 Terms of Reference of the Joint Committee

#### Orders of Reference - Dáil Éireann

(1) That a Select Committee consisting of 9 Members be appointed by Dáil Éireann to form the Joint Committee on Disability Matters to consider all disability matters including monitoring the implementation (by Ireland) of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.

(2) That the Select Committee on Disability Matters shall consider and report on-

(a) the 'Implementation Plan' for the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and national strategies including the National Disability Inclusion Strategy and sector strategies for the purpose of-

- (i) ensuring implementation plans are configured to advance the UNCRPD while delivering outcomes for persons with disabilities in their lived experience and planning into the future;
- (ii) making recommendations which align the plans and strategies of Ireland's international obligations;
- (iii) monitoring progress of the drafting and initiation of required and relevant legislation;
- (iv) engaging with Ministers and the Secretaries General of relevant Government departments regarding implementation measures and budgetary measures;
- (v) aligning the UN Sustainable Development Goals with the provisions of the UNCRPD;
- (vi) supporting the embedding of a rights-based approach to disability as provided by the UNCRPD within Ireland's economy, society, and culture;
- (vii) reviewing Ireland's Report/s to the UNCRPD Committee;
- (viii) monitoring and ensuring the timely implementation of the Optional Protocol of the UNCRPD;

(b) the effectiveness of-

- (i) all national processes established to implement the UNCRPD;

(ii) the National Framework for Monitoring the implementation of the Convention including engagement with the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission and the National Disability Authority.

(3) For the purposes of paragraph (2) the Committee shall-

- (a) engage with persons with disabilities, family carers, Disabled Persons Organisations, service providers and advocates in the Committee's work;
- (b) consider other topics that the disability community identifies as key as agreed by the Committee;
- (c) have regard to Concluding Observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN Committee) with respect to Ireland's periodic reports, review the Government response to the Observations of the UN Committee and make its own recommendations with respect to same.

(4) The Joint Committee shall have the powers defined in Standing Order 96, other than paragraphs (3) to (9) inclusive thereof;

(5) The Chairman of the Dáil Select Committee shall also be Chairman of the Joint Committee

### **Orders of Reference - Seanad Éireann**

(1) That a Select Committee consisting of 5 Members to be appointed by Seanad Éireann to form the Joint Committee on Disability Matters to consider all disability matters including monitoring the implementation (by Ireland) of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.

(2) That the Select Committee on Disability Matters shall consider and report on-

- (a) the 'Implementation Plan' for the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and national strategies including the National Disability Inclusion Strategy and sector strategies for the purpose of-
  - (i) ensuring implementation plans are configured to advance the UNCRPD while delivering outcomes for persons with disabilities in their lived experience and planning into the future;
  - (ii) making recommendations which align the plans and strategies of Ireland's international obligations;

- (iii) monitoring progress of the drafting and initiation of required and relevant legislation;
  - (iv) engaging with Ministers and the Secretaries General of relevant Government departments regarding implementation measures and budgetary measures;
  - (v) aligning the UN Sustainable Development Goals with the provisions of the UNCRPD;
  - (vi) supporting the embedding of a rights-based approach to disability as provided by the UNCRPD within Ireland's economy, society, and culture;
  - (vii) reviewing Ireland's Report/s to the UNCRPD Committee;
  - (viii) monitoring and ensuring the timely implementation of the Optional Protocol of the UNCRPD;
- (b) the effectiveness of-
- (i) all national processes established to implement the UNCRPD;
  - (ii) the National Framework for Monitoring the implementation of the Convention including engagement with the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission and the National Disability Authority.
- (3) For the purposes of paragraph (2) the Committee shall-
- (a) engage with persons with disabilities, family carers, Disabled Persons Organisations, service providers and advocates in the Committee's work;
  - (b) consider other topics that the disability community identifies as key as agreed by the Committee;
  - (c) have regard to Concluding Observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN Committee) with respect to Ireland's periodic reports, review the Government response to the Observations of the UN Committee and make its own recommendations with respect to same.
- (4) The Joint Committee shall have the powers defined in Standing Order 72, other than paragraphs (3) to (9) inclusive thereof;
- (5) The Chairman of the Dáil Select Committee shall also be Chairman of the Joint Committee

## Appendix 2: UNCRPD Categorisation

Categorisation	Articles
General provisions and implementation of the UNCRPD	Articles 1–4, Articles 11, 18, 22, 31, 32, 33
Participation in political, cultural, community and public life	Article 29, 30
Accessibility	Articles 9, 21, 30
Health and life	Articles 10, 23, 25
Independent and adequate standard of living and social protection	Articles 19, 20, 26, 28
Autonomy and integrity	Articles 12, 14, 15, 17
Equality and non-discrimination	Article 5
Awareness-raising	Article 8
Education	Articles 7, 24
Employment	Article 27
Access to justice	Articles 12, 13
Freedom from exploitation, violence, and abuse	Articles 6, 16







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