



**Convention on the Rights  
of Persons with Disabilities**

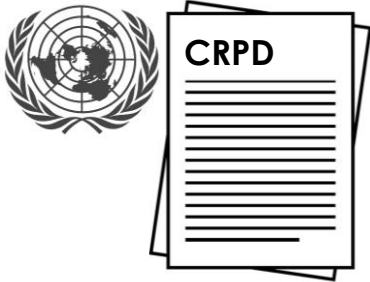
# **Roundtable 2**

## **Economic Empowerment and Entrepreneurship of Persons with Disabilities**

### **Easy Read**



# About COSP15, Conference of State Parties to the CRPD



The United Nations wrote a document to ensure the rights of persons with disabilities are protected. This document is called: **The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)**. This document is also called the Convention.

---



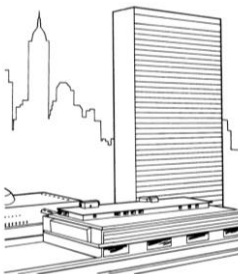
Countries who signed the CRPD need to report to the United Nations. Countries have to explain to the United Nations how they protect the rights of persons with disabilities.

---



At the **Conference of State Parties**, people representing their countries come together to talk about how they protect the rights of persons with disabilities in their country. People also call the conference: **COSP**

---



This Conference happens every year at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City. In 2022, it is the **15th session of COSP (COSP15)**.

## About This Document



**Different United Nations offices and representatives from civil society wrote this document together.**

Civil society are people or organizations that are not part of the United Nations or a government. Civil society can be an individual advocate or an organization.



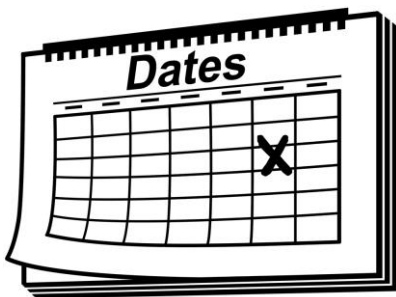
This document gives information about the topic,

**"Economic empowerment and entrepreneurship of persons with disabilities."**

We could also say: **Making sure persons with disabilities have enough money and can work and earn money.**



**This document will be used to have a conversation during a roundtable discussion at the COSP15 Conference.** It is called a roundtable discussion because everyone at the meeting will be able to participate.



The roundtable discussion is held on

**Wednesday, 15 June 2022, from 03:00 pm to 06:00 pm  
United Nations Headquarters in New York,  
Conference Room 4**

People can also watch the meeting on the internet.

This is the link to the website: [media.un.org](https://media.un.org)

# Introduction



The world of work is facing many problems. The COVID-19 pandemic made inequalities larger everywhere.

Inequalities are differences in well-being and access to money between different groups of people.



The **International Labour Organization (ILO)** is a United Nations organization. The ILO promotes social and economic justice by setting standards for businesses. Standards are rules for businesses.



The ILO guesses that **207 million people have no job in 2022**. This number shows 21 million more people are unemployed now compared to before the COVID19 pandemic. The number of working poor, which are people whose jobs do not pay enough to live, has increased by 8 million.



Persons with disabilities are having problems finding jobs. According to research, only 36 percent of persons with disabilities who are old enough to work have jobs.

# Introduction



Persons with disabilities need to **get paid the same as everyone else**, treated well at work, be given reasonable accommodations, and be supported in starting their own businesses.

---



A **reasonable accommodation** could be a computer program that helps someone read or a ramp or anything else the person needs to be able to apply for a job and do their job well.

---



**Persons with disabilities need economic empowerment.** It means a group of people can find good work. It also means being able to participate in the community by earning money and being able to spend money.

---

# International Framework



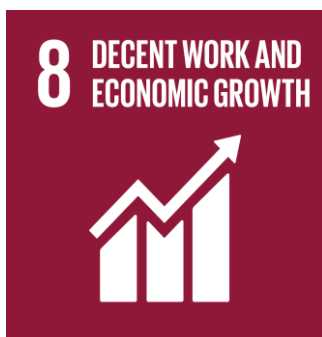
**Article 27** of the CRPD states that **persons with disabilities have the same right to work** and get jobs as everyone else.



**Article 5** of the CRPD forbids discrimination against persons with disabilities and talks about the importance of reasonable accommodations.



The United Nations works towards the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, also called the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**. They will make the world safer and better for everyone.



The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal **Number 8** says to ensure employment and decent work for all people, including those with disabilities.

## **Key Issues**

### **Problems and Opportunities in the World of Work**

This part talks about problems persons with disabilities have in the world of work. It also talks about what can be done to include persons with disabilities at work.

# Work and Employment of Persons with Disabilities



The number of persons with disabilities working is low all over the world. The reasons are different barriers persons with disabilities face.

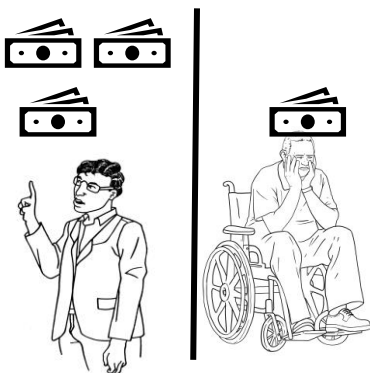


Persons with disabilities face **attitudinal barriers**.

**Attitudinal barriers** are negative views of people that focus on a person's disability rather than their ability. Because of this thinking people are judged as unable to participate and are excluded.



People face **environmental barriers**. Often our world is organized in a way that excludes persons with disabilities. Many systems, like transportation, are not built in a way that persons with disabilities can use them.



Many persons with disabilities get **paid less for the same work**. They do low-skilled work and work in unsafe places.



# Work and Employment of Persons with Disabilities



Many companies are getting better at including people with disabilities. But they are **often not aware of the unfairness** that still exists.



Some businesses hire persons with disabilities because they want to look good and not because they want to include everyone.

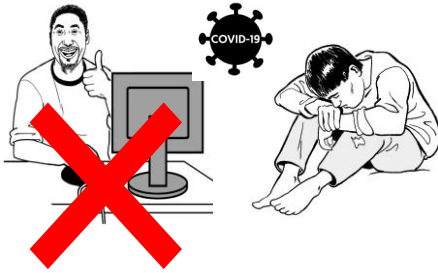


Persons with disabilities from **marginalized groups** experience more problems. A marginalized group is a group of people that does not enjoy the same rights and freedoms as others. Among people with disabilities, those with intellectual disabilities are one of the most marginalized groups.

# Work and Employment of Persons with Disabilities



Many people lost their job during the pandemic. This happened a lot to persons with intellectual disabilities

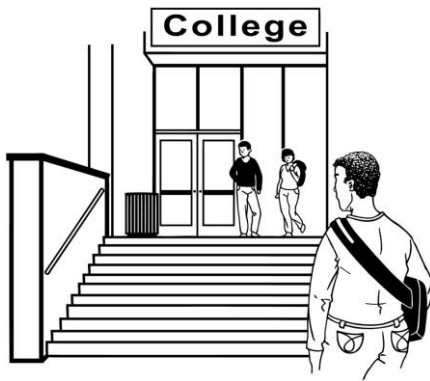


During the pandemic many people working in small businesses suffered a lot. They were unable to access financial supports and lost their income.



This situation did not comply with Article 28 of the CRPD that should provide a good living standard and social protection for people with disabilities.

# Work and Employment of Persons with Disabilities



**Many young persons with disabilities do not work.** This problem starts with schools not including children with disabilities and lack of support when students transition from school to work. This is against Article 24 of the Convention that speaks about the rights to inclusive education.



**People over 60 years old with disabilities** are half as likely to work as people over 60 without disabilities. When they cannot find work for a long time, they might not get a pension or retirement money.



**People with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities** often work in low positions. They often are pressured to participate in sheltered workshops instead of finding real work.

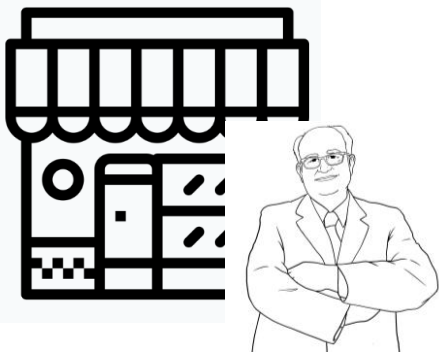


**Women with disabilities have a higher unemployment rate than men with disabilities.** Women have less chances to find work. Women are often expected to take care of the family instead of working for pay.

# Entrepreneurship of Persons with Disabilities



**People can work for themselves** by offering their service and getting paid directly without a company. This is called being self-employed.

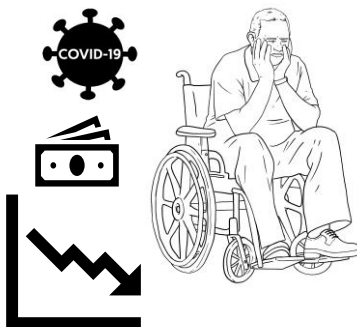


**People can also start their own business** as entrepreneurs.

**Entrepreneurship** is becoming more popular. In 2019, in 36 out of 52 countries more people started their own business than before.



The **Global Entrepreneurship Monitor** is an organization that studies entrepreneurship around the world. They found that entrepreneur activity is high in the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Entrepreneurship is low in Europe and North America.



**Research on entrepreneurs with disabilities is lacking.**

The 2021 Economic Co-operation and Development Report says that support for entrepreneurs with disabilities during the COVID-19 crisis was not given much attention by European governments.

# Entrepreneurship of Persons with Disabilities



Entrepreneurs with disabilities say that having their own businesses made them confident, gain self-respect, and become more independent. They also said they learned social skills and built new relationships.



Having their own businesses allows persons with disabilities to take an active, valued role in their communities.

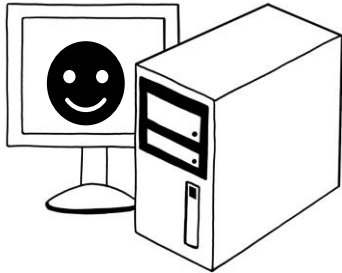


Persons with disabilities face many barriers to starting their own business. They often don't have the money, skills, and relationships needed.



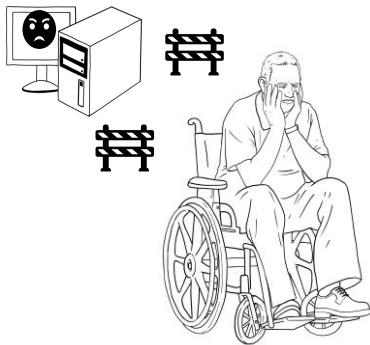
Many entrepreneurs with disabilities face the "**benefits trap.**" This is the fear of losing government money when they earn income with their business. This is against article 27 of the Convention.

## The Changing World of Work



Technology can help include persons with disabilities at work. Artificial intelligence (AI) are computers that can do difficult tasks on their own. AI can help persons with disabilities do their jobs. For example, voice and picture recognition can help persons with disabilities communicate.

---



AI can also discriminate against persons with disabilities. For example, if a computer makes decisions when hiring people, it might exclude those who look or sound differently because of their disability.

---



Many businesses use online platforms. These platforms include **digital web-based services**. Jobs in these services could be writing descriptions or reviews.

Accessible and inclusive platforms allow persons with disabilities to do these jobs.

---

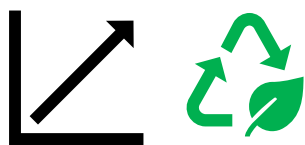


Platform workers do not have the same benefits and protections as regular employment. There are no regulations for safety or working hours. Platform workers also do not have any sick leave, family leave, or retirement plan.

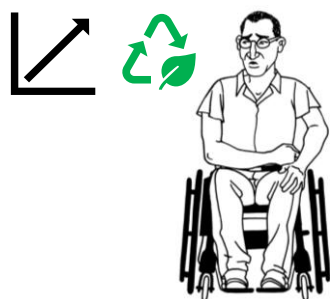
# The Changing World of Work



The environment is important to the world of work. The ILO says that 40 percent of all workers depend on the environment. Jobs like farming and the food industry are examples of work related to the environment.



People can take care of the environment by supporting a green economy. Green economy is when businesses make sure not to hurt nature.



Persons with disabilities will be affected by this change. It is important to help make the change to a green economy more inclusive for those with disabilities.

## **The Way Forward**

This part talks about what needs to be done.



# Policy Recommendations



A **human-centered approach to recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic** is needed. Human-centered means for the better of all people. This means persons with disabilities need to be included.



The **Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection** for a Just Transition in the Digital, Green and Care Economies plans to create 400 million jobs in the green and care economies.



Many countries have created policies in support of the right to work for persons with disabilities. They offer employment services and skill training that include persons with disabilities.



The **United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy** is another document that wants to create an inclusive world of work for persons with disabilities.

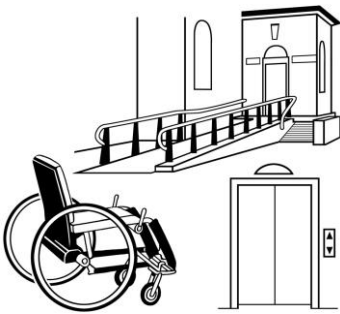
# Work and Employment for Persons with Disabilities



To make sure laws include person with disabilities governments need to ask employers, persons with disabilities, and their organizations to participate.



We need to close the digital divide. Article 9 of the Convention says countries need to ensure persons with disabilities have access to new information and communication technology systems like the internet.



Governments must make laws on accessibility requirements. Companies need to take a universal design approach when making new technologies. Universal design means the technology is build accessible to persons with disabilities.



Research on the job market needs to make sure to ask questions about disabilities to collect good data. Data helps governments to understand the situations and make good decisions that support persons with disabilities.

# Promoting Entrepreneurship



Artikel 27 of the Convention talks about the opportunities that working self-employed or starting a business can bring for persons with disabilities.



Persons with disabilities face many barriers and obstacles because many people do not believe in their abilities. Creating policies that support entrepreneurs with disabilities helps people to overcome these barriers and be successful.



It is important to offer accessible education for persons with disabilities to learn how to be a successful entrepreneur.



To be successful, entrepreneurs with disabilities need to work with other business owners, organizations, universities, businesses and the government in cooperation.

## Networked Approach



The Secretary General says in his report called “**Our Common Agenda**”, that it is important to work together to support persons with disabilities in the world of work.



The **ILO Global Business and Disability Network** is a group of companies working together to promote the rights of persons with disability at work.



**Valuable 500 companies** is a group made up of 500 CEOs and their companies that work together for disability inclusion.



Persons with disabilities and the organizations that represents them need to be partners in the process of making the world of work accessible to persons with disabilities.

## Questions for Discussion

These questions will help to start the conversation of the round table discussion.

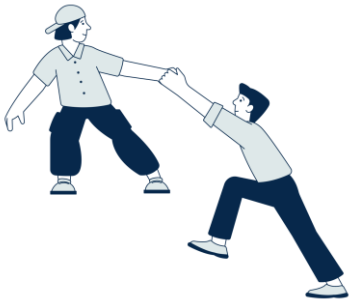
## Questions for Discussion



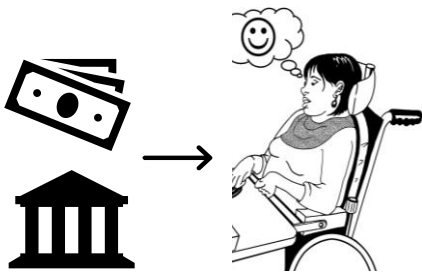
What laws exist that support economic empowerment of persons with disabilities? How can we make sure they are improving people's lives?



How can we make sure future policies include persons with disabilities in the changing world of work? Especially the changes in technology and the green economy.



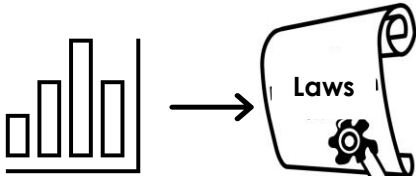
There are many programs supporting employment. What can we do to make sure people most left behind benefit from these programs?



What actions can we take to improve social security and the protection of workers?

Social Security are government programs that offer money to support people who are poor.

## Questions for Discussion



How can we collect data that helps us make good decisions to support persons with disabilities at work?



What are some new best practices that enable persons with disabilities to be successful entrepreneurs?



How can we support women, young and older people, native people and persons with disabilities who are trying to start their own business?



What can we do to change the way we organize our communities to strengthen the independence of persons with disabilities?



This Easy Read translation was developed by:



**Seeing beyond disability.**

220 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10017

**[international@yai.org](mailto:international@yai.org)**

**[www.yai.org](http://www.yai.org)**

Most pictures from the Easy Read Picture Database of the DPO Change [www.changepeople.org](http://www.changepeople.org)  
Some pictures by Freepik [www.freepik.com](http://www.freepik.com)