



UNITED NATIONS  
**HUMAN RIGHTS**  
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER



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

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*A toolkit*

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## About the toolkit

*The 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights celebrated in 2023 is an occasion to renew the ground-breaking commitments made by States when they adopted its text in 1948. The Declaration has inspired the norms and standards that are embodied in the core human rights treaties and their optional protocols. These instruments aim to realize the rights contained in the Declaration, by making human rights legal entitlements with legally binding obligations for States.*

*Ratifying these instruments is an essential means to translating the human rights enshrined in the Declaration into reality on the ground, while conveying a message of commitment to the international community.*

*Human Rights 75 is an initiative led by UN Human Rights and its partners. It seeks, among others, to promote universality and renewed commitment, including through a campaign to advocate for the ratification of the core human rights treaties and their optional protocols. Thus, this year, States are called upon to formally re-commit to the protection and respect of human rights by ratifying outstanding human rights instruments.*

*This toolkit presents the benefits of ratifying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), answers questions on its content and application, provides a simplified version of the provisions of the Convention and provides practical information on ratification and accession of treaties.*

# Why Ratify?

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is a legally binding instrument. Its purpose is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.

Ratifying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities:



1. Provides a **framework for States to develop laws, policies, and programmes** that address the needs and rights of persons with disabilities. It outlines specific measures governments should take to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to education, employment, health care, and other essential services.

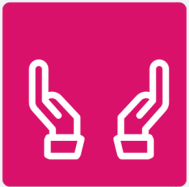
2. Leads to **greater international support for necessary domestic reforms** in relevant sectors.

3. Is a **critical starting point for building a society for all** - a society that values and respects the equality of all human beings. This includes ensuring the inclusion of persons with disabilities in development activities, education, employment, and political participation and mainstreaming disability issues into the broader development agenda. This inclusion benefits society by creating a more diverse and vibrant community.



4. Demonstrates a **commitment to promoting and protecting the rights and upholding the dignity of persons with disabilities**. It conveys to society that persons with disabilities are valuable and equal members of the community.

# Why Ratify?



5. Is an important step towards ensuring that **persons with disabilities enjoy the same rights and opportunities as everyone else and are treated equally**. It also helps to reduce stigma and discrimination that leads to the exclusion of persons with disabilities from education, employment, health, and other essential services.

6. Can have a **positive impact on the economy**. By ensuring that persons with disabilities have access to education and employment, they can contribute to the labour force and generate economic growth. In addition, by promoting accessibility and inclusion, governments can create new market opportunities for businesses.

7. Promotes **international cooperation** to improve the lives of persons with disabilities, including through the implementation of measures that facilitate and support capacity building, including through the exchange and sharing of information, experience, training, programs, and best practices through international cooperation. Furthermore, by ratifying the Convention, a State demonstrates its willingness to work with other countries to promote the rights of persons with disabilities worldwide.



**8. Contributes to achieving several Sustainable Development Goals and reaffirms the commitment to “leave no one behind.”**



## Frequently Asked Questions



### ***What is the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities?***

*The Convention is an international treaty that outlines the rights of persons with disabilities.*

*When a State becomes a party to the Convention, it undertakes to uphold the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for persons with disabilities and to promote the recognition of their inherent dignity.*

*This Convention marks a significant shift in the approach to disability, moving away from the previous model of medical treatment, charity, and social protection and towards the recognition of persons with disabilities as individuals with human rights who are active participants in decisions that affect their lives. This perspective recognizes that the main barriers to the full enjoyment of human rights by persons with disabilities are societal barriers, such as physical barriers and negative attitudes.*

# Frequently Asked Questions



## **Who can ratify or accede to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities?**

Any State can ratify or accede to the Convention based on its own internal laws regarding treaties. Additionally, Regional Integration Organizations (RIOs) can also ratify the Convention.

## **Which countries have ratified the CRPD?**

As at August 2024, 191 States had ratified the Convention.

## **Do States need to have the relevant legislative framework in place prior to ratification/accession to the Convention?**

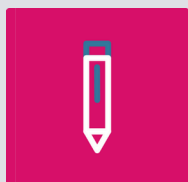
Harmonization of domestic legislation is a key aspect of the implementation of the Convention. It could be better achieved upon ratification and accession, as the State Party will benefit from interacting with the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which is in a unique position to advise States Parties based on its expertise.

## **What are the financial implications of ratifying or acceding to the Convention?**

Like other human rights treaties, the Convention also reflects economic, social, and cultural rights, which are subject to progressive realization. Financial implications related to the implementation of the Convention should, therefore, not be a deterrent to accession or ratification.

# Simplified Version

## The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)



**Entry into force:** 3 May 2008, in accordance with article 45(1).

**Registration:** 3 May 2008, No. 44910

**Status as of August 2024:** Signatories: 164. Parties: 186.

Procedural provisions of the Convention have been omitted.

**Purpose (Art. 1):** The convention aims to promote, protect, and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities.

**Definitions (Art. 2):** This article defines key terms used throughout the convention, including “persons with disabilities,” “discrimination,” and “reasonable accommodation.”

**General principles (Art. 3):** Eight general principles underpin the Convention, including respect for inherent dignity, non-discrimination, full and effective participation and inclusion, and accessibility.

**General obligation (Art. 4):** The general obligations of States parties to the Convention includes taking measures to ensure that all persons with disabilities enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with others.

**Equality and non-discrimination (Art. 5):** State parties must prohibit discrimination against persons with disabilities and promote their full and equal participation in society.

**Women with disabilities (Art. 6):** Intersectional discrimination experienced by women and girls with disabilities is recognized and requires State Parties to take measures to address discrimination.



# Simplified Version

**Children with disabilities (Art. 7):** Children with disabilities have the right to express their views and participate fully in all aspects of life and require State Parties to provide them with the necessary support.

**Awareness-raising (Art. 8):** State parties shall promote awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities and combat stereotypes and prejudices.

**Accessibility (Art. 9):** State parties must ensure that persons with disabilities have access to the physical environment, transportation, information, communications, and other facilities and services.

**Right to life (Article. 10):** Persons with disabilities have the inherent right to life, and State Parties must take measures to ensure their safety and protection.

**Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies (Art. 11):** States parties must ensure the safety and protection of persons with disabilities in situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies and must comply with other applicable international legal obligations, such as International Humanitarian Law.

**Equal recognition before the law (Art. 12):** Persons with disabilities have legal capacity on an equal basis with others. At times, States parties must provide support to assist persons with disabilities in making decisions and exercising legal capacity.

**Access to justice (Art. 13):** States parties must ensure that persons with disabilities have access to justice on an equal basis with others.

**Liberty and security of the person (Art. 14):** State Parties must ensure that persons with disabilities enjoy the same rights as everyone else concerning the liberty and security of the person.

# Simplified Version

**Freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment (Art. 15):** State Parties must ensure that persons with disabilities are not subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.

**Freedom of exploitation, violence, and abuse (Art. 16):** States Parties must take measures to protect persons with disabilities from all forms of exploitation, violence, and abuse.

**Protecting the integrity of the person (Art. 17):** State Parties must protect the integrity of persons with disabilities, including their physical, mental, and emotional health.

**Liberty of movement and nationality (Art. 18):** State Parties must ensure that persons with disabilities enjoy the same right as everyone else with respect to freedom of movement and the ability to acquire and change nationality. Children with disabilities must be registered at birth and have the same rights as others to a name, nationality, and, as far as possible, to be cared for by their parents.

**Living independently and being included in the community (Art. 19):** State Parties must take measures to enable persons with disabilities to live independently and have equal access to community services and facilities.

**Personal Mobility (Art. 20):** Persons with disabilities have the right to personal mobility, including the freedom to choose their mode of transportation and the accessibility of transportation systems. State parties must take effective measures to ensure personal mobility.

**Freedom of expression and opinion and access to information (Art. 21):** Persons with disabilities have the right to freedom of expression and opinion, including the freedom to seek, receive, and impart information in accessible formats.

**Respect for privacy (Art. 22):** Persons with disabilities have the right to privacy, including the protection of their personal information and data.

# Simplified Version

**Respect for home and family (Art. 23):** Persons with disabilities have the right to enjoy their own homes and families and to receive the necessary support from the State parties to exercise these rights.

**Education (Art. 24):** Persons with disabilities have the right to inclusive education without discrimination and on an equal basis with others and to receive the necessary support by the State party to exercise this right.

**Health (Art. 25):** Persons with disabilities have the right to the highest attainable standard of health, without discrimination and on an equal basis with others, and to receive the necessary support from the State parties to exercise this right.

**Habilitation and rehabilitation (Art. 26):** State parties should take effective and appropriate measures to enable persons with disabilities to attain and maintain maximum independence and full inclusion and participation in all aspects of life. State parties shall organize, strengthen, and extend comprehensive habilitation and rehabilitation services and programs. Programs should begin at the earliest possible stage and support participation and inclusion in the community and all aspects of society. States parties shall promote development for professionals and staff working in habilitation and rehabilitation. States parties should also promote the availability, knowledge and use of assistive devices and technologies designed for persons with disabilities as they relate to habilitation and rehabilitation.

**Work and employment (Art. 27):** Persons with disabilities have the right to work on an equal basis and to receive the necessary support from the State parties to exercise this right.

**Adequate standard of living and social protection (Art. 28):** Persons with disabilities have the right to an adequate standard of living, including food, housing, and social protection, without discrimination and on an equal basis with others. State Parties must ensure that persons with disabilities have equal access to Government social safety nets.

# Simplified Version

**Participation in political and public life (Art. 29):** Persons with disabilities have the right to participate in political and public life on an equal basis with others and to receive the necessary support from the State parties to exercise this right.

**Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure, and sport (Art. 30):** Persons with disabilities have the right to participate in cultural life, recreation, leisure, and sport, on an equal basis with others and to receive the necessary support from the State parties to exercise this right. **Statistics and data collection (Art. 31):** State parties must collect and analyse data related to persons with disabilities to help understand their situation and ensure effective policies and programs. Any information gathering must comply with the ethical principles of privacy and human rights norms.

**International cooperation (Art. 32):** International cooperation to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities is essential to the successful implementation of the Convention; State parties shall cooperate with each other and relevant international organizations.

**Statistics and data collection (Art. 31):** State parties must collect and analyse data related to persons with disabilities to help understand their situation and ensure effective policies and programs. Any information gathering must comply with the ethical principles of privacy and human rights norms.

**National implementation and monitoring (Art. 33):** States parties have the responsibility to ensure the implementation and monitoring of the Convention; while doing this, State parties must ensure the involvement of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in this process. For this purpose, State parties are required to 1) designate one or more disability focal points within the Government to facilitate implementation of the Convention, 2) establish a coordinating mechanism to facilitate action in different sectors at different levels of government, and; 3) designate or establish an independent monitoring mechanism such as a human rights commission or ombudsperson.

# Simplified Version

**Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Art. 34):** This article establishes the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Convention by States Parties and providing guidance and recommendations.

**Reports by States Parties (Art. 35):** States Parties must submit periodic reports on their implementation of the Convention to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

**Consideration of reports (Art. 36):** This article outlines the process for the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to consider the reports submitted by States Parties and to provide guidance and recommendations. If a report is overdue, the Committee can provide recommendations based on other reliable information. Cooperation between States and the Committee (Art. 37): The Committee will assist States parties in looking for ways to enhance national implementation, including through international cooperation.

**Relationship of the Committee with other bodies (Art. 38):** The Committee can invite specialized agencies and other United Nations organs to be represented or submit reports on the implementation of provisions that fall within the scope of their mandates. The Committee can also invite specialized agencies and civil society organizations to provide expert advice on the implementation of the Convention.

**Report of the Committee (Art. 39):** The Committee provides information on its work to the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations every two years.

**Conference of States Parties (Art. 40):** States parties to the Convention meet regularly, at least every two years. The first Conference will take place six months after the Convention enters into force.

# Process for Ratification and Accession

## What is ratification?

When a State ratifies an international human rights treaty, it legally commits to implement its provisions. By depositing instruments of ratification, a State expresses its consent to be bound by the treaty. Ratification is preceded by the signature of the treaty. Upon the signature, the State is obliged not to act contrary to the object and purpose of the treaty. The State may use the time between the signature and ratification to enact the necessary legislation to ensure the application of the treaty nationally.

## What is accession?

Accession is the act by which a State accepts to become a party to a treaty that has already been negotiated and signed by other States. It has the same legal effect as ratification. Accession usually takes place after the treaty has entered into force.

## What are the steps for formalizing a ratification or accession?

Model instruments of ratification or accession can be found on the [United Nations Treaty Collection](#) website. These templates are available in all six UN languages. The date indicated in the instrument of ratification or accession is the date on which the State becomes bound by the treaty. More information is available in the [Treaty Handbook](#). The annexes to the model instruments of full powers, ratification and accession are also available in this toolkit.

Once completed and signed by the competent authority in the State, e.g., the Head of State or Government or the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the signed copy of the original instrument can be emailed to [treatysection@un.org](mailto:treatysection@un.org) for deposit. However, the originals must be delivered to the Treaty Section as soon as they arrive at the Permanent Mission in New York. The Depositary Unit office is at 2 UN Plaza, 323 E 44th Street, 5th Floor, Room DC2-0500, Tel: 1-212 963 504. New York, NY 10017 USA.

The Permanent Representative in New York may deliver instruments of ratification or accession. There may be a ceremony for the deposit of instruments ([pictures](#)). Alternatively, the Government may wish to deposit the instruments at the Treaty Event held during the opening of the General Assembly, which will provide a high-level setting for this treaty action and give visibility to the Government's commitment to human rights.

ANNEX I

**MODEL INSTRUMENT OF FULL POWERS**

**(To be signed by the Head of State, Head of Government or Minister for Foreign Affairs)**

**FULL POWERS**

\_\_\_\_\_  
I, [name and title of the Head of State, Head of Government or Minister for Foreign Affairs],

**HEREBY AUTHORIZE** [name and title] to [sign <sup>2</sup>, ratify, denounce, effect the following declaration in respect of, etc.] the [title and date of treaty, convention, agreement, etc.] on behalf of the Government of [name of State].

Done at [place] on [date].

[Signature]

\_\_\_\_\_  
<sup>2</sup> \* Subject to the provisions of the treaty, one of the following alternatives is to be chosen: [subject to ratification] or [without reservation as to ratification]. Reservations made upon signature must be authorized by the full powers granted to the signator

ANNEX II

**MODEL INSTRUMENT OF RATIFICATION, ACCEPTANCE OR APPROVAL**

**(To be signed by the Head of State, Head of Government or Minister for Foreign Affairs)**

**[RATIFICATION / ACCEPTANCE / APPROVAL]**

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**WHEREAS** the [title of treaty, convention, agreement, etc.] was [concluded, adopted, opened for signature, etc.] at [place] on [date],

**AND WHEREAS** the said [treaty, convention, agreement, etc.] has been signed on behalf of the Government of [name of State] on [date],

**NOW THEREFORE I**, [name and title of the Head of State, Head of Government or Minister for Foreign Affairs] declare that the Government of [name of State], having considered the above-mentioned [treaty, convention, agreement, etc.], [ratifies, accepts, approves] the same and undertakes faithfully to perform and carry out the stipulations therein contained.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have signed this instrument of [ratification, acceptance, approval] at [place] on [date].

[Signature]



**MODEL INSTRUMENT OF ACCESSION**

**(To be signed by the Head of State, Head of Government or Minister for Foreign Affairs)**

**ACCESSION**

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**WHEREAS** the [title of treaty, convention, agreement, etc.] was [concluded, adopted, opened for signature, etc.] at [place] on [date],

**NOW THEREFORE I**, [name and title of the Head of State, Head of Government or Minister for Foreign Affairs] declare that the Government of [name of State], having considered the above-mentioned [treaty, convention, agreement, etc.], accedes to the same and undertakes faithfully to perform and carry out the stipulations therein contained.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have signed this instrument of accession at [place] on [date].

[Signature]

