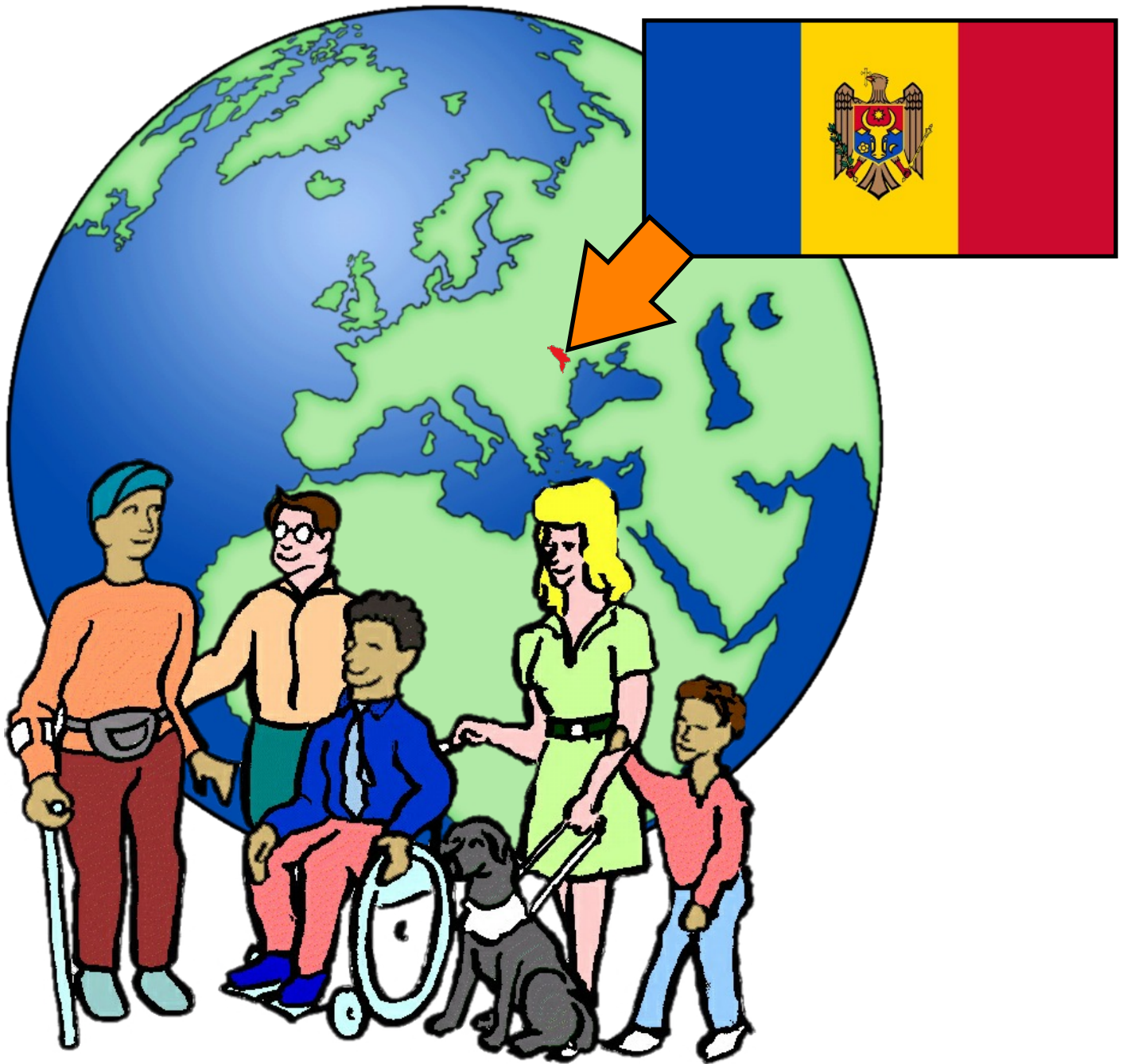




The rights of people with disabilities around the world.



What is happening in Moldova?



EasyRead version of:
Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities. Mission to the Republic of Moldova.



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Sometimes we need to use new or difficult words.



These words are in bold and there is a list of what they mean at the end of the report.

1. About this report



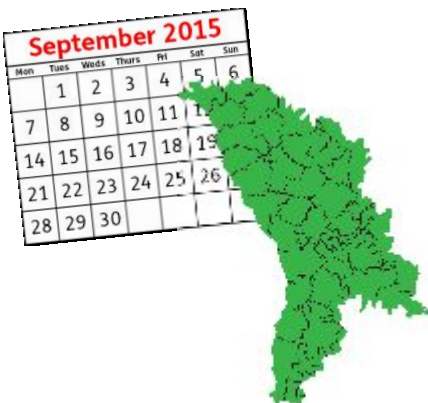
The **United Nations** is a group of different countries that work together to try to make the world a safer place for everyone.



Every year the **Special Rapporteur** writes reports for the **United Nations** about rights and people with disabilities.



The **Special Rapporteur** is Catalina Devandas-Aguilar. She helps countries understand what they need to do to make sure people with disabilities get their rights.



This is an EasyRead version of the report about her visit to a country called Moldova in September 2015.



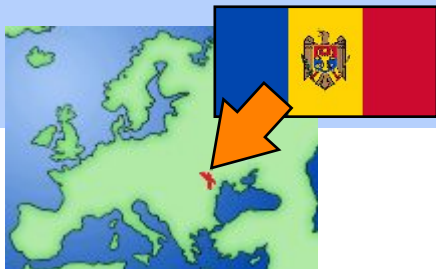
The government invited the **Special Rapporteur** to visit their country. She met Government officials, people with disabilities and their families, and visited the services that support them.



She would like to thank everyone who helped her understand what things are like for people with disabilities in Moldova.



The **Special Rapporteur** also visited people with disabilities who live in the Transnistrian region of Moldova.



2. About Moldova

What is Moldova like?

Moldova is a small country in Eastern Europe.



The government has signed the **United Nations convention** or agreement about the rights of people with disabilities.



This means they must try to make sure people with disabilities get their human rights.



Human rights are basic rights and freedoms that should happen for everyone.



When we use the word agreement in this report we mean the '**United Nations Convention** on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities'.



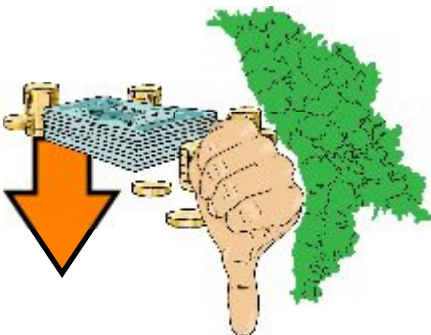
The government in Moldova is trying to change things for people with disabilities.



But the **Special Rapporteur** thinks many people with disabilities are still treated as if they were ill.



This can mean they live away from other people in places where they are sometimes treated badly.



Moldova is a fairly poor country and things are difficult at the moment, partly because the government keeps changing.



This could make it harder to include people with disabilities and treat them fairly.



How many people with disabilities live there?

The government in Moldova does not have good information about people with disabilities.



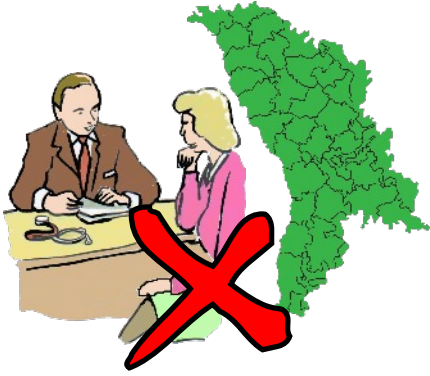
This makes it difficult to find out how many people with disabilities there are and what life is like for them.



Doctors test some people and give them a certificate (paper) to say they have a disability.



In 2014 about 5 out of every 100 adults and 2 out of every 100 children had a disability certificate.



But there are many people with disabilities in the country who have not been tested by a doctor.

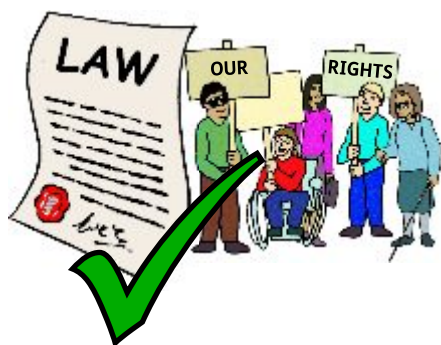


The government will not know about them.

3. People with disabilities in Moldova



Laws



The government of Moldova has changed some laws to give people with disabilities more rights.



But some laws are old fashioned and still treat people with disabilities as if they are ill.



The laws do not protect them if they are treated unfairly or worse than other people.



Moldova needs to check that all its laws protect people with disabilities and their human rights.

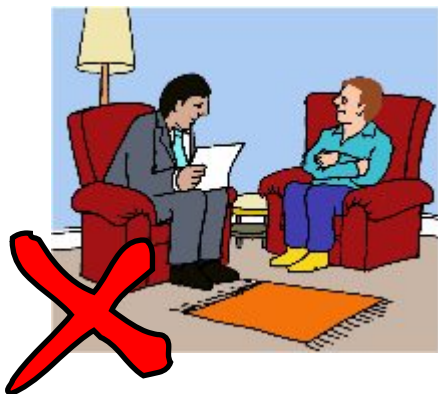


Services and support

In the past people with disabilities were moved to hospitals away from their home and families.



Many services in Moldova are still like this.



There is not much support in the community.



Things are changing slowly. But all parts of the government need to help people with disabilities live independently where they choose.



The **Special Rapporteur** is worried about some changes.



From 2016 local government will pay for services for people with disabilities. But no one knows how this will work.



Public services must get better at working with and involving organisations of people with disabilities.

4. What makes things difficult?



Not involving people with disabilities and thinking they are worse than other people



Many people in Moldova think people with disabilities are worse than other people and should be cared for away from other people.



When there are no community services, adults and children with disabilities cannot mix with local people and show what they can do.

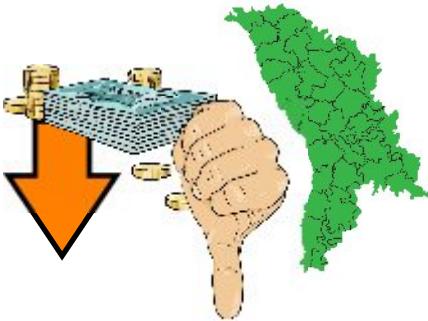


The government should tell people about human rights and people with disabilities.



They should make sure TV, the radio and newspapers all show that people with disabilities are not different to other people. They must show that it is unfair to treat them worse than other people.

Being a country without much money



The money problems in Moldova are getting worse.



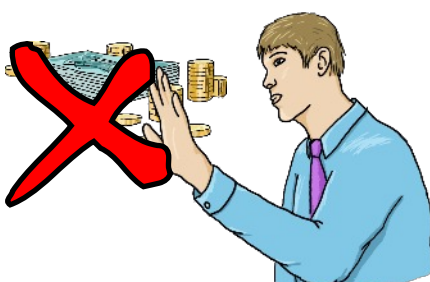
This means there is less money to spend on better community services.



The government should make sure people with disabilities can get the education, health care and services that other people use.



In time, this could save money if people live in the community and work and earn money for themselves.



Because of the problems in Moldova, some international organisations who normally give money to the country will not pay for projects there anymore.



The **Special Rapporteur** would like them to think about how they can help make the country better for everyone.



Not knowing who is disabled

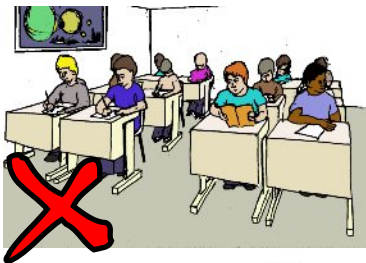
If people have a disability certificate it can help them get services.



But it can also mean other people think they are ill and cannot do things for themselves.



This can take away the person's choice and control and make it difficult for them to:



- go to school or college



- get a job



- live where they choose.



A lot of people with disabilities cannot get a disability certificate.



Some groups are treated unfairly or told they have to pay for them.

Not being able to do the same things as other people



The law says national and local governments in Moldova must make streets, buildings and transport better for people with disabilities.



But the **Special Rapporteur** found that this didn't happen in Moldova.



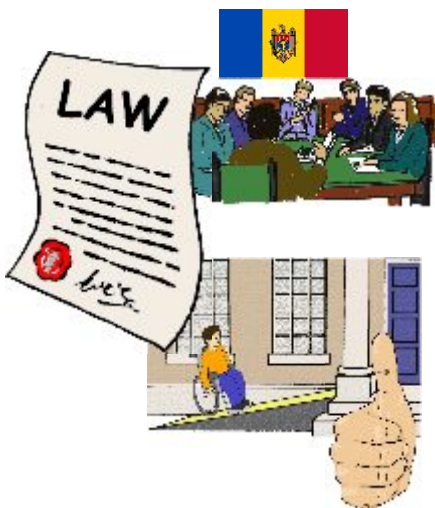
People in wheelchairs cannot use most streets in the capital city and there are not many ramps or slopes.



The **Special Rapporteur** did not see people with disabilities using computers or other technology to help them communicate. There is no sign language service for deaf people.



All of these things stop people with disabilities doing the same things as other people.



The government must follow the law. They must make sure public services and other organisations change things so people with disabilities can use them.

5. Human rights and people with disabilities



Going to school and college

People with disabilities have the right to go to school or college with people who not have disabilities.



The government in Moldova is doing some good things to help children with disabilities go to ordinary schools with other children.



The government must now:



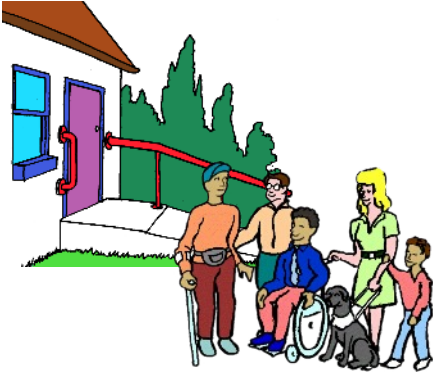
- stop children being taught at home so they do not mix with other children



- make sure children with disabilities get on the list for final examinations



- have lessons in sign language and other languages



- make sure children with disabilities can get into and use school buildings.

Being involved



The agreement says people with disabilities have the right to be involved in public life and decisions that affect everyone.



But they need to do more to involve people with learning disabilities or mental health problems.



The agreement says governments must ask what people with disabilities think about plans and laws that affect everyone. This was not happening in Moldova.



The government must support organisations of people with disabilities and involve them in local and national decisions.



Discrimination for lots of reasons

Discrimination means being treated worse than other people because of who you are.



People told the **Special Rapporteur** that in Moldova people with disabilities are treated even worse if they:



- are women



- have learning disabilities or a mental health disability



- have more than 1 disability.



If people with disabilities are from the **Roma** group they can be treated really badly.



Roma people can be poorer than other people and are sometimes forced to work as beggars.



Local government is not good at working with **Roma** people so they miss out on services like health, education or housing.

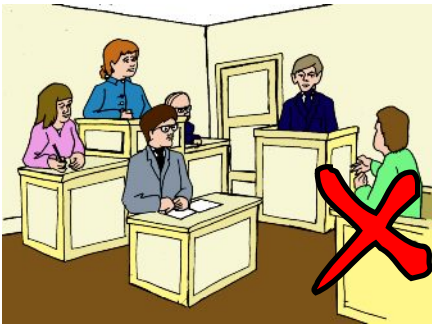


The **Special Rapporteur** hopes the government's new plan for human rights and **Roma** people will make things better.

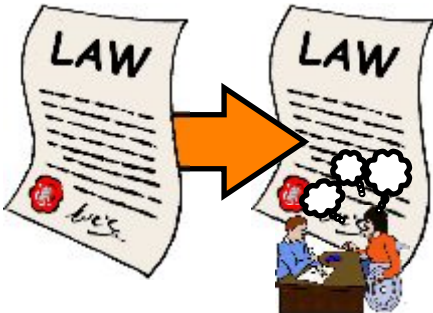


Making decisions for yourself

In Moldova about 4 thousand people do not have the right to make decisions for themselves.



This means a court makes decisions for them and they lose all their rights. This includes the right to say they do not agree with this.



The government is trying to change the law so people have the right support to make a decision.



This is taking too long and the government asked the **Special Rapporteur** to help if she can.

Social protection

Social protection is things that give everyone the same chances in life. For example:



- having enough food



- basic healthcare



- going to school



- money to help pay for things if you cannot work or earn enough.



The government in Moldova is spending money on residential care, benefits and schools for children with disabilities.



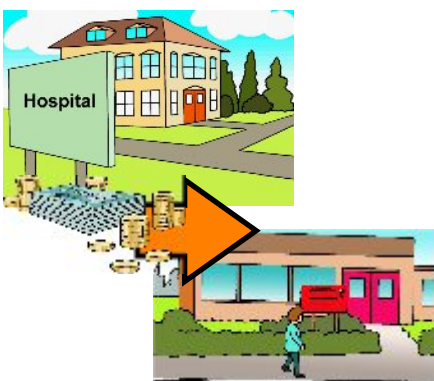
But their plans are based on the idea that people with disabilities cannot work or be part of society.



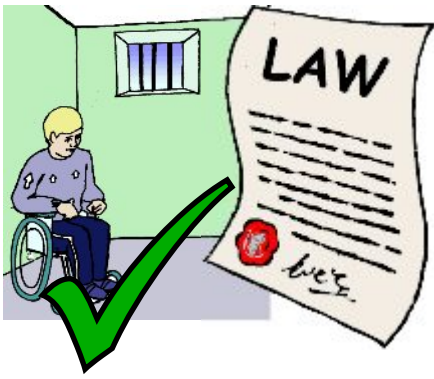
The **Special Rapporteur** saw some people living in their own homes with support.



But this is not happening enough.



The government could use the money it spends on large hospitals to pay for better community services.



Taking away your freedom

In Moldova the law says it is ok to take away a person's freedom if they have a disability.



This means things like:

- not being allowed to leave the hospital or care home where you live



- staff having control over all your decisions



- doctors giving you treatment even if you do not agree to it.



People are abused or treated badly and cannot do anything about it.



This breaks **United Nations** rules about torture, punishment and treating people with respect.



More children with disabilities are living in the community but many still live in large buildings away from their families.



Lots of people told the **Special Rapporteur** about children being treated very badly in these places.



The government must make sure people with disabilities have their human rights.



They must close the big hospitals and set up more community services to support people instead.



They must check that people are safe.



Using the courts and justice system

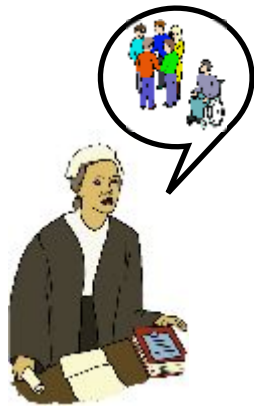
People with disabilities in Moldova find it difficult to go to court to complain because:



- they find it difficult to get into court buildings



- judges and lawyers do not understand their rights



- lawyers can discriminate against them. This means they do not have the free support the law says they should get



- the law says that a person cannot use the courts if their disability means they cannot make decisions.



People with disabilities and their families have no way to speak up about abuse or human rights.



If someone complains they can be forced to change what they say or people do not believe them.



This means staff can get away with treating people badly.



6. What happens next?



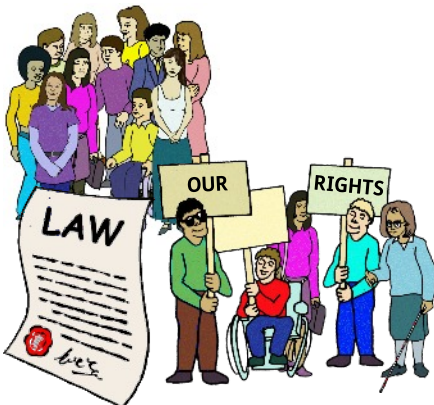
The government has done some things to help people with disabilities get their rights.



But things will only change when everyone in Moldova understands that people with disabilities are not ill or different from everyone else.



The government must start by making sure:



- their plans and laws say people with disabilities have the same rights as everyone else



- people with disabilities get social protection



- people with disabilities can use the courts and complain safely



- TV, radio and newspapers remind everyone about human rights. They must show that people with disabilities are not different from other people.



Moldova should work on these things



Better information



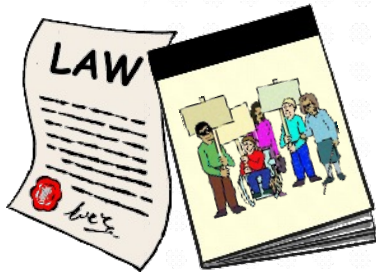
- get better at knowing how many people there are with different types of disability



- train people who work in services about the agreement and rights of people with disabilities



- help the public understand that people with disabilities have the same rights as everyone else.

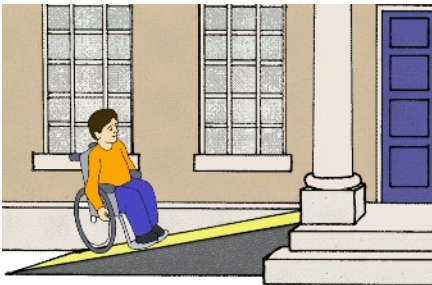


Better laws

- make sure laws link to the agreement and the new action plan for human rights includes people with disabilities



- involve people with disabilities and their organisations when they write plans or laws

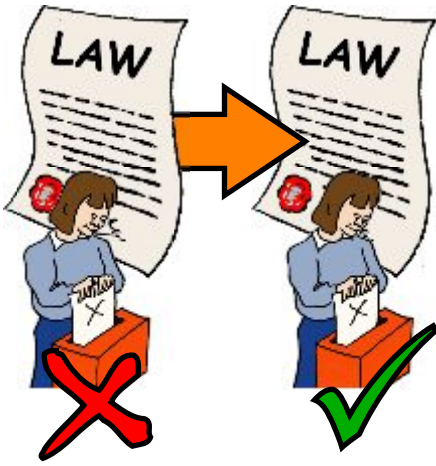


- make sure people with disabilities can use public services and buildings and take legal action if someone discriminates against them.



Being included

- get rid of the things that stop children with disabilities going to school or pre-school with other children. Check whether this is working



- change laws and other things that stop people voting and being involved in public life



- support organisations of people with disabilities.



Involve them in checking whether the agreement and other plans or laws are working.



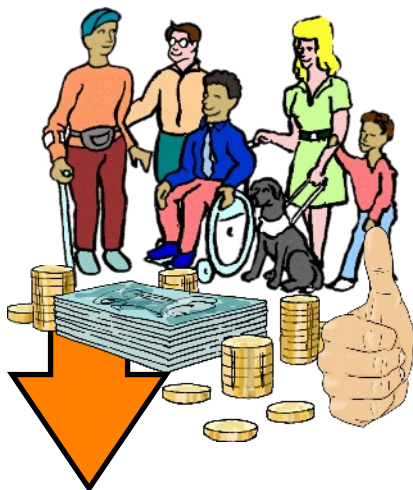
Making decisions

- make it easier for people to say they disagree if a court says they cannot make decisions.

Social protection



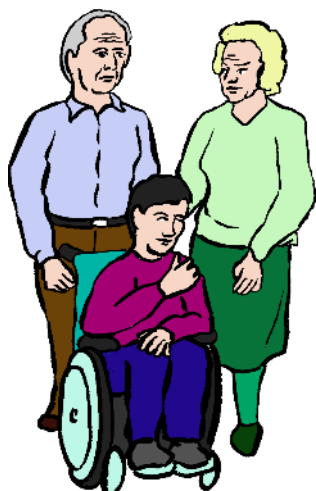
- close the big hospitals and use the money to support people with disabilities in their own homes



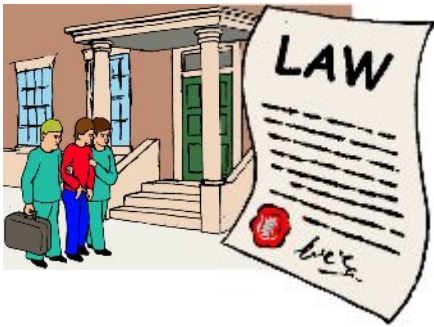
- make sure people with disabilities get a service even when money is short



- make sure benefits support people to live independently and do not take away their rights



- support the families of people with disabilities.



Freedom

- change the laws that mean people can be kept in hospital or treated when they do not agree to it



- check whether people are safe.



Act quickly to punish staff who treat people badly



- train staff about human rights.



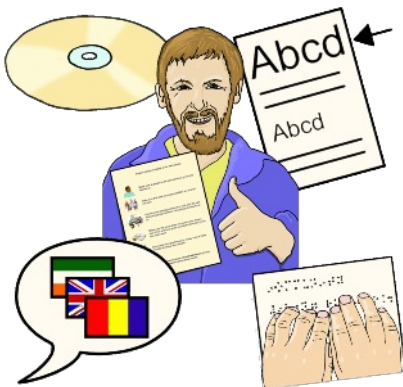
- make sure everyone gets justice



- change laws that stop people with learning or mental disabilities using the courts



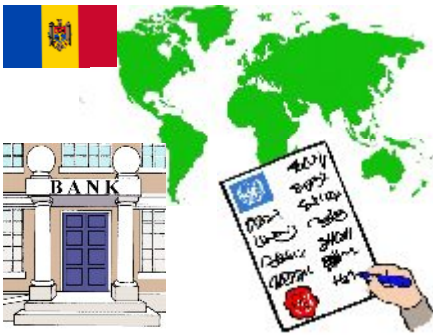
- make sure every person with disabilities can have free legal help



- have laws and court papers in EasyRead and ways that people with different disabilities can understand



- train judges and lawyers about the agreement and the rights of people with disabilities.



Working with other countries

- other countries, banks and organisations should support Moldova to keep to the agreement and make changes



- the **United Nations** should share good ideas and help Moldova have better information about people with disabilities.



7. What the words mean

Convention – an agreement between different countries.

Rights – things that should happen for every person.

Human Rights – basic rights and freedoms that should happen for every person in the world.

Discrimination – means being treated worse than other people because of who you are.

Disability certificate – a paper that says a doctor has tested you and you have a disability.

Roma – a group of people who live in different countries all over the world.

Social protection - things that give everyone the same chances in life. For example, having enough food, basic healthcare, going to school or money to help pay for things.

Special Rapporteur – a person working for the UN who helps countries understand what they need to do to make sure people get their rights.

Torture – hurting someone on purpose to make them do or say something.

United Nations (UN) – a group of 193 different countries that work together to try to make the world a better and safer place for everyone.



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