Nothing about us without us!
The human rights of disabled people in Scotland.
The human rights of disabled people.

Human rights are basic rights and freedoms that belong to everyone.

The human rights of disabled people are not always respected and protected because of discrimination.

Discrimination means treating someone worse than other people for some reason.

The rights of disabled people are not always respected and protected because services, buildings and transport are often designed without us.
What is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities?

The United Nations is an organisation that works with countries to keep peace and security across the world.

A Convention is an agreement that means countries will protect human rights in the same way for everyone.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities sets out how the human rights of disabled people should be respected and protected.

In this document we will call this convention the ‘CRPD’ for short.

The UK Government ratified the CRPD in 2009.

Ratified means they promised to do what the convention says and act to protect disabled people’s rights.
This includes things like:

- stopping disability discrimination so disabled people can live independently in the community

- having an education system that gives all learners choices and chances

- making sure disabled people are not at risk of harm

There is an Easy Read version of the CRPD [here](#).

**The United Nations CRPD Committee**

The United Nations has a group of people that check what work countries are doing on the CRPD and if it is working well.

This group is called The United Nations CRPD Committee.

The Committee does 3 main things.
1. The Committee checks how the CRPD is working.

If a country signs up to the CRPD the Committee will check:

- what the country has done to protect all the rights
- what the country has done to tell people what rights they have
- if disabled people help to make plans and check if work is going well

They check this every 4 years.

Then the Committee publish a report called ‘Concluding Observations’.

The report says what they found out and what should happen next.

You can read the 2017 report about the UK on the United Nations website.

2. The Committee can have an inquiry if it gets information that shows a country is not protecting the human rights of disabled people.

An inquiry is a way of finding out information.
The Committee had an inquiry into how UK Government policies affected the rights of disabled people since 2010.

The inquiry found that Government policies had not looked after the rights of disabled people, especially:

- the right to independent living
- the right to work and employment
- and the right to a fair standard of living, to be included in communities and to be kept safe from poverty

Poverty means not having enough money to buy basic things like food or housing.

You can read the Committee’s report on the Inquiry into the UK’s treatment of disabled people on the UN website.
3. The Committee writes ‘General Comments’.

These are documents where the Committee explains the rights in the CRPD.

For example General Comment 7 is about how disabled people and Disabled People’s Organisations should be involved in:

- telling governments and organisations what they think of the CRPD
- making sure governments and organisations are following the CRPD
- checking the CRPD is working well.

You can read General Comment 7 on the United Nations [website](https://www.un.org/).
Checking the CRPD

An important part of the Committee’s work is to check how the CRPD is working.

There are 6 steps in the way they check this.

1. Organisations write shadow reports

The Committee does not do a review on its own.

Other groups in the country give reports to the Committee so that they find out more.

Civil Society

Civil society are organisations like Inclusion Scotland that are not linked to government or private companies.

Civil society groups across the UK write reports so the Committee hears what is happening to disabled people in the UK.

These are called shadow reports.
You can read an Easy Read version of the UK civil society group shadow report from 2017 on the United Nations website.

Human Rights Institutions

The Equality and Human Rights Commission and the Scottish Human Rights Commission are human rights institutions.

Human rights institutions have the job of protecting and promoting human rights in the country.

They are not connected to government.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission and the Scottish Human Rights Commission are called the United Kingdom Independent Mechanism (UKIM).

They have a special role to promote, protect and check how the CRPD is working in the UK.
UKIM also write a report to tell the Committee what things they should look at when they review the UK.

You can read UKIM’s 2017 report to the Committee here.

For the UK’s next review, UKIM and civil society organisations will send in their reports in April 2022.

2. The Committee publishes a list of issues

The United Nations Committee reads the shadow reports and uses these to come up with a list of issues.

The list of issues is a list of things the United Nations Committee wants to ask the UK about.

For the UK’s next review we expect the Committee to publish its list of issues at the end of 2022.
3. The UK government responds to the list of issues

The UK government writes a report that answers the questions the Committee has asked.

They must do this before a year has passed.

For the UK’s next review this should be at the end of 2023

Other organisations and groups can also write a reply to the list of issues.

4. The Committee examines the government

After all the reports are sent in the Committee look at the report the UK government has given them at a big public meeting.
People from the UK government will go to the meeting.

The Committee can ask them questions or make comments.

For the UK’s next review this should happen at the end of 2023 or later.

5. The Committee publishes recommendations

After the UK has been examined, the Committee publishes a report with recommendations.

The recommendations are the things the Committee says the UK government should do to make life better for disabled people.

This report is called the ‘Concluding Observations’.

For the UK’s next review this should take place at the end of 2023 or later.
6. Government implements recommendations

After the Committee publishes its report, the UK government should do the things that it has recommended.

The report puts pressure on the UK government to make changes to make disabled people's lives better.

Other information

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has:

- a guide on the CRPD.
- information on the monitoring process on their CRPD webpage.

There is a British Sign Language version and an Easy Read version of the CRPD guide.