

EN
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Answer given by Ms Lahbib
on behalf of the European Commission
(21.3.2025)

Under the United Nations Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (UNCRPD)¹, Parties, including the EU and all its Member States, shall guarantee persons with disabilities can effectively and fully participate in the conduct of public affairs without discrimination², and address the specific challenges and needs of women with disabilities, as subjects to multiple discrimination³.

The Commission recalls the importance to ensure gender equality and rights for all women in the EU. This includes achieving gender balance in leadership positions, in line with the Commission's Gender Equality Strategy⁴, and through the adopted Gender Balance on Corporate Boards Directive⁵. The Commission has been leading by example by ensuring gender-balance in its middle-management⁶. Moreover, the Commission adopted a new Human Resources Strategy to boost employment of staff with disabilities to foster diversity and inclusiveness⁷.

Furthermore, the Strategy for the rights of persons with disabilities 2021-2030⁸ promotes an intersectional perspective, addressing specific barriers faced by persons with disabilities. The Commission is working on a progress report to assess the implementation of the Strategy.

The National Guarantor Authority for the rights of persons with disabilities is not subject to specific EU law imposing a particular composition of its board. However, the Commission encourages Member States to ensure gender equality and the inclusion of persons with disabilities in decision-making.

¹ The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) is the first international, legally binding instrument setting minimum standards for rights of people with disabilities. For the EU, the convention entered into force on 22 January 2011. All EU Member States have signed and ratified the convention.

² United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Art.29 – Participation in political and public life: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-persons-disabilities>

³ United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Art.8 – Women and girls with disabilities: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-persons-disabilities>

⁴ A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025, p. 13: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52020DC0152>

⁵ Directive (EU) 2022/2381 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 November 2022 on improving the gender balance among directors of listed companies and related measures: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2022/2381/oj/eng>

⁶ The European Commission has 48% of women in senior management positions; 49% in middle management positions; and 51% in middle management in Executive Agencies.

⁷ Communication to the Commission - A new Human Resources Strategy for the Commission: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_22_1783

⁸ EU's Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030 covers all areas of the UNCRPD: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/3e1e2228-7c97-11eb-9ac9-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>