

EN

E-004441/2025

Answer given by Ms Lahbib
on behalf of the European Commission
(28.1.2026)

The EU has competences to coordinate, rather than harmonise, national social security schemes. Under EU social security law¹ Member States remain responsible for organising their schemes, with invalidity benefits, disability assessment, cross-border recognition, benefit allocation. The EU coordination protects EU citizens with disabilities and their carers social security rights when moving across borders. Periods of insurance or residence completed in other Member State may be used to establish entitlement. Benefits, such as invalidity pensions, remain fully payable even if the beneficiary lives outside the paying Member State. The exemptions are disability-related benefits that are special non-contributory cash benefits² or social assistance, which are not required to be exported under EU law.

Depending on the social security coverage provided for by a Member State, persons with disabilities needing social integration may receive long-term care benefits to help cover extra age or disability-related costs. The Commission proposed to revise EU social protection coordination rules³ with more specific rules to better coordinate these benefits in cross-border situations.

Directive 2024/2841⁴ introduces a mutually recognised European Disability Card as proof of a disability when accessing special conditions or preferential treatment offered by a wide variety of services, activities or facilities, in the context of a short stay or EU mobility programme. By 5 June 2029, the Commission shall assess remaining gaps relating to the free movement of persons with disabilities, within the EU competence, and shall take account of the outcome of that assessment when deciding if further action at EU level is required⁵.

¹ Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the coordination of social security systems (Text with relevance for the EEA and for Switzerland) and Regulation (EC) No 987/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 September 2009 laying down the procedure for implementing Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 on the coordination of social security systems (Text with relevance for the EEA and for Switzerland).

² Article 70 and Annex X of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004.

³ Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 on the coordination of social security systems and regulation (EC) No 987/2009 laying down the procedure for implementing Regulation (EC) No 883/2004: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52016PC0815>.

⁴ Directive (EU) 2024/2841 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2024 establishing the European Disability Card and the European Parking Card for persons with disabilities: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/2841/oj/eng>.

⁵ Directive (EU) 2024/2841, article 20.