



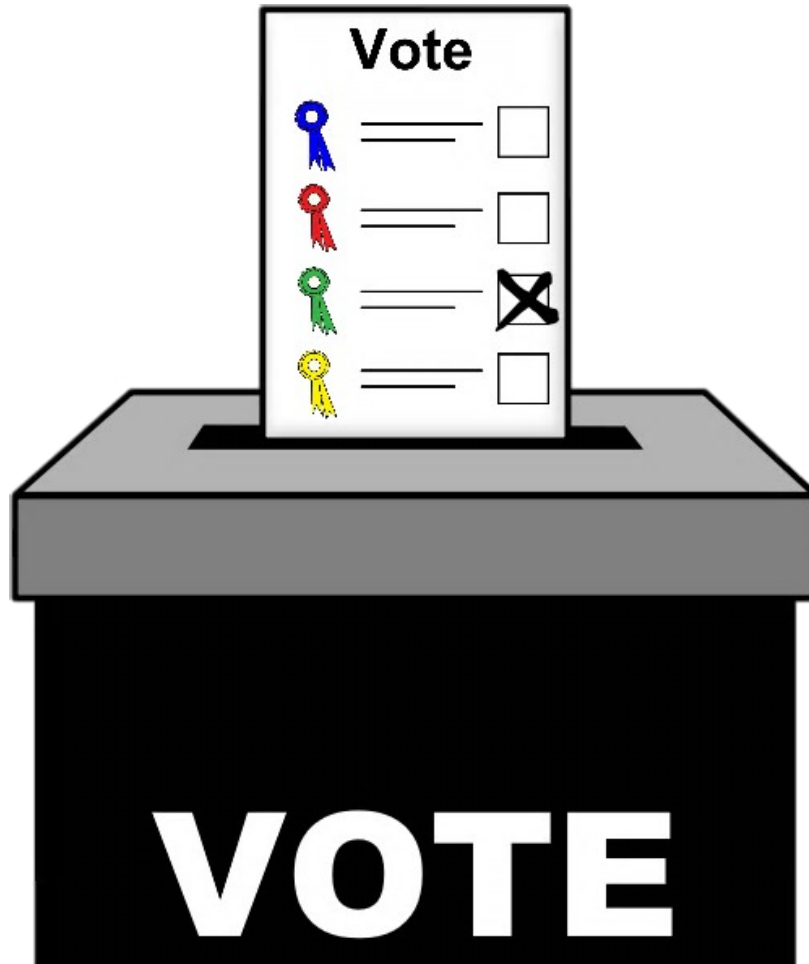
Inclusion
international



The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Inclusion International



UNPRPD MPTF
Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities



How Governments and other organizations can help everyone to vote and take part in politics



EasyRead version

2021

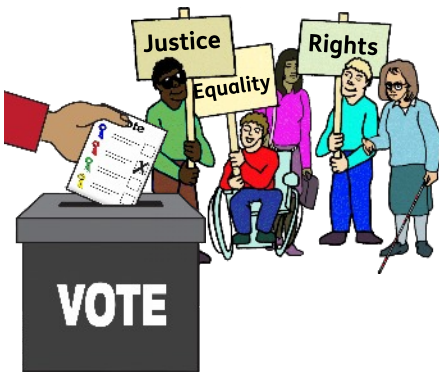
What is in this document?



The **United Nations** has an agreement between countries about the rights of people with disabilities.



This agreement is called the **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)**.



Part of this agreement is about the rights of people with disabilities to vote and take part in politics.



This document is for people with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities. The document asks people to think about ways that they can take part in elections.



Inclusion
international



Part one

1

Who are we?

1



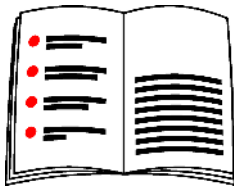
What is politics about?

3



Your rights in politics

5



What this document is about

9



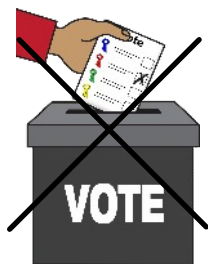
Human Rights

12



How we wrote this document

15



Why some people don't vote or
take part in politics

19



What persons with intellectual or
psychosocial disabilities want:
voices from around the world

22



Part 2

24

How you can help make elections fairer **24**



Group 1: The rules and laws

26



Group 2: Before an election

30



Group 3: Election day

37



Group 4: After election day

40

Part 1: Who are we?



Inclusion International is an organization that works to make sure people with intellectual disabilities and their families are included and have the same rights as everyone else.



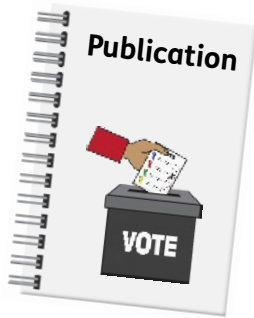
The **United Nations (UN)** works to make sure people around the world are treated equally and have their human rights.



The United Nations (UN) has different offices that work on different issues.



The United Nations (UN) office that is doing this work is called the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).



The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has joined up with Inclusion International to write a document for countries all over the world to help everyone to vote and take part in politics.



The document is funded by the United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Multi-Partner Trust Fund (UNPRPD MPTF).

What is politics about?

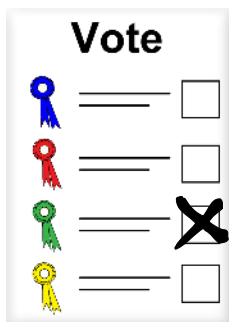


We want everybody around the world to have their say in **politics**.

Politics is how the big decisions in a country are decided. For example, big decisions could be about government, the environment, refugees, schools, transport, and the police.



A lot of countries ask people to vote for who they want to make decisions.



Voting is usually done by having an **election**.

An **election** is when people vote to say who they want to make decisions.



People who want to make decisions for their country can share their ideas and ask others to vote for them. The people with the highest number of votes get voted into jobs where they make decisions.



For example, in lots of countries there are elections to decide who is in the **government**.

The **government** is the group of people who make big decisions.

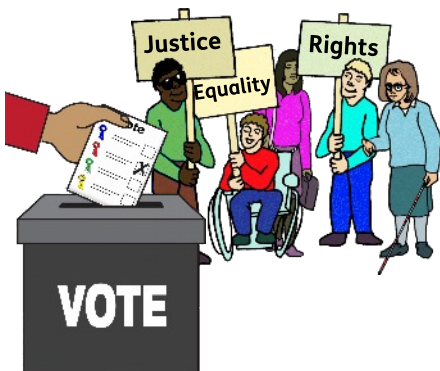
Your rights in politics



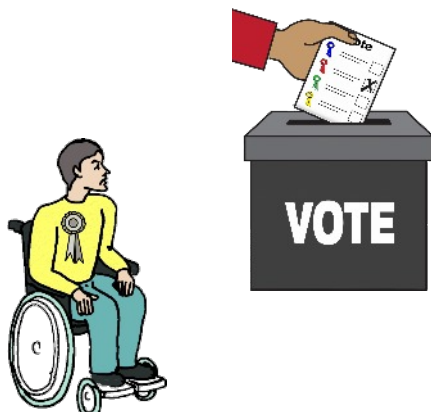
The United Nations has an agreement between countries about the rights of people with disabilities.



This agreement is called the **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)**.



Part of this agreement is about the rights of people with disabilities to vote and take part in politics.



It says that every person has a right to:

- vote
- to be a candidate



- take part in politics



- understand the information



- be able to get to voting places



- have a say in their own lives



- be treated equally to anyone else.



Sometimes 2 groups of people do not get a chance to vote or have their say.

They are:



1. People with intellectual disabilities face challenges in society to being included and taking part. For example may need help working things out, talking with other people or looking after themselves.

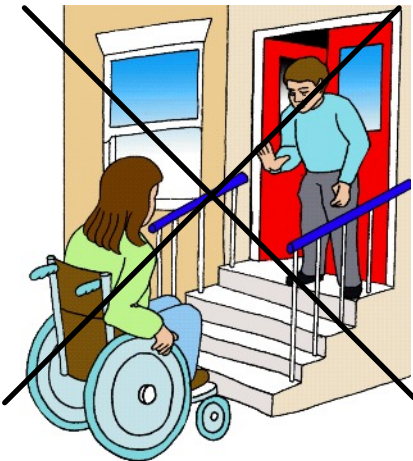


2. People with psychosocial disabilities.
This is a group of people who face issues or barriers from having a mental health condition.



People with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities can face issues or **barriers**.

A **barrier** is anything that gets in the way of taking part with other people in the community.



The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities says that those barriers should be removed.



People with intellectual disabilities or psychosocial disabilities are still not allowed to vote in a lot of countries.



This is because of laws that say people with intellectual disabilities and psychosocial disabilities are not able to make decisions.



This is not fair!

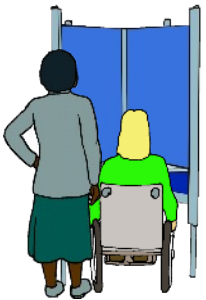


The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities says that those barriers should be removed by:

- getting rid of any laws that do not treat people equally
- supporting people to make their own decisions.



What this document is about



This publication has practical suggestions about:

- how to check the way things are happening right now
- how to support persons with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities to vote and take part in politics.



This is what we want:

- we want governments to have a plan about making politics fair for everyone
- we want organizations managing elections to make sure that people with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities have information and support to vote and to be a candidate
- we want parliaments to make sure elections are inclusive and fair





- judges are people who make decisions about the law. We want judges to make sure that people with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities can vote



- we want national human rights institutions (NHRIs) to check that people with disabilities are treated fairly in politics



- we want organizations that represent people with disabilities to show governments good examples of how things are done in other countries



- we hope that service providers supporting people with disabilities help people with transport and other support they need to take part in electoral processes



- we are asking political parties to help people with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities to stand as candidates by making their information easy to read



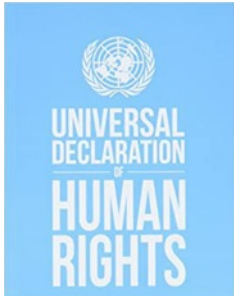
- we expect the news media to report on elections fairly and truthfully
- we will ask international organizations to include people with disabilities during elections.

Human Rights



Around the world, laws have been made to look after people with disabilities.

Some of these laws are:



- The Universal Declaration on Human Rights.
- The International Convention on Civil and Political Rights.

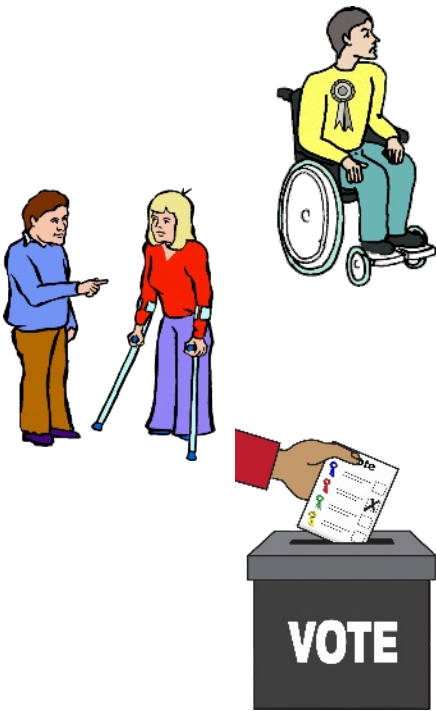


- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

These laws say that people with disabilities have the same community rights as others, such as:



- the right to be treated equally to anyone else



- the right to be a candidate
- the right to say who is running the country
- the right to vote and get the **support** they need to take part in politics.

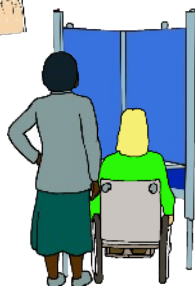
The **support** to take part in politics includes:



- helping people with disabilities to join organizations that deal with politics



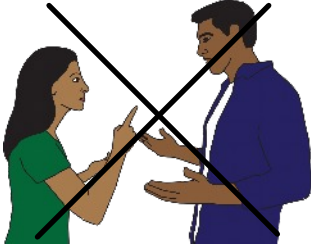
- providing information about how to vote in easy read and other formats



- making voting places accessible to everybody



- helping people keep their voting choice private



- protecting people from being told who to vote for by others when they are voting



- keeping people safe at voting places.

How we wrote this document

2020			
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec



In 2020 Inclusion International asked people for their ideas.



We talked with groups called **focus groups**. Focus groups are meetings where people come together to talk about a topic.



We asked 133 men and women from 24 countries around the world.



We spoke to people with intellectual or learning disabilities in:

- Malawi
- the United Republic of Tanzania



- Egypt
- Israel
- Nepal
- New Zealand
- Mexico
- Peru
- Moldova
- Spain.

We spoke to people with psychosocial disabilities in:



- Fiji
- Georgia
- Kenya
- Peru
- Asia, the Pacific, and Europe.

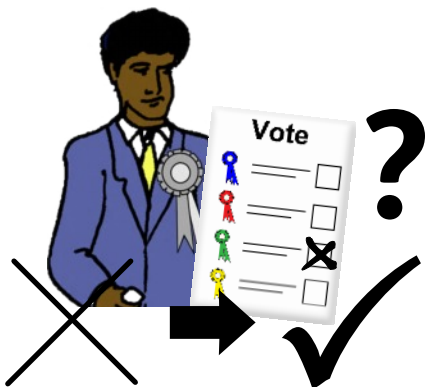


We kept everybody's name private.

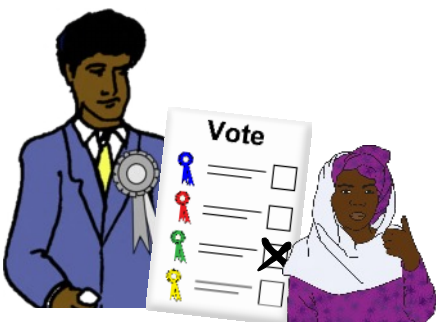


These are the questions we asked:

1. What things get in the way when you want to know about politics?



2. What needs to change so you can get involved in politics?



3. Can you tell us about good things that help you get involved in politics?

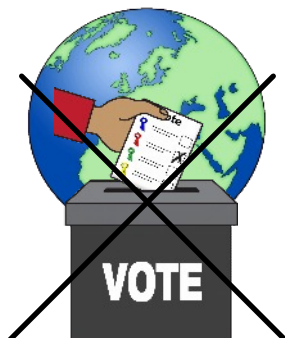


4. What would you like to say to governments and people who run elections?



We used their answers to make checklists of things governments and other organizations can do to help things change faster.

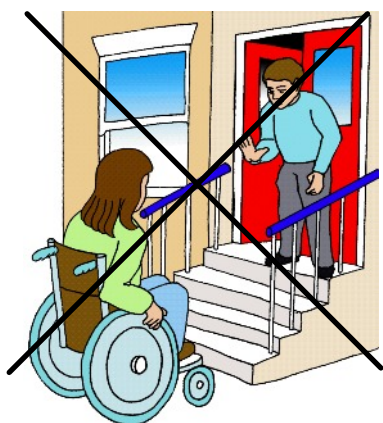
Why some people don't vote or take part in politics



Around the world, many people with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities do not vote or take part in politics.



This is because there are barriers. A barrier is anything that gets in the way of taking part in the community.



The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities says that those barriers should be removed.



Here is what people told us about the barriers.

These are examples from lots of countries and it may be different where you live.



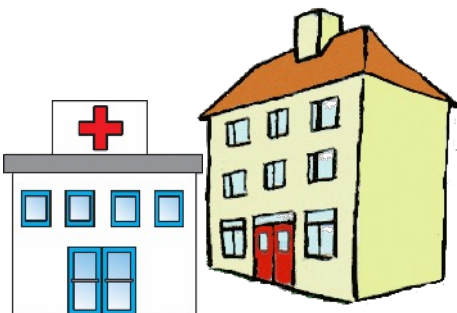
1. There are countries where they do not allow some people to take part in politics. This is because the countries think they cannot make important decisions.



2. The voting place is not accessible to people who are blind, in wheelchairs or need Braille, sign language or assistive technology.



3. A person with anxiety may not feel safe at a voting place.



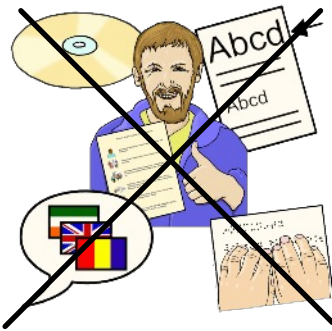
4. People living in supported group institutions or hospitals are not allowed to vote.



5. The information about politics is too difficult to read and understand.



6. The information about who to vote for in an election is not clear.



7. The information about who to vote for in an election is not in large print, Braille, Easy Read, audio, video.

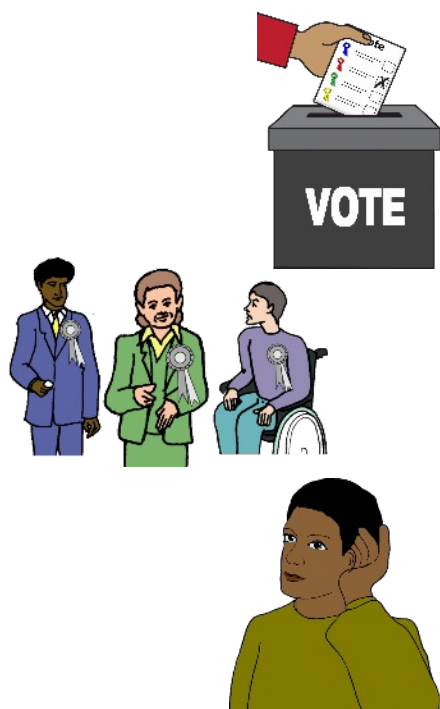


8. Election organizers do not understand that people with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities can make decisions.



9. People with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities are not involved in planning and organizing elections.

What persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities want: voices from around the world



People said they want:

- equal rights to vote
- equal rights to be elected
- politicians who listen to their needs and ask for their help when making decisions that affect them.



A man from Malawi said:

I am a person with intellectual disability and I am married with two kids ... I voted this year and I intend to be voting as long as am alive.



A man from Nepal who wanted to be a politician said:

Though I could not win, this will set as an example that persons with intellectual disabilities can be an election candidate.



A person from Spain said:

I ... suffered prejudice when voting, because they believed that I was not capable.



Information from around the world tells us that only a few people with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities vote. Sometimes they don't know how and sometimes they don't get the chance.

Part 2: How you can help make elections fairer



We want to get better at including people with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities in politics.



The 2020 focus group made a list of ways to help people with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities vote and take part in politics.



We have sorted the list into 4 groups.

Group 1 is about the laws.



Group 2 is about things that happen before an election.



Group 3 is about what happens on election day.

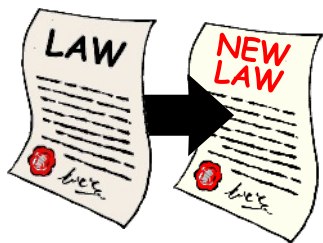


Group 4 is about what happens after the election



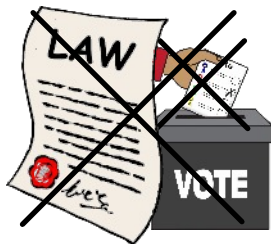
We want people with disabilities and their organizations to check how well their country is doing and see what more could be done.

Group 1: The rules and laws

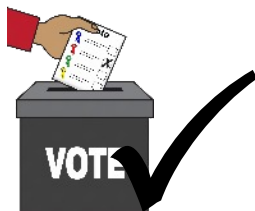


This is about:

- how laws and rules can be changed to include all people
- getting rid of laws and rules that stop people with disabilities from voting or taking part in politics.



Here are things to check or ask for in your country



The laws and rules in my country let people with disabilities vote. This includes people:



with intellectual disabilities



with psychosocial disabilities



with a guardian



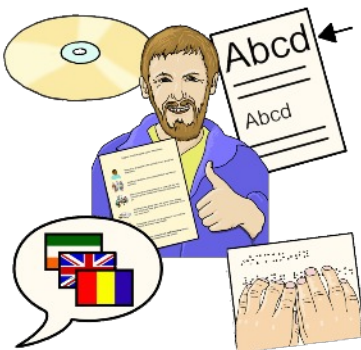
living in an institution.



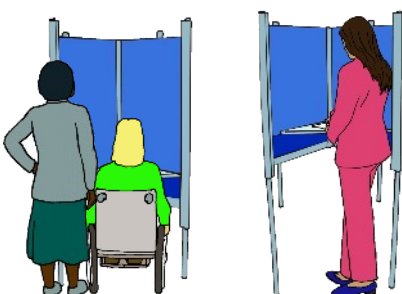
People with disabilities get the support they need to be a candidate or help out with elections.



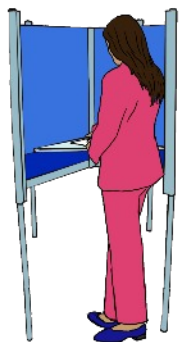
Organizations of people with disabilities are involved in planning elections.



All information about politics are in different formats that people need and are in the languages people use.



People with a disability can vote by a secret **ballot** on their own or be helped by someone they choose. A ballot is a vote.



A person with a disability can ask someone they trust to vote for them.



My country keeps information about whether voters have a disability, how old and what gender they are. This information is kept private.



My country has a plan about my right to vote and I can have a say about it.

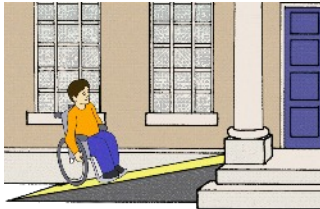


Organizations run by and run for people with disabilities to make training about politics for their members.



My government helps people with disabilities vote or to be a candidate by:

making information in many formats, like Easy Read



making polling or voting places safe and accessible.

Group 2: Before an election

Lots of things happen before an election like:



- People have to register to vote. Register means to fill out a form with your name, age and address so you can vote on election day.



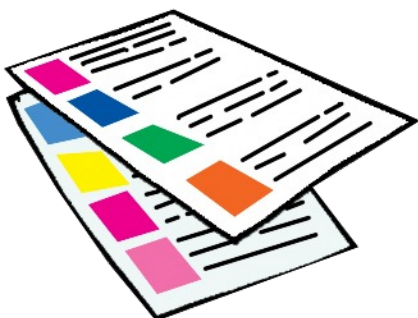
- People have to register to be a candidate. Standing for election is when you want people to vote for you.



- Voters need information about who they are voting for.

Registering to vote in an election

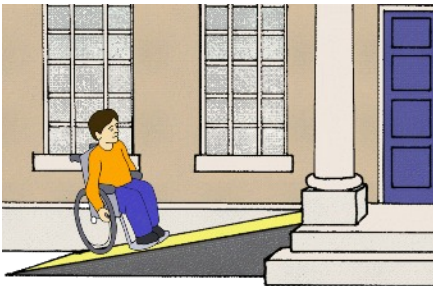
Here are things to check or ask for in your country



The information about how to register my name is easy to read and I know that I can bring someone to help me register to vote.



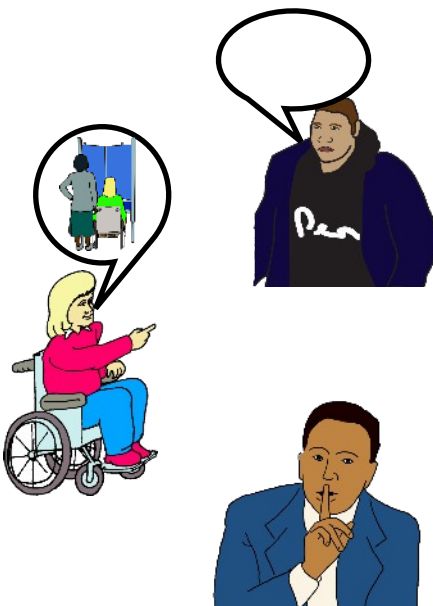
People with disabilities can easily get proof of their identity, or who they are, before they register to vote.



The place where I register my name is safe and accessible to all people, and has people who want to help me.



It is easy to check my registration to vote and to change any details I need to.



People with disabilities can safely:

say they have a disability

ask for support on voting day

and know this will be kept private



Registering to be a candidate in an election

A candidate is a person who is standing for election.

Here are things to check or ask for in your country

Candidates with disabilities can get the help they need to register including:

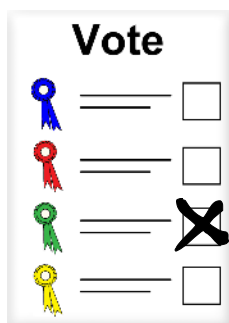


information in Easy Read or other formats.



allowing their support person to be with them if needed.

Information for people who are voting in an election



People need to know how to vote and that voting is important.

Here are things to check or ask for in your country



Voters can learn how to vote in different formats and in different ways. This can be:

online



at support groups



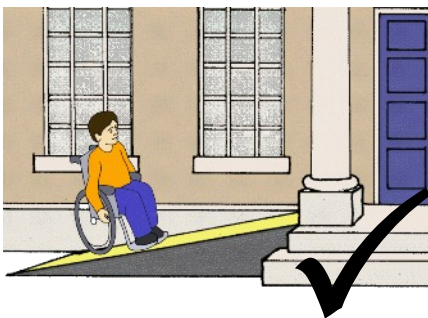
in care



through a disability organization.



People with disabilities can choose someone to help them.



It is easy for voters to check if the place they vote at is accessible and can meet their personal needs on polling day.

About how elections are set up and run



The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities says we must talk to people with disabilities when we are making rules and laws. This includes EMBs which stands for Election Management Bodies. They are the people setting up the election.

Here are things to check or ask for in your country

Election Management Bodies have a disability plan about:



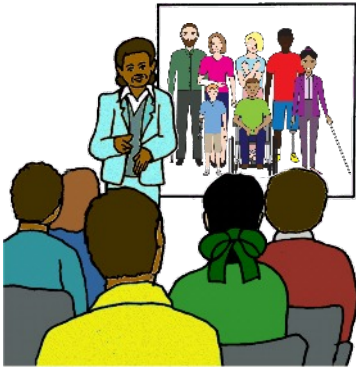
making information about the election easy to read and understand



talking to people with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities about registering for an election, voting, complaining



hiring people with disabilities and making the workplace friendly and supportive



training their staff about the rights of people with disabilities.

Political parties



These are the political groups who want to win an election. They need to think about the needs of people with disabilities when getting ready for an election.



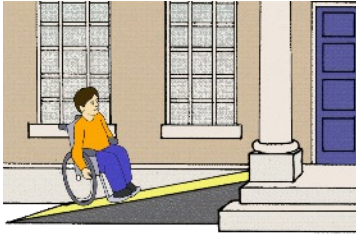
Here are things to check or ask for in your country

A person with a disability can get the support they need to stand as a candidate.



Main political parties have information called policies about including people with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities as candidates. The information must be easy to read and understand.

When political parties hold public events, they are safe for candidates with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities:



the place of the event will be safe and accessible



information will be in Easy Read



security staff will be helpful, such as welcoming a support person with the candidate.



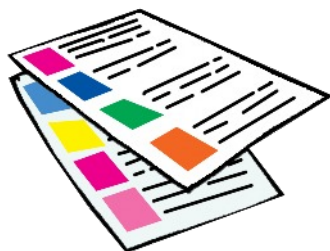
We want the media to ask candidates with disabilities about barriers when they are getting ready for the election.

Group 3: Election day



Election day is when people go to a voting place called a polling station.

Here are things to check or ask for in your country



At the polling station there is:

clear, Easy-Read information about how to vote



help for people if they make a mistake on the voting form



information about how to complain.



When you are voting, you can:

choose a person to bring along to help you



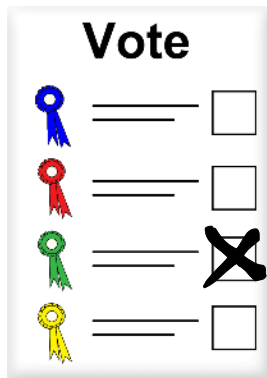
ask for plenty of time to make your vote



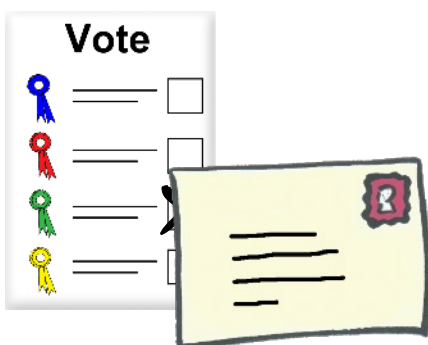
ask for a quiet space to make your vote if you are bothered by the noise and crowds.



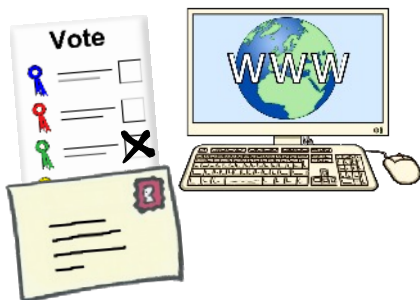
There is a clear and easy-to-use way to complain and get help.



The voting paper, called a ballot paper, is easy to understand. This can be Easy Read, symbols, or photos.



If you cannot go to a polling station, there can be other ways to vote, such as posting your vote or voting from your own home.



If you cannot go to a polling station, you are given other ways to vote.



On voting day, there are many workers called election staff who have a job to help out.



The election staff welcome and support people with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities to work with them on election day.

Group 4: After election day

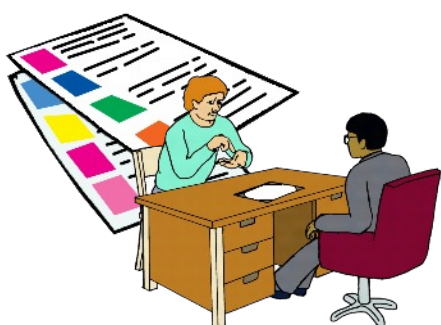


This part is about seeing the results of the election and sorting out any problems or arguments.



Here are things to check or ask for in your country

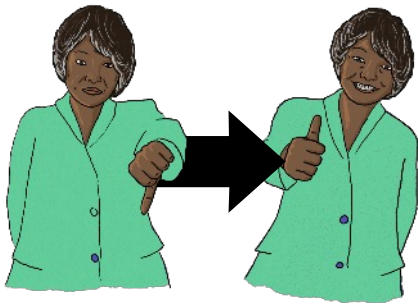
You can read about who won the election on the internet in Easy Read.



There is easy-to-read information about how to complain.



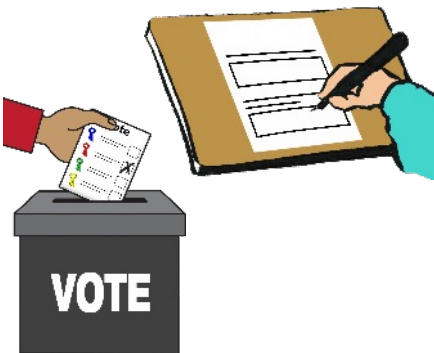
You can find help to make a complaint. This may be a support person you choose or a legal person.



After the election it is helpful to check how everything went and what could be done better.

Here are things to check or ask for in your country

There is a chance for people with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities to say how they found each part of the election:



registering to vote before the election

voting



standing as a candidate



after the election.

Credits



This paper has been designed and produced by the EasyRead service at Inspired Services Publishing Ltd.

Ref ISL137 21. November 2021.

www.inspiredservices.org.uk



Artwork includes material from the Inspired EasyRead Collection and cannot be used anywhere else without written permission from Inspired Services.

www.inspired.pics
