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# Towards cross-national convergence of disability politics? A comparative study on the involvement of disability organisations in UN CRPD implementation processes in European countries

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## Abstract

The United Nations' Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) has acknowledged the relevance of organisations representing persons with disabilities by obliging States Parties to consult with and actively involve these organisations in CRPD implementation processes at national level. Against this background this presentation investigates the involvement of disability organisations in national policies that have aimed at ratifying and, in a further step, are about to implement the Convention. It uses empirical data generated within the EU funded research consortium DISCIT and draws on 84 guided informant interviews with national experts of disability policy and representatives of disability organisations in the nine European countries Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Ireland, Norway, Serbia, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

This presentation uses a qualitative method of analysis, for its analytical concept it refers to the approaches of international relations, transnationalism and policy convergence. It will first investigate in what ways national disability organisations have become engaged in efforts towards achieving CRPD ratification in their countries and how these organisations have in recent years been involved in implementation processes. Second, the interview data is used to explore the impact of the CRPD with regard to national styles of political deliberation and decision-making. This national comparative study intends to answer the question whether the CRPD has increased disability organisations' chances to exercise influence on behalf of persons with disabilities and what practices have resulted from these opportunities. It concludes with identifying a trend towards cross-national convergence of disability politics in the age of the United Nations' Convention.

**Keywords:** UN Convention, human rights, disability rights advocacy, disability politics, Europe, policy convergence

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