

FIGHT FOR RIGHT

ADVOCACY AGENDA

FIGHT FOR RIGHT

2022-2024

Before Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the Fight For Right (FFR) non-governmental organization, together with the community of people with disabilities, developed a human rights agenda with the advocacy goals we set for 2022-2024.



These were crucial long-term goals for the community of people with disabilities¹, and achieving them would improve the situation:

Exercising the right of a person with disabilities to be fully involved in political life. It means far beyond just being able to come to the polling station, casting their vote independently and consciously, but also being able to stand for election, serve as observers, join political parties, influence political processes, follow the political agenda, etc.;

Having the opportunity to enjoy the right to work, not to wait for the "hiring of workbooks" according to the quota or expect some "special" jobs for people with disabilities², to help employers become inclusive by arranging accessible workplaces, enabling assistive technologies, and providing reasonable adaptations³;

Accelerating the reform of the Medical and Social Expert Commission (MSEC) and ensuring the provision of medical services to people with disabilities in line with human rights standards, patient protection, and personal data confidentiality;

¹A non-exhaustive [list](#) of pre-planned activities of Fight For Right for 2022-2024

²Enterprises, institutions, organizations, and individuals employing hired personnel shall allocate and create jobs to employ persons with disabilities, including special jobs (...). Please find more details in [Article 18 of the Law of Ukraine On the Fundamentals of Social Security of the Disabled in Ukraine](#)

³Reasonable adaptations require employers to take different measures, wherever this is necessary in specific cases, to enable persons with disabilities to access employment, work, or be promoted/trained. Please find more details in [Article 5 of Directive 2000/78/EC establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation](#)

Securing the reform of state aid to NGOs of people with disabilities and the introduction of a transparent tendering procedure for the distribution of funds and further accountability;

Implementing a system to collect disaggregated centralized data on people with disabilities with its further breakdown by at least such variables as gender, age, place of residence, type of disability, etc.;

Ensuring that both public and railway transport is accessible for people with disabilities, and it is not just about a few separate accessible cars, but about the ability to travel independently, plan individual trips, be able to buy tickets through digital technologies on an equal footing with others, etc.;

Developing, adopting, and implementing legal frameworks for accessible information formats and obligations to use them in all areas so that people with different types of disabilities can use information equally with people without disabilities⁴.



The above and other goals set by Fight For Right at the end of 2021 are still essential for human rights advocacy today. As well as for achieving a real opportunity for all people with disabilities in Ukraine to enjoy their human rights.

The very first days and weeks after February 24, 2022, have already proved the lack of disaggregated or any updated and transparent data on the number of people with disabilities, understanding of their security needs, and the relevance of addressing the crisis with a human rights-based approach in mind. Likewise, there is a shortfall in including people with disabilities in decision-making processes at all levels, which often causes the needs of people with disabilities to be overlooked and their rights violated.

⁴In this case, Fight For Right is primarily focusing on plain language formats, [audio description](#), extended subtitles, sign language translation, Braille, and large font.

Looking at the work done by our team, the data from the human rights community of people with disabilities, and the requests for assistance from people with disabilities, which are received 24/7 by the FFR hotline operators, Fight For Right never fails in its efforts. However, it is forced to admit that other complex tasks, which are caused by systemic gaps in Ukrainian legislation and society, are now being brought to the forefront of the advocacy agenda.

After all, only by addressing these systemic gaps, it will be possible to move on to the previous goals and focus on the development of an inclusive society during the reconstruction of Ukraine.



Bearing in mind the Fight For Right's experience from February to August 2022, we should point out the following systemic gaps in the work of the state and local governments:

- The lack of an inclusive system for ensuring individual security for the civilian population and gaps in the State's evacuation and humanitarian actions, which impose a disproportionate burden⁵ on the public sector, which mostly provides humanitarian assistance and evacuation of people with disabilities;
- The presence of an extensive, congested, and unreformed system of institutional accommodation for people with disabilities in Ukraine⁶, which was not capable of ensuring the personal safety of all residents, as well as timely organized mass evacuation;
- Apart from the imminent danger associated with the hostilities, people living in residential institutions have faced a significant deterioration of their situation due to the disrupted supply routes for medicines and food, as well as limited staff;

⁵Find out more about the evacuation of people with disabilities in Fight For Right's research [here](#) and [here](#)

⁶Throughout the document, Fight For Right mainly refers to adults with disabilities and older people residing in geriatric and psychoneurological institutions

The lack of accessible and inclusive services for internally displaced persons (IDPs) with disabilities. Despite the experience of previous years and multiple complaints from the public and international organizations, Ukraine continues to arrange and provide services to IDPs without applying the principle of individual approach and, accordingly, without taking into account specific needs;

Critically inaccessible infrastructure and housing stock of Ukraine, which were further affected by the hostilities in certain areas. The implications are critical for many internally displaced persons with disabilities, as it is the lack of accessible housing and the inability to access urban infrastructure independently that forces many to flee the country and seek refuge abroad⁷;

Neither the state and local authorities of Ukraine nor international humanitarian service providers can hold effective consultations with the public when planning assistance, which also reduces its accessibility and isolates it from the specific needs of people with disabilities;

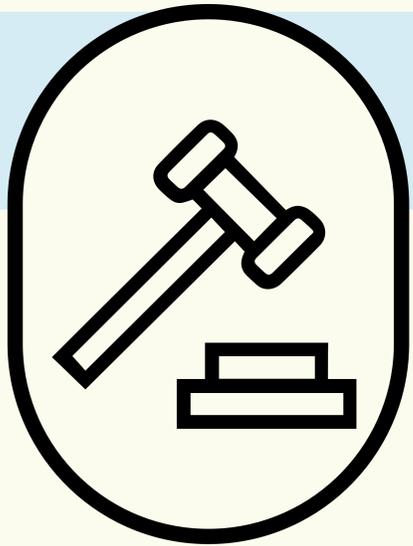
The lack of inclusive decision-making, especially at the national level, and the failure to engage the community of people with disabilities in the processes of building, coordinating, and implementing humanitarian actions.

Addressing systemic gaps is a prerequisite for building an inclusive and justice-based Ukraine, as well as for implementing other ambitious and urgently needed tasks to improve the lives and enjoyment of all rights and fundamental freedoms by people with disabilities.



With the complexity of the challenge in mind, Fight For Right aims at advocating for the introduction of a human rights-based model of disability in Ukraine and identifies three priority areas for 2022-2023:

⁷Meanwhile, others are forced into a deeper institutionalization

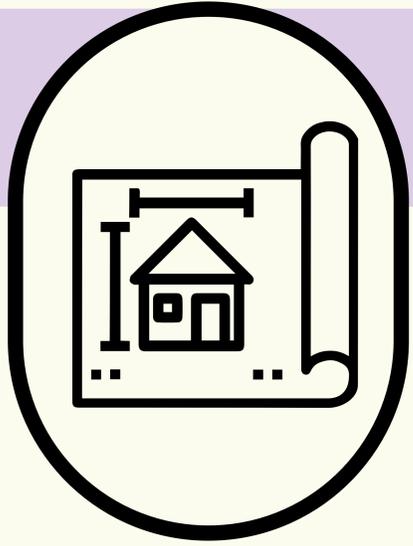


Area 1

Goals related to advocacy for the rights of people with disabilities during the war:

- Resume continuous monitoring of all institutional facilities as required by the National Preventive Mechanism and ensure compliance with the standards of decent living and human rights for residents of these institutions;
- Supervise careful recording of all war crimes committed against people with disabilities and, accordingly, access to justice for victims in the future;
- Demand a moratorium on building, restoring destroyed institutions, and establishing new ones of any type that do not meet the requirements of the Convention and guidelines of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities⁸;
- Promote and adopt requirements for the provision of accessible services to people with disabilities at the state standard level.

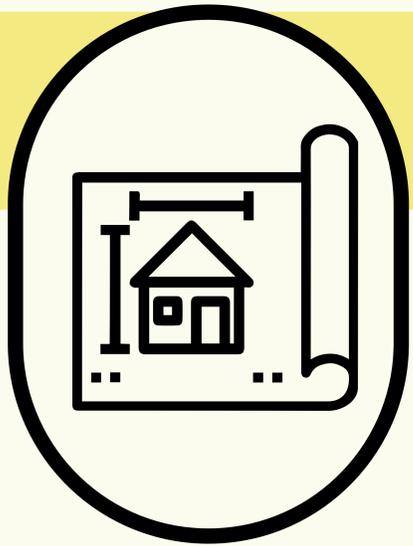
⁸Guidelines on deinstitutionalization, including in emergencies by UN CRPD Committee, [available](#) in English



Area 2

Goals related to ensuring the active participation of people with disabilities in decision-making processes on reconstruction:

- Make sure that plans for the reconstruction of Ukraine include the duty to restore accessible and inclusive infrastructure and other issues related to providing opportunities for all people with disabilities to live independently and equally in Ukrainian society;
- Ensure access of people with disabilities to public administration and humanitarian assistance through inclusion in decision-making processes at all stages ranging from local to international;
- Build an inclusive system of service provision to internally displaced persons with disabilities and inclusion of IDPs in the processes of humanitarian assistance planning and development of integration programs to meet their real needs.



Area 3

Incorporating the protection of the rights of people with disabilities into European integration processes (cross-cutting issues):

- Advocate for a cross-cutting human rights approach to understanding disability in Ukraine, including by reforming relevant legislation and the system of service provision for people with disabilities;
- Consider all EU standards and approaches on disability in Ukraine's action plans to align national legislation with EU requirements, including the transition from institutionalization to independent and supported living in the community for institutionalized people with disabilities;
- Initiate deinstitutionalization reform for adults with disabilities and older people;
- Include the right to independent living in national legislation as defined in Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;
- Request a cross-cutting approach in all state decisions regarding people with disabilities, including girls and women with disabilities;



Raise the problem of violence against women with disabilities, especially those living alone and in restricted institutions;



Increase awareness of people with disabilities of human rights, remedies, and fair trial, including accessible and confidential services for women with disabilities seeking to report domestic violence.



Once these advocacy goals are achieved, or at least these processes are launched, and Ukraine's victory is secured, Fight For Right intends to resume its previous human rights agenda because human rights are always relevant and must be ensured for all people without exception!

