



National Housing Strategy for Disabled People 2022 - 2027

Easy-to-Read Version



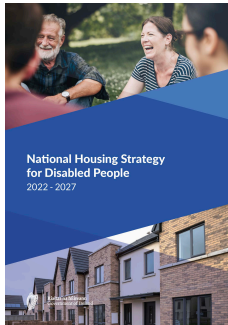
Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Introduction

This document is an easy-to-read version of the new National Housing Strategy for Disabled People.

A strategy is a plan about what the government is going to do.



The new housing strategy has been put together by the Housing Agency, along with

- The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
- The Department of Health
- The Department Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth



This is the second housing strategy for disabled people that Ireland has made.

The new strategy sets out the future plan for housing for disabled people for the next 5 years.



The strategy makes sure that disabled people are at the centre of decision-making when it comes to housing.

The new strategy will work alongside other strategies, such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).



The words we use about disability

As part of putting this strategy together, the wording used to describe disability was looked at.

Language is very important, and there are many words used to describe disability in Ireland and around the world.

Different groups use different words to describe themselves.

For some people, the term “disabled people” is the way they would like to describe themselves.

This term gives people pride in who they are and how they are seen by others.

It is also in line with the social model of disability that says that society disables people, and that disability is not within people.



For other groups, they would like to use other words to describe themselves.

Terms such as “people with a disability” or “people with an intellectual disability” are also important to people because they want to be seen as a person first, before their disability.



This strategy will use the term “disabled people” throughout the document.

But it will also use terms such as “people with intellectual disabilities” and “people with psychosocial disabilities” to represent people who would prefer to be described that way.



National Advisory Group

As part of putting this strategy together, a National Advisory Group was set up.

A National Advisory Group helps the government to make decisions.

This group was made up from

- Disability organisations
- Disabled Persons Organisations (DPOs)
- The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
- Department of Health
- Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth,
- The HSE
- Local Authorities



This group helped the Housing Agency by giving advice and information on the strategy and consultations.

A consultation is when we ask people for their opinion.

The Strategy

The new strategy has been separated into 4 main sections. These are:

1. What has been done
2. Where we are now
3. Where we want to get to
4. How we will get there





Section 1 - What Has Been Done?

National Housing Strategy for People with Disabilities (2011 – 2016, and extended until 2021)

The first chapter looks at what work has been done so far for housing for disabled people.



It looks at the last housing strategy and the work that was done.

This work included:

- Giving more houses to disabled people
- Setting up the Housing and Disability Steering Groups in each local authority.
- Making accessible information, such as the easy-to-read guide to filling out the Social Housing Application Form.
- Making the new medical form, called the HMD1 Form.



Progress on UNCRPD

This section also looks at the progress that has been made in relation to the UNCRPD.



This includes how Ireland completed its first ever State Report and sent it in to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.



This report explains all the work the State feels it has done to put the UNCRPD into action and promote the rights of disabled people.

The State also set up a new Network called the Disability Participation and Consultation network, or DPCN.



This Network has 117 members and includes Disabled Persons Organisations (DPOs), disability organisations, people with disabilities, family members and support groups.



The goal of the DPCN is to make sure that disabled people are involved in the development of policies and programmes.

Section 1 also looks at other policies that are out there and how they might relate to disability.

These are:

- The new Housing for All strategy
- The Disability Capacity Review to 2032
- The Time to Move on From Congregated Settings.
- Sharing the Vision
- Wasted Lives



Section 2 – Where We Are Now



Research

As part of the development of the new strategy two pieces of research were done.

The first piece of research is about Disability and Housing Approaches in other countries.



The research looked at good practice models of housing in other countries.

The research looked at 5 countries and the different housing, support and grant schemes they had in place.

The countries that were looked at were:

- England
- Canada
- Australia
- New Zealand
- Sweden



The results will be used to see if Ireland can learn from the research and also use some of these schemes in the future.



The second piece of research is Housing and Disability Steering Group Qualitative Assessment.



This involved the groups filling out a survey on how they feel the groups are working and what can be done to improve them.

The results from this research will help in putting together actions for the strategy.

Information on statistics



This chapter looks at the different statistics related to disability in Ireland.

It looks at:

- The number of disabled people in Ireland
- The numbers related to housing and disability
- The numbers related to poverty and disability
- The number of disabled people in residential care
- The number of disabled people living at home with family members
- The number of carers
- The number of people using services (such as day services)



This chapter also looks at the statistics related to people who need social housing support.



This is called the Summary of Social Housing Assessment.

This chapter looks at all the local authorities and the number of households with a disabled person who qualified for social housing.

It also shows the different needs and types of disability such as:

- Intellectual disability
- Mental health
- Physical
- Sensory



It also shows the places where there is more or less need for social housing for disabled people.



Consultation

This chapter goes through all the details involved in the consultation process for the new strategy.

It was important to make sure that disabled people were involved in this process, and that their voices were heard.



The Housing Agency made sure that the consultation process included everyone, and that it was done in an accessible way, in line with the UNCRPD.

The consultation process was split into 2 parts - Round 1 and Round 2.



Round 1 Consultation

This consultation involved:

- People filling out a survey
- Local Strategic Plans
- Housing and Disability Steering Groups (HDSGs) Strategic Plans

People who took part in this first round of consultation included:



- Disabled people
- Family members
- Local Authorities
- HSE
- Disabled Persons Organisations (DPOs)
- Disability organisations



The Housing Agency collected all the ideas and opinions of people from Round 1 and put them into 9 themes or topics for the Strategy.



Round 2 Consultation

The goals of Round 2 consultation were:

- to see what people thought of the draft themes which came from Round 1,
- and



- to come up with ideas for what should be done as part of the strategy

5 online focus groups were organised to get people's opinions. These were with:



- Disability Participation and Consultation Network (DPCN)
- Local Authorities, Approved Housing Bodies, the Irish Council of Social Housing and the HSE
- The National Federation of Voluntary Service Providers



As part of Round 2, the 9 draft themes which came out of Round 1 were sent out to everyone along with:

- An easy-to-read version
- A video to explain the themes



The themes were then discussed at each consultation.

People discussed the barriers that disabled people face, and they also said what could be the solutions or actions for the new strategy.



The main issues that came back as part of Round 2 were:

- Accessibility and design
- Agencies not working together enough
- Person centred approach, supports and assistive technology
- Future need
- Housing supply and affordability
- Access to information



The 9 themes were re-organised into 6 themes.

Section 3 – Where We Want to get to



The Strategy and the UNCRPD

This section is about making sure that the new strategy respects the UNCRPD.

This means that the new strategy will promote the right to a house for disabled people.



The most important UNCRPD Article for housing is Article 19 – Living independently and being included in the community.

This Article is about making sure that disabled people have equal rights in accessing housing and supports.



It also says that disabled people should be able to choose where they live and who they live with.

Other important UNCRPD Articles that are related to housing are:

- Article 9 – Accessibility
- Article 4.3 – What countries should do
- Article 28 – Good standard of living
- Article 31 – Information



The Vision and Themes

The vision for the new strategy explains how the strategy will build on all the work that has been done on housing and supports.



It also says that the strategy will give disabled people more choice and control over where, how and who they live with.



It says it will promote people being more included in their community.

The new strategy has 6 themes. These are:



Topic 1 – Accessible Housing and Communities

This theme is about making accessible housing for disabled people and making communities more accessible for everyone.



Topic 2 – Agencies working together and providing supports

This theme aims to build on the work that has already been done by improving the way organisations such as the HSE and Local Authorities work together.



It is also about making sure that housing and support services can happen at the same time.

Topic 3 – Affordability of Housing

This theme is about making sure disabled people have access to affordable housing.

Affordable means that you have money to buy or rent a house.



It will also look at ways to help disabled people buy their own home and rent in the private market.



Topic 4 – Communication and Access to Information

This theme is about communication and the access to information. Being able to communicate is important in every part of life.



Accessible
Information
Standard

This includes making information in accessible formats to help people understand.

Topic 5 – Increase Understanding in Organisations



This theme is about helping people in organisations to understand and know more about disability.

This means helping people in the housing sector to know more about disability.



It also means helping people in the HSE to know more about housing.

It also involves helping people to understand the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act.

Topic 6 – Connecting the Strategies



This theme is about making sure that all Government strategies and policies promote the rights of disabled people in housing, like the UNCRPD explains.

This will make sure that the new National Housing Strategy for Disabled People 2022 – 2027 supports other strategies such as:



- The Sharing the Vision national mental health strategy and
- The Time to Move on From Congregated Settings strategy for de-congregation



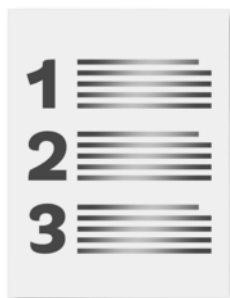
Section 4 – How We Will Get There

This section looks at how we will achieve the aims of this strategy.

Implementation Plan

An implementation plan is the plan to put a strategy into action.

An Implementation Plan will be made soon after this strategy is published.



The Implementation Plan will include all the actions that are needed to make the 6 Themes of the Strategy happen.



The Implementation Plan will be published in June 2022.

An awareness campaign for this strategy will happen in June 2022.

Implementation Structures

A number of groups will be set up to help achieve the Implementation Plan, such as:



- A National Implementation Subgroup
- Housing and Disability Steering Groups (these groups already exist but the Strategy wants to make them better)



Monitoring of Progress

Monitoring is checking that a strategy is working.

The monitoring of the strategy will be a very important part of its success.



Monitoring at National Level

There will be a report completed once a year by the National Implementation Subgroup.

This report will show the progress made in the previous year across the whole country.



The report will also check each of the actions set out in the Implementation Plan.

At their meetings, The National Implementation Subgroup will discuss any areas where there are barriers or challenges that need to be worked on.



Monitoring at Local Level

The Housing and Disability Steering Groups will have to report to their Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) four times a year.

They will report on the progress of all areas of their Local Strategic Plans.



These reports will be checked for any issues that could be barriers to making the Local Strategic Plans happen.



Data Collection

Data collection means keeping personal information about people on files.

Data collection is an important part of the work that goes into giving housing opportunities for disabled people.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)



GDPR rules must be respected when getting information.

Local authorities get information when they look at/go through applications for Social Housing Support through the Social Housing Application Form.

This includes the Housing Medical/Disability Form (HMD Form 1).



This Easy to Read Document was developed by the Housing Agency.

The document was proof-read by people with a disability.

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