

Disabilities and disaster risk reduction – What is Europe doing?

Madrid 8.10.2014

Silvio Sagramola

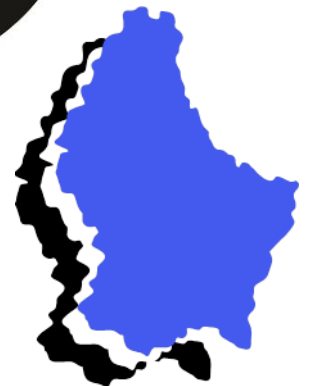
Info-Handicap Luxembourg

www.info-handicap.lu

silvio.sagramola@iha.lu



- Created in 1993
- National Disability Council Luxembourg
- National Disability Information and Meeting Centre
- 9 staff members
- 55 member organisations (out of 70)
- Information, concertation, empowerment and legal support



Europe and Disability

- Long tradition with **non-discrimination** policies from European Institutions
 - European **research projects** towards identifying and overcoming barriers
 - Initiatives for developing **standards** and harmonising approaches
- However: the richness of diversity is at the same time a challenge to common solutions!



The European challenge

Strengthen human rights in

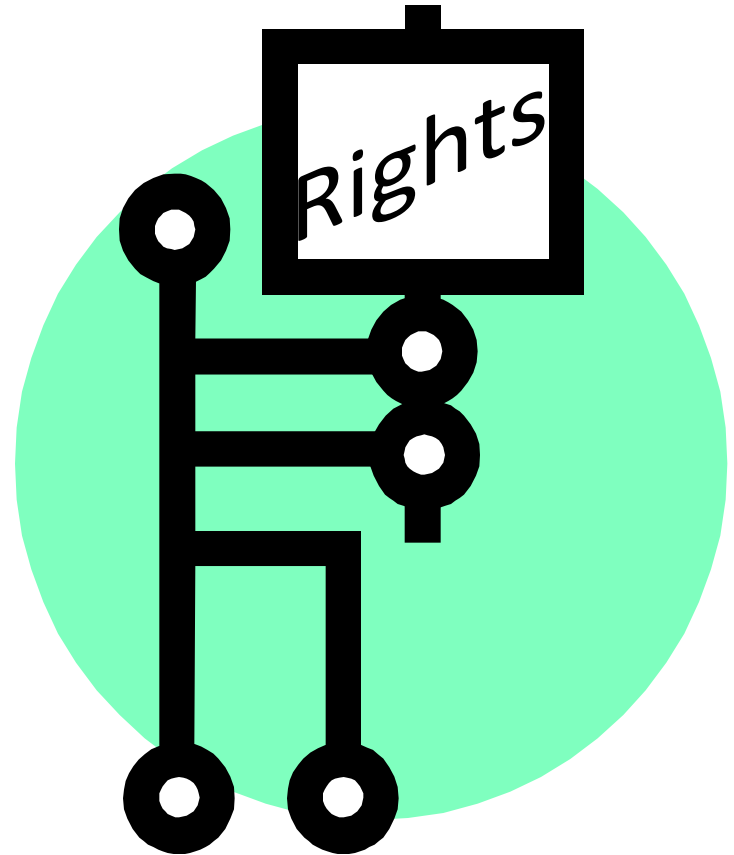
- different political contexts
- varying socio-cultural backgrounds
- huge number of different languages

→ **Start at the local level**
(think global, act local!!!)



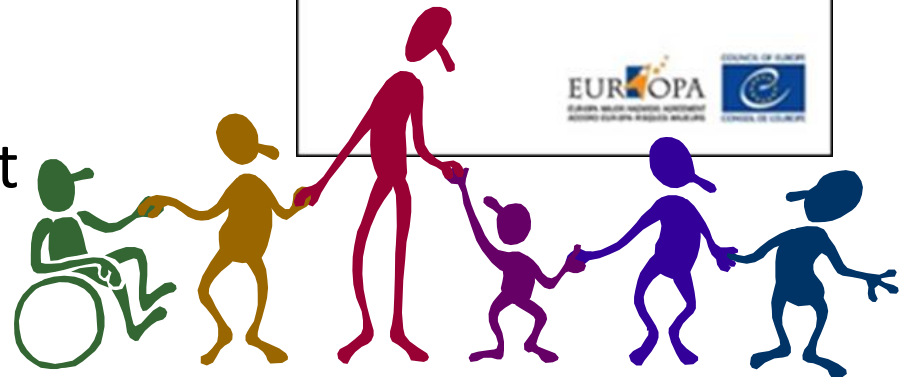
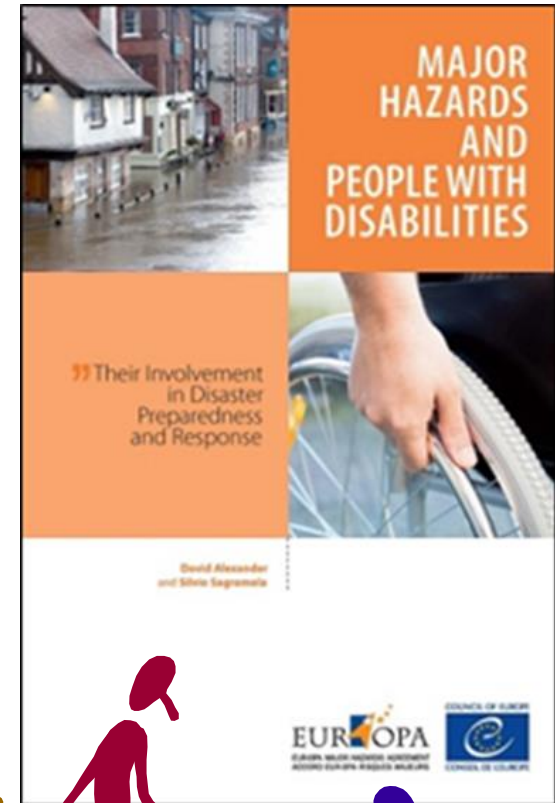
DRR and Human Rights

- All recent European policies strive at strengthening the rights of people with disabilities.
 - These rights include of course the **freedom to choose how and where** they want **to live**, to work, to spend their time.
- Does this impede on the wish to guarantee **their safety**?



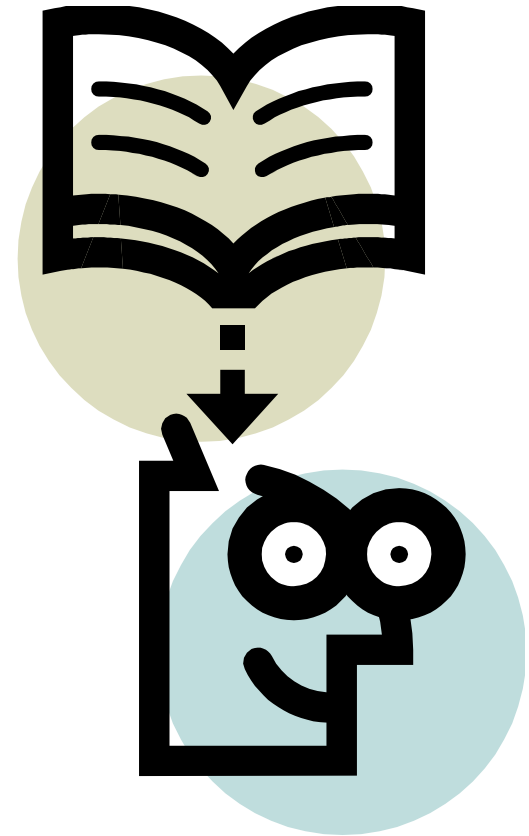
Preparedness to human diversity

- The only possibility for developing effective disaster management schemes “for all” is a **coherent preparation having human diversity in mind**.
- Such coherent preparation must be based on a **well-coordinated bundling of diverse competences**, including knowledge about the specific needs of particular groups of the population.



Good intentions are not enough!

- Rescue plans must take into consideration human diversity since the beginning and **rescue teams must be prepared to that diversity.**
- On the other hand, **people with disabilities and their relatives must also know how to behave in case of an emergency or a disaster.**



Planning for success

- Many potential difficulties can be anticipated once there is the willingness to do so, but such **anticipation must follow a series of clear rules.**
- The Council of Europe has adopted **seven success factors** to facilitate the implementation of a design for all approach in DRR.
- They are not rigid and they allow taking into account the particular situations at local, regional or national levels.



*)ECA for Administrations
www.eca.lu / documents

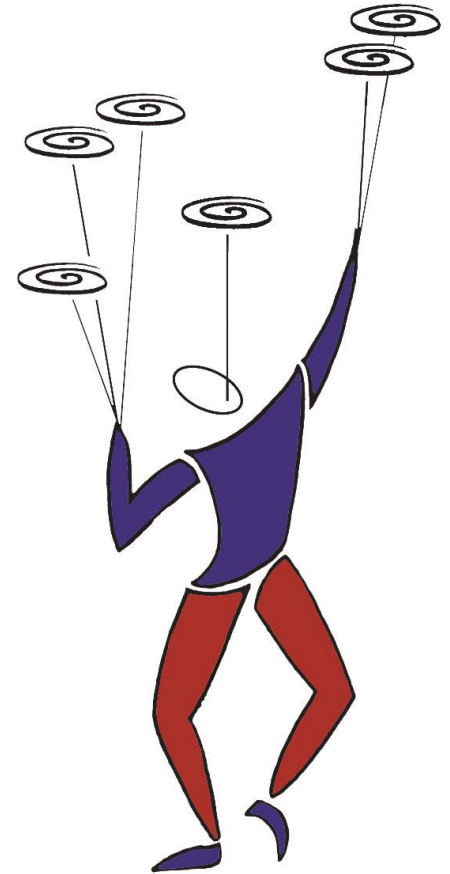
1. Commitment of decision makers

- If there is no commitment, there is no pressure and there are no means. The decision and the **responsibility** to have a coherent disaster risk management system must be taken **at the highest hierarchic levels**.
- It is not enough to vote a piece of legislation without **controlling** its correct implementation. People, who will have to put into practice adequate strategies, must be able to rely on **clear legal parameters**.



2. Coordination and continuity

- Somebody must **translate decisions into concrete actions**. Such a coordinator must have a **clear mandate** in order to carry out his/her role and to build up relationships with all the stakeholders to be involved in the definition of strategies and actions, including representatives of “vulnerable” groups of the population.
- The coordinator must be able to **guarantee the continuity of any undertakings**.
- **All partners must be able to count on his availability** and on his assistance when it comes to brainstorm and to develop or upgrade concepts.



3. Networking

- The coordinator must be able to build up a **network integrating all necessary competences**, including those about specific needs.
- He must have the possibility to create trustful links between the members of the network in order to **elaborate coherent solutions** without losing time and energy in jealous competitions.
- And **new experts** must know about the network and know how to get in touch.



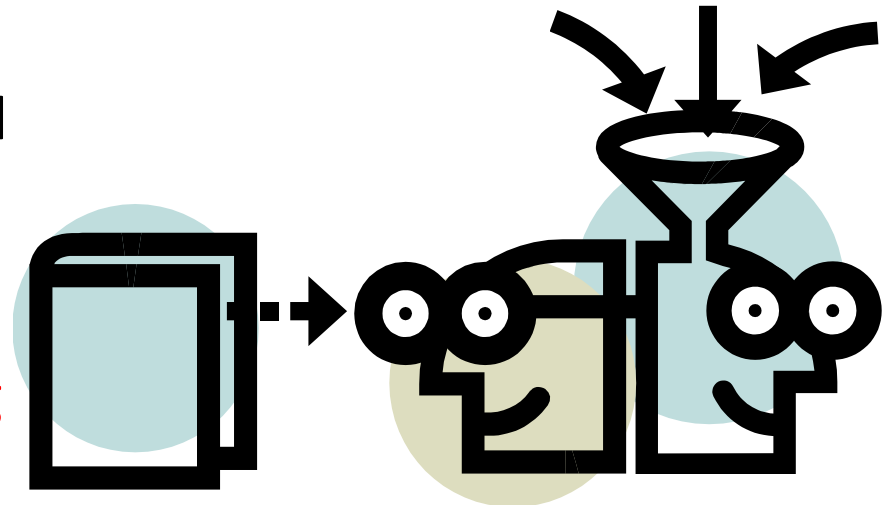
4. Strategic planning

- Plans have already been defined in the past and many routines work fine. So it is not indicated to change winning teams, however, such **plans should not be rigid**.
- Habits change and **new particularities or needs have to be taken into consideration** when necessary.



5. Knowledge management

- New habits or challenges may call for new expertise. New people may have joined and need to be updated. New technologies appear and have to be acquired. All this calls for **ongoing training activities** addressing members of rescue services.
- Adequate activities at various levels could also help **educating the population to adopt correct behaviours** in case of disasters.



6. Optimising resources

- Resources are not only financial means. Acquiring new expertise or reorganising existing routines may bring **improvement of traditional schemes**.
- All partners should be **open to new approaches** and ready for ongoing quality checks.



7. Communication (marketing)

- Ongoing information and communication to the **exterior** keep the citizens updated on how to behave in case of disasters.
- Good communication to the **interior** valorises and “keeps on board” the rescuers.
- All communication and information activities should take into account the growing diversity of the population and **accessibility rules in order to reach everybody.**



CoE Questionnaire 04/2014

- 12 responses
- Many good intentions, several good ideas, some good practice, ...
- How to make sure that relevant stakeholders are reached and listened to?
- **How to transpose good practice?**



Looking forward



Content of the toolkit

- share information, **learn from good practices** and standardise approaches between European countries
- guidance for **civil protection professionals** and **decision-makers** to improve resilience at national, regional and **local level (bottom-up approach)** to all inhabitants
- the content will be based on the concept of **« Design for All »** taking into consideration human diversity in a holistic way

Particular focus

The questionnaires sent in April 2014 show that two out of the 7 success factors need particular attention:

- Coordination
- Networking



Format / Layout

The toolkit is for sure not the final “recipe”.

It should be the starting point of an ongoing process...

- Web based format
- Folder with “technical sheets”
- Easy to read language



Thank you

