

**Question for written answer E-015171/2015
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Richard Howitt (S&D)

Subject: Access of persons with disabilities to independent living

In its concluding observations on the initial report of the European Union in September 2015, the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities referred to breaches of Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which concerns the right to live independently and to be included in the community.

What action will the Commission take, in line with Recommendations 50 and 51, to prevent European Structural and Investment Funds from being used for the maintenance of residential institutions rather than to support the development of community-based living? Specifically, how will the Commission improve the monitoring and enforcement of the correct use of funds?

In the wake of increased austerity across the Member States, the access to funds for persons with disabilities to live independently has been severely and disproportionately cut; in the UK, for example, the Independent Living Fund has been closed down, which means that people can no longer afford to live independently. Considering that the EU is a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, how will the Commission remedy and prevent breaches of Article 19, the right to live independently?