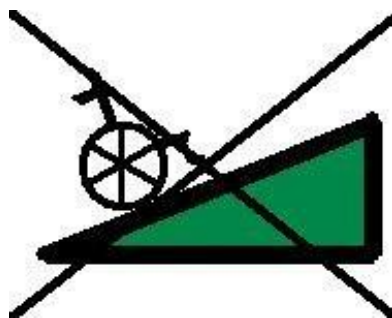




A report about problems with accessibility in Russia

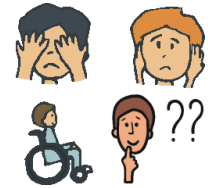


Easy to read

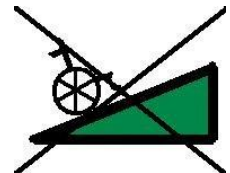


About this report

This is a report about the rights of persons with disabilities in a country called Russia.



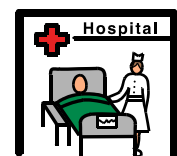
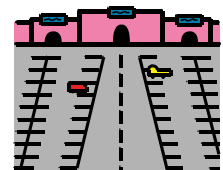
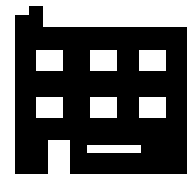
The report is about the problems that persons with disabilities have because things, places, and services are not accessible to them.



This means that persons with disabilities find it hard to go to places and use things and services.

The report checks if:

- Places and buildings are accessible.
This means that persons with disabilities can get in and out of places easily.
- Transport is accessible.
This means that persons with disabilities can easily take a bus, train, or plane.
- Persons with disabilities can have a job like anyone else.
- Shops, restaurants, and other businesses are accessible.
Accessible businesses make it easy for persons with disabilities to shop there.
- Persons with disabilities can get good healthcare.



In the report, you will also read about discrimination. Discrimination is when persons with disabilities are treated unfairly because of their disability.



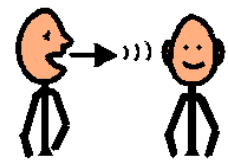
Who we are

We are an organization called “Human Rights Watch.” We work to make sure that:



- People around the world have their rights.
- Everyone is treated in the right way.

To write this report, we spoke to many people and organizations in Russia.



We spoke to:

- Persons with disabilities in 6 cities.
- Organizations of persons with disabilities.
- Other organizations supporting persons with disabilities in Russia.

Accessibility is a right!

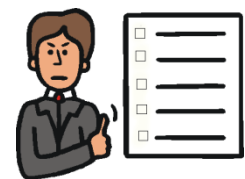
The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is an agreement among countries.



It says what governments should do to make sure that persons with disabilities can use their rights like anyone else.



The Convention says that governments should make sure that persons with disabilities can:



- Go to public places and buildings, like parks or town halls.
- Use transport, like buses or trains.
- Get all important information in a way they can read and understand.
- Use all public services.
Public services are places that everyone can use, like schools or hospitals.



Russia agreed to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

This means that the government of Russia has to do what the Convention says.



Next year, the government of Russia will have to explain what it does to make things better for persons with disabilities.

What we found out

The government of Russia has done some good things for persons with disabilities in the past years.

For example:

- It agreed to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- It made laws and programs on accessibility.
- It helped to make places and services more accessible.

Next year, the winter Paralympic Games will be in Russia.

The Paralympic Games is a sports competition for persons with disabilities from all over the world.

The Games will take place in the city of Sochi.

The organizers made a lot of effort to make the places where the competitions take place accessible.

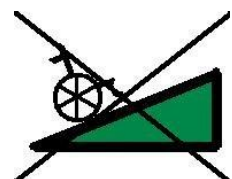
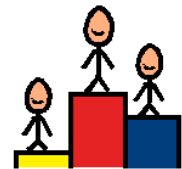
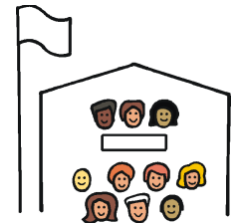
Still, persons with disabilities have many problems.

Many buildings, places, and services in Russia are not accessible to persons with disabilities.

For example:

- houses
- trains, buses
- hospitals, schools
- shops and restaurants
- workplaces

This makes it hard for persons with disabilities to take part in the community and live like anyone else.

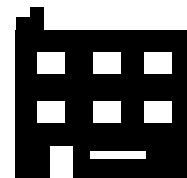


Many persons with disabilities are treated unfairly because of their disability.

This is discrimination.

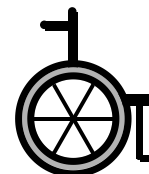
Problems with buildings

Persons with disabilities often have problems using buildings.



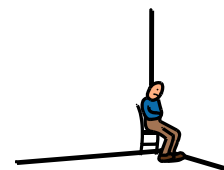
For example, people who use wheelchairs cannot use buildings because:

- There is no elevator.
- The corridors are too narrow.
- Wheelchair ramps are too steep.



Many people who use wheelchairs live in houses with no elevator.

That is why they rarely go out of the house to meet other people.



Maria is 26 years old.

She uses a wheelchair.

She lives on the third floor.

The elevator in her building does not work.

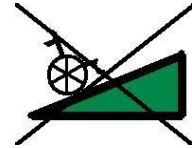
This year, she did not go out of her flat for 4 months.

Problems with transport

Many persons with disabilities have problems with transport.

For example, they cannot:

- Get into train stations or bus stops.
- Get on the bus, train, or plane.
- There are no signs for blind people to help them get around train stations, bus stops, or airports.



Problems with transport make it really hard for persons with disabilities to take part in the community.

- They cannot go to see their friends.
- They cannot go to work.
- They cannot go out in their free time.



Sometimes, transport companies refuse to make trains or buses accessible. This is discrimination.



Sometimes, persons with disabilities are not allowed to take a plane. This is also discrimination.



The government made a new law to stop this discrimination. But it also has to make sure that plane companies respect this law.

Denis uses a train to go to work every day.

He is blind.

He fell 3 times off the train platform, onto the railway track.

One time he broke his hand.

He said that there should be a sign for blind people at the edge of the platform.

Nina is 52 years old.

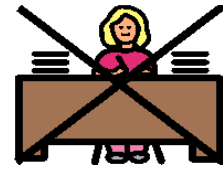
She is deaf and cannot talk.

She wants buses to have buttons that people can press when they want to get off the bus.

She also wants buses to have signs that say the names of bus stops they are at.

Problems with getting a job

Persons with disabilities do not have the same chances to work as other people.



Only 1 in every 5 persons with disabilities has a job.

Many companies do not want to hire persons with disabilities. They think that people with disabilities cannot work as well as other people.

Sometimes, persons with disabilities get paid less money.



Companies sometimes make it hard for persons with disabilities to work there.

Some companies tell workers with disabilities to leave because of their disability.

The government creates special jobs for persons with disabilities.

But persons with disabilities have the right to work in ordinary jobs together with people without disabilities.



Youliana is 28 years old.

She has problems seeing.

She wanted a job as a teacher in a school.

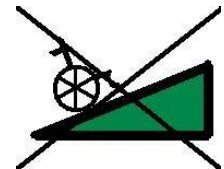
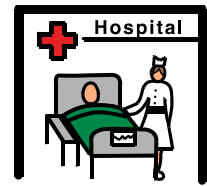
But the school told her she could not work there because she sees badly.

Problems with healthcare

Persons with disabilities often find it hard to get help when they are ill.

For example:

- They have problems getting into hospitals and clinics.
- They have problems talking to doctors and nurses about their health.
- Doctors do not want to talk to them directly. Some doctors think that persons with disabilities will not understand them.
- There are not enough healthcare services.



Sometimes, hospital workers treat persons with disabilities badly or unfairly.

For example, they wanted to stop a woman with disability from having a baby because of her disability.

Problems with institutions

In the past, most persons with disabilities lived in big care homes called institutions.

These institutions separated persons with disabilities from other people.

In Russia, many persons with disabilities still live in institutions.

Still, many doctors tell parents to put their child with a disability into an institution.



Problems with the law

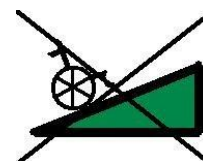
In Russia, there is a law that says that persons with disabilities have the right to:

- Go to schools or learn at home.
- Get to hospitals.
- Use transport.
- Understand information.



But there are problems with the law:

- There are many mistakes in the law.
- Many important rules are missing.
- The government does not check if people respect the law.



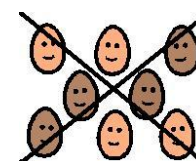
The law says that businesses must be accessible. But it does not say that government buildings must be accessible as well.



The government gives money to some regions in Russia to make places and services more accessible. This money should make sure that persons with disabilities can:



- Go to school.
- Take a bus or a train.
- Get important information.
- Get help when they are ill.



The government says this money helps people who have problems moving, seeing or hearing. The government does not say how the money helps persons with intellectual disabilities or mental health problems. Also, only some regions get this money.

What needs to be done

We want the government of Russia to make sure that persons with disabilities can live and take part in society like anyone else.

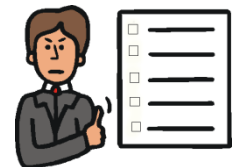


This is what we want the government to do:

- Make it easier for persons with disabilities to take part in all areas of life.
- Make changes in the law to make sure that houses and transport are accessible.
- Make changes in the law so that more persons with disabilities can work.
- Make sure that people respect the law about accessibility.
- Make strict rules about making all buildings accessible.



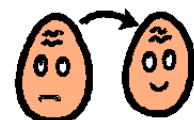
- Make sure that people respect the law about accessibility. These rules should be the same for businesses and for the government.



- Appoint a disability rights ombudsman. A disability rights ombudsman is a person who helps persons with disabilities to get their rights.



- Make sure persons with disabilities know about their rights.



- Help to change the way people think of persons with disabilities for the better.

Other governments and organizations should talk to the government of Russia about the rights of persons with disabilities.