



## *Easy Read Edition*

# **The Right to Make Choices: International Laws and Decision- Making by People with Disabilities**

## **Part 1: Introduction**

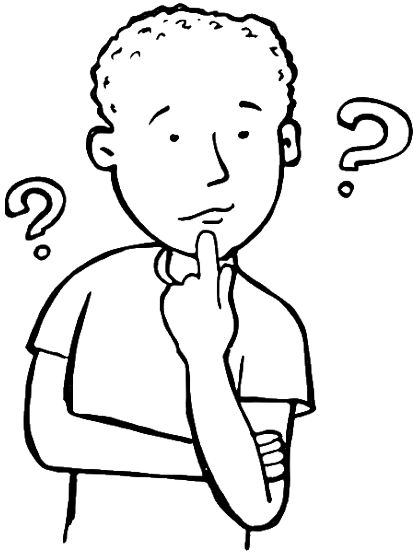


# 1. Introduction

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- Freedom to make choices is a human right.
- International human rights laws protect people's right to decide how to spend their money, make their own health care decisions, work for a living, and have relationships with friends and family.
- Adults without disabilities take freedom of choice for granted. But people with disabilities cannot take freedom of choice for granted. People with disabilities often do not make their own choices.





- People with disabilities – especially people with intellectual, developmental, or mental health disabilities – often do not get to make their own choices.

- Often, if a family member thinks the person with a disability cannot make good choices, the person with a disability is no longer in charge.



- People with disabilities can make their own decisions with the right supports.

# What is this guide?



- This guide helps people with disabilities understand decision-making laws. It is separated into chapters to make it easy to find the information you need.
- Every country has different laws. This guide explains the different types of laws and how they work.
- The guide explains how **international law** protects people with disabilities' freedom of choice.



- International laws are laws between countries.
- It also involves agreements with international organizations.



- Examples of international organizations include the United Nations and the European Union.

- International organizations create laws all member countries who vote for them must follow.



- Sometimes there is conflict between international law and a country's laws. Conflicts lead to lawsuits. This conflict can lead to changes in the laws.



- This guide helps you understand laws that help people with disabilities make their own decisions.

- These laws include **guardianship**, **conservatorship**, and **supported decision-making**.

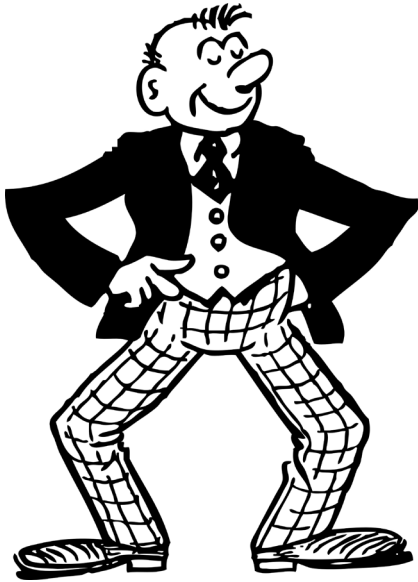


- This guide will also help you push for better laws in your own country.

# Glossary

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## Guardianship

An arrangement where someone is appointed by law to make decisions about another person's life. In many countries, guardians will be appointed for disabled adults who are seen as unable to make their own decisions.



## International laws

Laws that were created by an organization with multiple countries as members – like an agreement or treaty between countries.



## Supported Decision-Making



A way to make decisions. A person with a disability chooses someone to help them understand or communicate a decision.

The person with a disability is free to make their own decision but has help from the supporter.