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People with disabilities

In Germany, almost one in ten people has a severe disability. People with disabilities must have the same opportunities as healthy people. They should be able to participate in society. That's what the law says. There are measures for **inclusion** to achieve this. For example, people with disabilities can get help at work. There is also special support for small children. This is called **early intervention**.

There are different types of disabilities:

- **Physical disability:** When the body is restricted. For example, when walking, gripping or moving.
Example: Someone is in a wheelchair or has a prosthesis.
- **Sensory disability:** When vision or hearing is impaired.
Example: Someone is blind or hard of hearing.
- **Mental disability:** When learning, thinking or understanding is more difficult.
Example: Someone needs more time to learn or understand something.
- **Mental disability:** When feeling or behaviour is severely impaired - often due to mental illness.
Example: Someone has severe anxiety or depression that has a major impact on their life.
- **Learning disability:** When learning is permanently difficult.
Example: Someone has great difficulty with reading, writing or maths.
- **Chronic illnesses:** Chronic illnesses are illnesses that you have permanently, such as: diabetes, heart disease and depression.

What is inclusion?

[Aktion Mensch](#) says: "Inclusion means that **everyone** belongs naturally. Or in other words: inclusion is when **everyone is allowed to participate**. No matter what you look like, what language you speak or whether you have a disability.

For example: children with and without disabilities learn together at school. When everyone can be involved everywhere, at work, at home or in their free time: that's inclusion."

All people should have **the same opportunities**. They should not feel excluded or disadvantaged. According to the principle of inclusion, all people are equally involved in life with and in society.

! Disability as an insult

It is **okay** to say: "This person has a disability" or: "A person with a disability needs support."
This is **respectful and factual**.

It is **not okay** to say: "You are disabled!" (as an insult) or: "He's completely disabled!"
Such sentences are **hurtful and discriminatory**.

What is early intervention?

[Early intervention](#) is help for children who develop more slowly, have a disability or could develop a disability. Early intervention is available from birth to school age. It not only supports the child, but also the parents and family.

Early intervention helps, for example, with

- Learning to speak
- Moving and walking
- Seeing or hearing

Goal: The child should **develop well** and be able to **live** as **independently** as possible.

Where can I find help and counselling?

You can find counselling services and information for people with disabilities [here](#)

Severely disabled person's pass

Would you like to apply for, extend or change a severely disabled person's pass?

To apply for, extend or change a [severely disabled person](#)'s [pass](#), you need a form. You can obtain this form from your local citizens' office. You can also submit initial applications or apply for changes there. You can find your local citizens' office [here](#).

You must send the completed form to the [Versorgungsamt Dortmund](#).

You can find more information on the application procedure on the website of the Versorgungsamt. You can find the application form [here](#). You can also submit the application online via the [ELSA.NRW](#) portal.