



# Monitoring the Human Rights of People with Disabilities in Canada

## Toronto Monitoring Site Fact-sheet on Social Participation

July 2010

### Disability Rights Promotion

#### International Canada

(DRPI Canada) is a community-university alliance that works to build capacity and systems for **monitoring the human rights of people with disabilities in Canada.**

#### DRPI Canada

coordinates work among four monitoring themes: **systemic** (laws and policy), **individual experiences** (personal experiences), **media** (coverage of disability), and **survey datasets** (information collected by population surveys). Persons with disabilities and their organizations are involved at all levels of the project.

In this study the human rights experiences of people with disabilities were monitored across several domains: *access to justice, education, information and communication, support services, health and habilitation, work, family and social participation*. This fact-sheet focuses on **social participation** which, for the purposes of this study, encompasses **inclusion in society (including freedom of choice of living arrangement, access to community supports, services and facilities)**, as well as participation in cultural and political life and participation in sports, recreation and leisure activities.

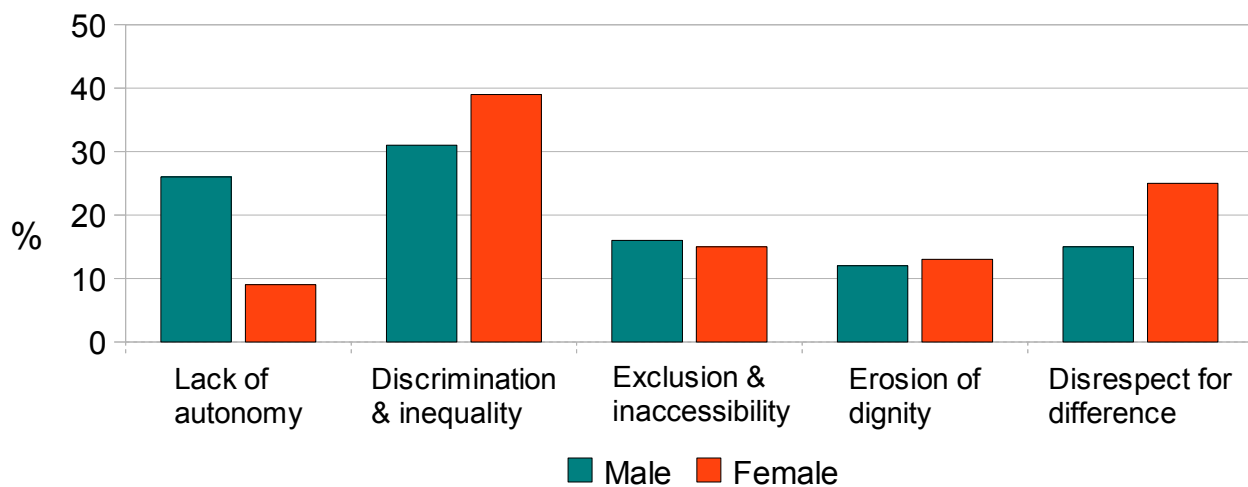
### Key Findings

- Issues related to **social participation** are the top priority for persons with disabilities interviewed in Toronto, being raised by **90% of the interviewees**. **79%** of these reports dealt with **violations of rights related to social participation**.
- **Violations based on discrimination** are the most pervasive, being reported by **70%** of the interviewees.
- **Lack of accessibility in the built environment and problems with transportation are among the greatest barriers** preventing the full participation of persons with disabilities in social life.
- **Women are more likely to report discrimination and exclusion in social participation and men more likely to report lack of autonomy**. These results suggest that gender intersects with disability to shape differently women's and men's lives and human rights experiences differently.

## Measuring the Gap for Torontonians with disabilities (Social Participation)

Rights	Reality
<p><b>Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessibility standards to achieve accessibility for all Ontarians with disabilities with respect to services, facilities, accommodation, buildings</li> <li>• Involvement of persons with disabilities in the development of accessibility standards</li> </ul>	<p><i>“One time, all of my board members were staying at a hotel that was pretty inaccessible and I had to stay in a hotel down the street. ... It was really awful and the street was a super big hill, and then I would go to the other hotel they were staying at and I had to go in from a pretty bad back entrance. I actually couldn’t stay with the rest of the people I was with because of inaccessibility.” (Female, age n.a.)</i></p>

### Denial or Violation of Human Rights Principles by Sex (Social Participation)



*It’s frustrating, lack of accessibility makes me feel like I’m not included, like I’m not part of the society that surrounds me. (Male, 38 years old)*

*I use a segregated transportation system that I don’t want to use, I don’t get to use public transit with everybody else ... I cannot do anything in an evening because I never know when I can get home... It inhibits me because I don’t take on some of the things I’d like to do. I don’t get to go to people I would like to visit, I don’t get to go to a movie at the theatre, or some of the volunteer things I like to do. (Female, age n.a.)*