unitar — United Nations Institute for Training and Research

United Nations | Department of Economic and Social Affairs

UNFPA

IOM UN MIGRATION

International Labour Organization

UN WOMEN

UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency

World Health Organization

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

ITU

ROUNDTABLE SERIES

MAINSTREAMING KNOWLEDGE ON AGEING

Bridging Paths Towards Strengthening Protection and Participation

5 FREE EVENTS ✓ 5th Year MAY - NOVEMBER 2026

Legal Protection for Older Persons

21 May 2026

9:30 EDT
15:30 CEST

AI generated-image

With the support of:

WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities

hpod Harvard Law School Project on Disability

INPEA

ILC GLOBAL ALLIANCE INTERNATIONAL LONGEVITY CENTRE Designing the Future of Ageing

NGO Committee on Ageing GENEVA

GIA Global Initiative on Ageing

cifal Global Network

2026 Series for Mainstreaming Knowledge on Ageing

First Event Takeaways

This document has been prepared by the Division for People and Social Development at UNITAR, Ms. Analucía Jácome, Specialist in Human Rights and Good Governance, and Ms. Zhuoqing Cao, SDP Team.

We hope you enjoy it!



Moderator

Mr. Alex Mejía
Director, Division for People and Social Development
UNITAR



Coordinator

Ms. Analucía Jácome
Specialist, Human Rights and Good Governance
Division for People and Social Development, UNITAR

Focus: Closing the Protection Gaps through Rights-Based Transformation



Dr. Chitralekha Marie Massey
Chief of Section, Rights of Older Persons,
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

"Older persons are entitled to a life of full human rights enjoyment, equivalent to a life of happiness, joy and fulfillment."

1. We are living in a time of profound demographic change, with populations ageing rapidly. However, longer lives do not automatically guarantee dignity, autonomy, equality or participation. Too many older persons still face discrimination, exclusion, inadequate care, digital isolation, and heightened vulnerability to harm. The protection gap persists, and current human rights legal frameworks remain incomplete.

2. The continued invisibility of older persons often results in extreme marginalization, violence, abuse, and neglect. Protection gaps span across long-term care, healthcare, access to justice, and social security, all of which are interconnected. We are also seeing increasing challenges in emergencies and humanitarian settings, including climate change-induced displacement and armed conflict. We must recognize that accountability remains weak and implementation uneven.

3. We have seen many examples of these protection gaps. In terms of the data gap, a grassroots organization shared that, during emergency preparedness training, a flood evacuation plan contained no guidance for people who could not walk or move quickly. Likewise, the digitalization of pensions and health appointments assumes that everyone owns and knows how to use a smartphone. The reality is that, even in highly developed cities such as Geneva, not everyone is comfortable with digital technologies. This is why inclusion must be designed into our systems from the outset.

4. These gaps are also reflected in the legal framework. Article 31 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities requires systematic data collection, while other human rights instruments, such as Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on the right to adequate housing, contain no comparable obligation.

Highlights on OHCHR

OHCHR strives to ensure that older persons are given space and weight in the human rights agenda. OHCHR supports the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Human Rights of Older Persons, the mandate of the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons, and the work of UN human rights mechanisms and national human rights institutions to monitor and provide guidance for the promotion and protection of human rights of older persons.



5. Housing is much more than mere shelter. An older person may choose where and with whom to live, but if urban planning, transportation, and community services are inaccessible, the right to housing will become difficult to realize. Structural ageism, together with gaps in public investment, labour markets, care systems, institutional engagement, and policy design, contributes to these protection gaps. This affects not only fundamental rights such as an adequate standard of living, housing, health, and information, but also emerging challenges related to climate adaptation and digitalization.

6. A rights-based transformation grounded in dignity, equality, accessibility, autonomy, participation, and non-discrimination is required to address these challenges. A one-size-fits-all approach does not work and will not work. The failure to adopt a comprehensive, holistic, multidisciplinary, and intersectional approach is a failure that falls hardest on those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. Closing these protection gaps is therefore essential to ensuring that all older persons can fully and equally enjoy their human rights and live with dignity.



Recent Developments on the Work of the IGWG on the Human Rights of Older Persons

The Intergovernmental Working Group (IGWG) on the Human Rights of Older Persons was created by the Human Rights Council in its resolution A/HRC/RES/58/13, with the mandate of elaborating and submitting to the Human Rights Council a draft international legally binding instrument on the human rights of older persons with the objective of promoting, protecting and ensuring the full enjoyment of human rights by older persons. The intergovernmental working group will meet for two sessions each year in Geneva.

From 18-19 February 2026, the organizational session of the IGWG took place at Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland. This session focused on the election of the Chair, interactive discussions on setting the scene for the rights of older persons, elements of a legally binding international instrument on the rights of older persons, IGWG working methods, and the Chair's Summary of Proceedings.

From 13-17 July 2026, the first session of the IGWG was held at Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland. This session marked the start of the negotiation process, with discussions focusing on the guiding principles and structure of the future treaty, the outcome of the global call for submissions from different stakeholders, treaty monitoring arrangements, dialogue with HRC mechanisms and other UN bodies, and the roadmap for the negotiations ahead.

Remember

The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), in General Comment No. 6 "The Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of Older Persons"(1995), called for a comprehensive and holistic approach grounded in the human rights framework, recognizing intersectionality, promoting coordination and multidisciplinary action, and addressing interlinkages. These principles reflect the State's threefold obligation to respect, protect, and fulfil human rights, while recognizing that ageing is not a homogeneous process.

Did You Know?

The 13th session of the World Urban Forum (WUF13), convened by UN-Habitat, was held in Baku, Azerbaijan from 17-22 May 2026. It brought together a wide range of urban stakeholders to explore solutions to the growing global housing crisis and to position housing as a foundation for safe and resilient cities and communities. The rights and needs of older persons were also highlighted in discussions on inclusive and age-friendly urban development.



Useful Resources

- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities | Link
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights | Link
- Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Comment No. 6 "The Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of Older Persons" (1995) | Link
- Learn more about the Work of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Human Rights of Older Persons | Link
- World Urban Forum 13 | Link

Focus: The Theory of Overlooking the Injustice in the Legal Protection of Older Persons



Ms. Nena Georgantzi
Head of Advocacy, AGE Platform Europe

"Ageism does not only drive human rights violations against older persons, but also makes those violations appear natural, inevitable, or less serious."

1. Older persons face legal, institutional and personal barriers, all of which are linked to ageism. As a result, they are overlooked, discounted, and often fall outside the scope of human rights protection. The theory of overlooking the injustice could help strengthen the legal protection of older persons. This happens through three interconnected processes that contribute to the systemic undermining of the human rights of older persons.

2. Firstly, non-recognizing. This refers to the failure to recognize the wrongfulness of acts, behaviours, and practices affecting older persons. Discrimination is often trivialized, normalized, or even legally accepted. For example, in European legal systems, some courts may assume that a person's capacity to work naturally declines with chronological age, reflecting age-based biases in the application of the law. Similarly, policy language often frames older persons as being able to enjoy their rights "for as long as possible", rather than on an equal basis with others. Such approaches make restrictions, coercion, and institutionalization easier to justify and much harder to challenge.

3. Secondly, non-enabling. When violations are not recognized as systemic human rights issues, they are treated as isolated incidents, malpractice, or institutional failures rather than as matters that engage State responsibility. As a result, States are not expected to prevent these violations, provide remedies, or implement structural reforms. Where older persons are not viewed as contributors to society, policies may continue to exclude them. For example, lifelong learning strategies may impose upper age limits. Likewise, violations in long-term care are often dismissed as social care issues rather than human rights violations, while financial abuse is minimised, normalised, or silenced instead of being treated with the seriousness of theft or other rights violations.

Highlights on the AGE Platform Europe

Age Platform Europe is the largest European network of non-profit organisations of and for older people. It celebrates longevity as one of the greatest achievements of humanity. It seeks to combat ageism, promote human rights throughout the life course, reduce inequalities and enable everyone to live a full and dignified life.



4. Thirdly, disempowering. Older persons, as well as the organizations supporting them, may not have the knowledge, awareness, or opportunities needed to claim their rights. Many older persons internalize ageist stereotypes themselves, believing that institutionalization, exclusion from employment, or barriers to justice are simply normal at their age. They may feel that they lack the energy, resources, or legitimacy to challenge violations. This silences their voices and further weakens the legal protection.

5. Therefore, the UN Convention on the rights of older persons can make a real difference. It could strengthen accountability by explicitly recognizing these issues as human rights violations and providing the legal language needed to identify and address them. It could also support reform by clarifying the obligations of States and serving as a catalyst for legislative and policy change. Additionally, it could create greater space for participation and justice, enabling older persons to take part in decision-making and monitoring processes while improving awareness of their rights and access to remedies.

6. Strengthening legal protection requires more than adopting legal standards. We must also raise awareness among rights-holders and the organizations that support them, improve access to information about available remedies, empower older persons to claim their rights, and address the biases that persist in both legislation and its interpretation. This includes training judges, lawyers, and other legal professionals, as well as systematically reviewing and repealing laws and policies that discriminate against older persons. Only by addressing these interconnected barriers can we ensure that older persons enjoy their human rights on an equal basis with everyone else.



Curious Facts

According to WHO Findings on the Abuse of Older Persons in 2024:

- Around 1 in 6 people 60 years and older experienced some form of abuse in community settings in 2023.
- Rates of abuse of older people are high in institutions such as nursing homes and long-term care facilities, with 2 in 3 staff reporting that they have committed abuse in 2023.
- Abuse of older people can lead to serious physical injuries and long-term psychological consequences.
- Abuse of older people is predicted to increase as many countries are experiencing rapidly ageing populations.

Important

Beyond the law itself, ageism is also embedded in institutional practices. Human rights professionals, social workers, police officers, and legal authorities may lack the awareness or appropriate terminology needed to identify violations against older persons.

Studies show that the same facts are more readily labelled as abuse when the victim is younger than when the victim is an older person, and older women experiencing abuse are often taken less seriously by law enforcement.



Useful Resources

- Learn more about the AGE Platform Europe | Link
- Learn more about AGE Platform Europe's efforts in the Negotiations on a UN Convention on the Rights of Older Persons in Geneva | Link
- WHO Findings on the Abuse of Older People (2024) | Link
- Nena Georgantzi, Developing a New Framework for Human Rights in Older Age: Exploration, Interpretation and Application | Link

Focus: Access to Justice for Older Persons in Georgia



Ms. Nino Shalamberidze

Chief Specialist, Department for the Protection of Civil, Political, Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, Office of the Public Defender (Ombudsman) of Georgia

"Older persons often face limited access to justice, a lack of adequate legal remedies, low levels of legal awareness, and challenges in fully participating in legal proceedings."

1. Older persons continue to face a number of structural challenges in accessing justice. The first challenge concerns the excessive length of judicial proceedings. The Public Defender has consistently emphasized that prolonged proceedings undermine the right to a fair trial and reduce the overall effectiveness of the justice system. Procedural overload has resulted in delays across civil, administrative, and criminal cases, reflecting broader systemic challenges, including insufficient judicial resources and inconsistencies in court administration.

2. These delays have a particularly severe impact on older persons, as well as persons with health conditions and those in situations of social vulnerability. For these groups, timely proceedings are often critical to the effective protection of their rights. Ensuring that judicial proceedings are concluded within a reasonable time is therefore essential to guaranteeing meaningful access to justice.

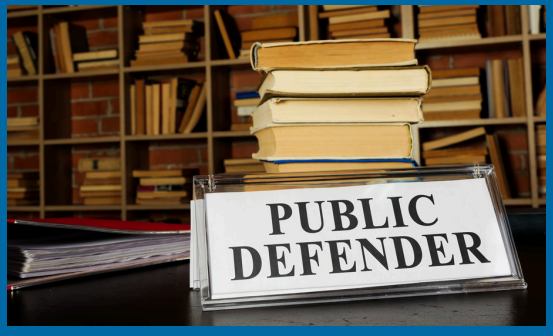
3. Affordability also remains an important concern. Georgian legislation does not provide specific financial benefits or exemptions for older persons in judicial proceedings. Instead, the legal framework establishes general exemptions, including for insolvent plaintiffs and certain categories of cases, such as those involving social rights. Judges are also empowered to grant full or partial exemptions from court costs based on an individual's financial circumstances.

4. With regard to accessibility, the specific needs of older persons have not been adequately identified or addressed in national policy. Existing policy documents and studies focus primarily on juveniles, persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities, women, and children, while older persons remain largely absent. Likewise, neither policy frameworks nor legislation provide age-appropriate procedural safeguards to ensure equal access to administrative and judicial proceedings for older persons.

Highlights on the Office of the Public Defender of Georgia

The Office of the Public Defender of Georgia is the only national human rights institution in this country in Georgia and holds a status accreditation.

Over the years, the public defender's office has been actively engaged in the protection and promotion of the human rights of older persons and has consistently supported the establishment of the above mentioned legally binding instrument for human rights for older persons. It is based on the findings and challenges identified through the examination of complaints submitted by older persons, the monitoring of institutions providing services of older individuals like residential care institutions, the investigation of cases of violence and abuse against older persons.



5. Capacity-building within the justice system also requires greater attention. Current training programmes for judges and judicial personnel do not include dedicated modules on ageism, age discrimination, or the specific barriers older persons encounter in accessing justice. While the curriculum covers areas such as domestic violence and international non-discrimination standards, it does not adequately address the implications of age-based discrimination within judicial processes.

6. Finally, when access to justice is understood in its broader sense, the Public Defender's Office provides an important avenue of redress for older persons. Its regional offices enhance accessibility across the country. However, the Office does not generally have the authority to represent individuals before ordinary courts, except in proceedings before the Constitutional Court or through constitutional submissions. As a result, its mandate alone is insufficient to ensure comprehensive and effective legal protection for older persons.



To Bear in Mind

According to Article 12 of the United Nations Principles for Older Persons (1991):

"Older Persons should have access to social and legal services to enhance their autonomy, protection and care."

Useful Resources

- United Nations Principles for Older Persons (1991) | Link
- Learn more about the Public Defender (Ombudsman) of Georgia | Link
- OHCHR, A/HRC/41/32, Report on Technical Cooperation and Capacity Building Regarding Human Rights of Older Persons | Link

Food for Thought

Georgia operates a free legal aid system that provides legal advice, assistance in preparing legal documents, and representation in civil and administrative proceedings. In criminal cases, mandatory legal representation is available under the circumstances prescribed by the Criminal Procedure Code.

Despite these mechanisms, the number of older persons seeking assistance from the legal aid system remains relatively low, which may reflect limited legal awareness among this population.

Focus: Rethinking the Age-Based Law for Older Persons



Ms. Nina A Kohn

Distinguished Professor of Law, Board of Advisors
Professor, Syracuse University
Distinguished Scholar, Solomon Centre for Health Law & Policy, Yale Law School

"Creating a legal regime that protects older persons requires neither embracing nor rejecting age-based law entirely."

1. Legal protections for older persons vary considerably across jurisdictions, which can be understood through three key variables: source, substance, application.

2. First, source. Protections may take the form of statutes adopted by legislative bodies, regulations developed by administrative agencies, or policies and principles established or reinforced by courts. They may also operate at different levels, including the international, national, regional, or local levels.

3. Second, substance. Some laws protect older persons by providing positive rights, such as minimum income or access to health care coverage. Others protect their freedoms, including protection against age discrimination or involuntary institutionalization. There are also laws that address risks faced by older persons, such as laws criminalising elder abuse or providing services to those at risk of neglect, as well as laws that empower older persons to shape their own futures through powers of attorney and advance directives.

4. Third, application. The law may protect people generally, older persons specifically, or a particular subset of older persons.

5. The question, therefore, is whether the law should allocate rights and responsibilities among people based on age. To answer this, it is important to consider the purposes that age-based law currently serves in society. Five functions are particularly important.

6. Firstly, age-based law may be used to allocate resources to those who need them. Where older people are considered to be in greater physical or cognitive need, less resilient to financial shocks, or more vulnerable to other life events, old age may serve as a proxy for need.

Highlights on the Ageing Studies Institute at Syracuse University

The Ageing Studies Institute (ASI) at Syracuse University (SU) aims to coordinate and promote ageing-related research and education at Syracuse University. With 14 faculty associates and over 65 faculty affiliates from more than 17 departments, ASI provides faculty and students with opportunities to engage in multi-disciplinary research related to the SU academic strategic plan's "Human Thriving" Area of Distinctive and Aspirational Excellence.



7. Secondly, age-based classifications may be used to promote equal opportunities, a rationale that is also frequently invoked to justify favourable treatment for younger adults who are perceived as having fewer opportunities.

8. Thirdly, age may be used to prioritise people seen as deserving, based on the idea that older persons should be rewarded for the contributions they have made throughout their lives.

9. Fourthly, age-based classifications may help mitigate the fear of ageing. Policies that provide public benefits or other forms of support to older individuals can reduce the fear associated with anticipating or experiencing age-related declines in cognitive, physical, or social well-being.

10. Finally, age may be used to exclude those perceived as less able. In some circumstances, age functions as a proxy for disability, facilitating what might otherwise be considered impermissible disability discrimination.

11. However, each of these uses has associated costs. Using age to allocate limited resources, for example, can result in poorly tailored laws because chronological age is a highly imperfect proxy for individual need. It can also contribute to negative stereotypes about older persons. These costs might be acceptable if age-specific law were the only way to achieve these functions, but there are often effective alternatives. Resources, for example, can be allocated through means testing or individualized assessments of vulnerability.

12. People who are considered deserving can be rewarded through criteria that focus on individual conduct rather than status, since the extent to which people have contributed to society is rarely strongly correlated with their chronological age. The concerns associated with ageing can instead be addressed through broad social safety nets, while the use of age as a form of disguized disability discrimination should be rejected in favour of individualized assessments, which are increasingly recognized as necessary where the law overtly discriminates on the basis of disability.

13. Age-based law can provide valuable protection against age discrimination and, in some circumstances, may be a reasonable and politically necessary way to allocate resources. At the same time, age-based classifications should be carefully scrutinized. Their overuse may result not only in inefficient policy choices but also in negative stereotypes about older persons, reinforcing ageism that legal protections are intended to address. The challenge, therefore, is to use age-based law where it provides genuine protection while relying on individualized, age-neutral approaches wherever they can better protect the rights, dignity, autonomy, and equality of older persons.



Did You Know?

Age-based laws are not always politically or administratively easy to replace. Although individualized assessments and broader social protections may provide better alternatives, such approaches can be difficult to implement and may not always be politically feasible. Age-based law may therefore be justified in certain circumstances, particularly when allocating scarce resources or mitigate the fear and insecurity associated with ageing. Nevertheless, age-based classifications should be carefully examined rather than automatically accepted.

The United States provides an example of how rejecting age-based rules can strengthen legal protection for older persons. Historically, "advanced age" could be a basis for guardianship under the Uniform Probate Code of 1969, allowing courts to remove an older person's legal capacity based on age-related assumptions. The modern approach has largely shifted to an age-neutral model, focusing instead on the individual's actual functioning and whether there is an unmet need. This approach can better protect both older persons' interests and their right to legal capacity and self-determination.



Remember

An age-neutral approach does not mean abandoning protection for older persons. Rather, it can provide greater protection by safeguarding a person and their property when they are genuinely unable to make decisions and no less restrictive alternative is available, while also protecting their right to legal capacity and self-determination. The guardianship example demonstrates that removing age-based classifications can sometimes strengthen, rather than weaken, the protection of older persons.

Useful Resources

- Learn more about the Ageing Studies Institute at Syracuse University | Link
- Legal Capacity and Informed Consent: Report of the Independent Expert on the Enjoyment of All Human Rights by Older Persons, Claudia Mahler (2024) | Link
- Nina Kohn, Elder Law: Practice, Policy, and Problems (3rd Edition, 2024) | Link

Focus: Legal Capacity, Autonomy, and Protection of Older Persons



Mr. Hezzy Smith

Director of Advocacy Initiatives,
Harvard Law School Project on Disability (HPOD)

"Access to justice is about how older persons navigate and access information, as well as the usability of the systems to empower them, support them in expressing their autonomy, and enable them to make meaningful choices about their lives."

1. Older persons not only face specific and differential human rights violations, but also encounter related barriers in accessing the systems designed to prevent and remedy those violations. This creates a significant paradox in the protection of their rights: the very systems intended to provide protection may remain inaccessible or difficult to navigate. Therefore, two issues are of particular importance: the right to exercise legal capacity under the future treaty and the potential to reimagine existing legal capacity tools as safeguards against exploitation.

2. The emerging treaty process is critical to addressing gaps in legal protection at the international, national and local levels. A particularly challenging issue in the treaty negotiations will be how the treaty addresses the right of older persons to exercise legal capacity, including the right to enter into legal obligations and to make decisions with legal effects for themselves and others. The negotiation of this issue will ultimately be informed by the normative values that prevail.

3. Meanwhile, there is a real and growing risk of financial exploitation of older persons. According to the Center for Law, Brain and Behavior (CLBB)'s white paper, financial judgement may be undermined even at the stage of mild cognitive impairment and, importantly, regardless of cognitive impairment, long before an individual's legal capacity is formally called into question. The increasing sophistication of scams involving digital tools, deepfakes and cross-border schemes is likely to make this risk more pronounced in the coming years.

Highlights on the Harvard Law School Project on Disability

HPOD has demonstrated a steadfast dedication to empowering civil society and other actors by fostering knowledgeable and discerning advocacy for Human Rights. Their endeavors encompass a range of activities, including the provision of comprehensive human rights training and education, the facilitation of international law and policy development, the promotion of inclusive practices in development, the dissemination of technical assistance pertaining to strategic litigation, and the cultivation of innovative perspectives regarding the capabilities of persons with disabilities and their entitlement to human rights.



4. A related question is whether tools traditionally used to restrict legal capacity might instead be reimagined as safeguards against exploitation. Their design and application must take account of the normative values they reflect, as well as the potential for assumptions about language, culture and individual characteristics to influence their outcomes.

5. Although it may be too granular for an international treaty to prescribe specific checklists, regulations or assessment procedures, the treaty can nevertheless embody and reflect certain normative values. These values can inform the design and implementation of legal protection systems, including the tools, assessments and safeguards used to balance autonomy and protection. The emerging treaty negotiations therefore provide an opportunity not only to establish substantive legal protections, but also to provide normative guidance for their implementation at the national and local levels.

6. Ultimately, systems of legal protection should be designed and adequately resourced to be accessible, age-friendly and effective. This requires not only appropriate laws and policies, but also ensuring that older persons have the necessary tools and knowledge to apply the appropriate normative stance in practice. Such an approach must be nuanced and culturally appropriate, balancing the preservation of autonomy with the need to safeguard older persons from abuse and exploitation, while enabling them to exercise their rights and make meaningful choices about their lives.



The Case of Mr. Herrera

In the CLBB White Pater on "Cognitive Decline and Financial Exploitation of Older Adults", a case related to language and cognitive assessment is presented.

Mr Herrera, a 78-year-old older person who immigrated to the US from Mexico, underwent a cognitive assessment in English after concerns were raised about his financial management. The assessment suggested moderate cognitive impairment; however, when he was reassessed in Spanish using culturally appropriate cognitive screening measures, he performed within the normal range. If the second assessment had not occurred, he might have been misdiagnosed with dementia, potentially leading to unnecessary restrictions on his legal capacity, including financial oversight or guardianship measures.

This case demonstrates that legal protections for older persons are inseparable from questions of language, culture and the design of assessment tools and procedures. It also highlights the importance of the normative values embedded in such tools. The assumptions and values that inform their design and application may unintentionally disadvantage certain individuals based on characteristics such as language or cultural background, regardless of what the tools are intended to measure.

While specific checklists, regulations and assessment procedures may be too detailed for an international treaty to prescribe, the treaty can nevertheless establish the normative principles that guide their development, ensuring that safeguards protect them without unnecessarily restricting their autonomy.

Insights from the CDPR on Guardianship

The experience of the disability rights movement, including its participation in the negotiations of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), demonstrates the importance of protecting the legal capacity of persons with disabilities and older persons. Automatically stripping people of legal capacity on the basis of disability, and similarly on the basis of age, constitutes a human rights violation and represents poor policy. Guardianship and other forms of legal capacity restrictions, once established, are extraordinarily difficult to unwind and may entrench abuse rather than prevent it, even where those entrusted with the care of older persons or persons with disabilities are family members or caregivers.

Food for Thought

A key challenge for the new treaty will therefore be whether its negotiators choose to strike a balance between protection and the preservation of autonomy, as the negotiators of the CRPD did, or whether, they will adopt a different balance based on the values advocated by civil society organizations and prioritized by Governments.

This is particularly important given the real and growing risk of financial exploitation of older persons, including through increasingly sophisticated scams involving digital tools, deepfakes and cross-border schemes. The outcome will be significant, as the treaty can provide strong normative guidance on how legal protection schemes at the national level should be designed to protect older persons while preserving their autonomy.



Useful Resources

- Just Security Blog Post on "How Can a New International Treaty Address Older Persons' Decision-Making Rights?" (2026)| Link
- CLBB, White Paper on "Cognitive Decline and Financial Exploitation of Older Persons"(2025)| Link
- HPOD, CLBB & The Petrie-Flom Centre (PFC) Event Recap for Webinar on "What to Expect from the Nascent Negotiations of an International Human Rights Treaty for Older Persons" (2025)| Link



Decade of healthy ageing

unitar
United Nations Institute for Training and Research

United Nations | Department of Economic and Social Affairs

UNFPA

IOM UN MIGRATION

ILO International Labour Organization

UN WOMEN

UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency

World Health Organization

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

ITU

With the support of:

WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities

hpod Harvard Law School Project on Disability

Group of Friends of the Human Rights of Older Persons • UN Geneva •

INPEA

ILC GLOBAL ALLIANCE INTERNATIONAL LONGEVITY CENTRE Designing the Future of Ageing

NGO Committee on Ageing GENEVA

GIA Global Initiative on Ageing

cifal Global Network