**Europe for us**

**Employ campaign and a new podcast**

**Editors note**

Hi everyone, my name is Soufiane Elamrani

I am the easy-to-read editor and self-advocacy expert.

In this Europe for us you will find what kind of things Inclusion Europe has been up to lately.

I really like the article on what the European Commission will be in the next 10 years for people with intellectual disabilities.

As a person with intellectual disabilities, it is important for me to know what the European Commission will do for all people with intellectual disabilities in the next 10 years.

As it was a great pleasure to be interviewed for the new Inclusion Europe podcast.

I really enjoyed telling my story to the whole world of how I found this job at Inclusion Europe.

Also, I think it is a good idea to have a Inclusion Europe podcast because it means we share with other people our own experiences about our lives.

[**Soufiane El Amrani: Life with intellectual disability - Inclusion Europe Radio**](https://www.inclusion-europe.eu/life-with-intellectual-disability-interviews-by-inclusion-europe/)

Inclusion Europe is creating a new project.

This new project is interviews with  
people with intellectual disabilities and people   
who live or work with people with intellectual disabilities.

The first interview for this series was done between   
Myrto Delkou and Soufiane El Amrani.

Myrto Delkou is the communication   
trainee of Inclusion Europe.   
Soufiane El Amrani is the easy-to-read and advocacy officer at Inclusion Europe. 

Myrto and Soufiane spoke about daily life   
and employment for people with disabilities.

Myrto and Soufiane also talked about COVID-19   
and the way COVID-19 has changed the employment of people with intellectual disabilities.   
   
Soufiane spoke about how important it is   
for people with intellectual disabilities to have a job   
and make their own money.

Soufiane talked about his own experience with    
applying for a job and working for Inclusion Europe.

Soufiane also spoke about the struggles  
he has faced in his daily life due to his disability.

Myrto and Soufiane also discussed  
about Soufiane’s personal goals and   
about how important it is that more employers  
give jobs to people with disabilities.

In the next episodes of the interview series  
Inclusion Europe wants to talk with more  
people with intellectual disabilities and learn more  
about their daily lives.

Listen to the **podcast** here: <http://www.inclusion-europe.eu/life-with-intellectual-disability-interviews-by-inclusion-europe/>

**Employ campaign – Everyone has a right to work**

In 2021 Inclusion Europe wants to talk more about

supporting people with intellectual disabilities

in the labour market.

Inclusion Europe wants to share good practices

and discussions about inclusive employment

everywhere in Europe.

Inclusion Europe made a page on the website

about the employ campaign.

On the page Inclusion Europe shared

useful videos and articles about employment.

You can visit the page [here.](https://www.inclusion-europe.eu/employ-campaign-2021/)

Inclusion Europe is looking for

Self-advocates who would like to share their story

about working and living independently.

Email us at [comms@inclusion-europe.org](mailto:comms@inclusion-europe.org).

Write usi f you want to share your story.

[**Union of equality: Strategy on the rights of persons with disabilities 2021-2030**](https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1535&langId=en)

The **European Union** is a group  
of 27 countries in Europe.  
These countries came together  
to make things better, easier and safer for people.

The **European Disability Strategy** is a plan  
that says how the European Union will work  
to protect the rights of people with disabilities  
in the next 10 years.

To make this happen, in the next 10 years  
the European Commission will work to make sure  
that all people with disabilities can:

Move and live freely in any country of the European Union.

Get the right support to be able to have a good life.

Live independently.  
They should not live in institutions away   
from their families and friends.

Be part of the community together with other people.

Make their own decisions about their lives.  
For example, they have the right to decide  
where, how and with whom they want to live.

Have the same chances to study and work  
as all other people.

Have access to health care  
and other important things and services.

Are treated in a fair way and with respect.  
They should not be left out or be treated badly  
because they have a disability.

The European Commission will work closely together  
with all countries in the European Union  
to make this plan happen and protect the rights of all people with disabilities.

Read more about the European Disability Strategy here: <https://www.inclusion-europe.eu/european-commission-presents-strategy-for-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities-2021-2030/>

[**What is the European Union? Watch our easy-to-understand videos.**](https://www.inclusion-europe.eu/what-is-the-european-union-watch-our-easy-to-understand-video/)

[**Inclusion Europe**](https://www.inclusion-europe.eu/easy-to-read-term/#IE) made a video  
about the [**European Union**.](https://www.inclusion-europe.eu/easy-to-read-term/#EU)

This video talks about the European Union  
and explains the European Union  
in words that are [**easy to understand**](https://www.inclusion-europe.eu/easy-to-read-term/#ETR).

Watch the video about what is the European Union. Link to the video: <https://youtu.be/x8cv9XgbBOA>

The European Charter of Fundamental Rights  
is a document that talks about human rights  
in the European Union.

All countries in the European Union  
must follow those rules.

Watch the video about what is the European Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Link to the video: <https://youtu.be/drFdu8lTheo>

There are 70.0 million people with disabilities   
in the European Union.   
   
The European Union has made laws and documents   
that say that people with disabilities should be   
protected and included in society.

Watch the video about why is the European Union  
important for people with disabilities.

Link to the video: <https://youtu.be/XVeifyK1OFY>

**EPSA activities in 2020**

My name is László Bercse.

I come from Budapest, Hungary.

I am the Vice-President of Inclusion Europe

and the Chair of EPSA.

EPSA is the European Platform of Self-Advocates.

I would like to tell you

what EPSA worked on in 2020.

**New challenges**

The COVID-19 pandemic changed the way we work.

It affected the work of the EPSA Steering Group

and the work of EPSA members.

Most organisations worked online.

This was difficult for some self-advocates,

who have no computer, phone

or access to the internet.

For some self-advocates

it was difficult to join online meetings

without having their supporters in the same room.

As an international organisation,

It was very difficult for us because of the translation.

But we continued working

and speaking up.

Self-advocates discovered new ways

to stay in contact and to advocate.

**A new member of the Steering Group**

In 2020 we said goodbye to Harry Roche.

Harry decided to focus on his national work

in the United Kingdom.

Harry had been a Steering Group member for a long time.

We were happy to work with Harry

and wished him all the best for the future.

Ana Martinez from Spain got elected

as the new member of the Steering Group.

Ana had been working with the Steering Group

for some time already.

We were glad to welcome Ana to the group.

**Steering Group meeting in Brussels**

In January, we had a Steering Group meeting in Brussels.

We started planning the Hear Our Voices 2021 conference.

We talked about how Inclusion Europe can better include

self-advocates in its work.

We also talked about

how EPSA can include more

* young people
* self-advocate women
* and people with complex support needs.

This was the first and also the last time

we met in person in 2020.

In the rest of the year, we had online meetings.

**Towards Inclusion conference**

In January, the Europe European Committee

organised a conference in Brussels.

The title of the conference was Towards Inclusion.

The conference was about

the 10 years of deinstitutionalization, in Europe.

Elisabeta Moldovan was one of the speakers.

Elisabeta is a member of the EPSA Steering Group.

Elisabeta told her experiences about institutions

and about the importance of support.

**Position paper on the COVID-19 situation**

In spring, EPSA prepared a questionnaire.

We asked our members

how they were coping with the situation.

We used the answers to write a position paper.

We wrote about the main issues

and what we want to achieve.

We want to make sure that our rights are respected

and we are not left behind.

We want to be considered

when planning support services for the future.

**EDF conference**

EDF is the European Disability Forum.

EDF and Lebenshilfe Germany

organised an online conference in October.

The conference was about the situation

of people with disabilities during COVID-19.

Adreas Zehetner was one of the speakers.

Andreas is from Austria.

He is a member of EPSA Steering Group.

Andreas said that governments

not always consider us when planning measures.

**Self-Advocates in Inclusion Europe’s board**

Our self-advocate colleague, Harry Roche

left Inclusion Europe’s board as well.

Oswald Föllerer took over his position

and joined the board.

Oswald is an Austrian member of EPSA Steering Group.

Oswald helps us to make sure

that the voices of self-advocates

are heard in Inclusion Europe.

**The project My Talents for Diversity**

In 2020 Inclusion Europe had a project about employment.

The title of the project was My Talents for Diversity.

The project aimed to support the employment

of people with intellectual disabilities.

Self-Advocates also worked on the project.

There were online events in during the project.

I spoke at two of the events.

I spoke about

* why employment is important for self-advocates
* and how to support the employment

of self-advocates.

**The conference of PSONI**

PSONI is the Polish Association

of Persons with Intellectual Disability.

In November, PSONI organised an online conference

for self-advocates.

I sent a video message to the conference.

I talked about the work of EPSA

and the role of self-advocates in Inclusion Europe.

**Learning by Sharing events**

In November, EPSA organised national events

for self-advocates, online.

We called them Learning by Sharing.

Self-advocates could

share their experience about the COVID-19 situation

and learn from each other.

We had 7 online events in 7 different languages.

We had 71 attendees altogether, from 11 countries.

Self-advocates shared how they overcame difficulties,   
so others could learn ways to do the same.

We also heard useful suggestions on how governments should

support us and ensure our rights

in situations like this in the future.

**European Day of Persons with Disabilities**

Every December, the European Committee

organises a conference

called the European Day of Persons with Disabilities.

This year they had a discussion about the COVID-19 situation

and the recovery after the emergency.

I was asked to speak at discussion.

I said that the governments must learn

from the experiences.

They must listen to us,

when planning protection measures.

Our lives are as valuable as others’.

**Thank you!**

I want to thank my colleagues

and everyone in our movement

for their work in 2020.

I really admire all persons with intellectual disabilities,

family members supporting them

and the staff of services.

I hope that 2021 is going to be a better year.

I am looking forward

to meet you in person soon!

**László Bercse**

Chair

European Platform of Self-Advocates

[**Belgium condemned - Inclusive education for children with intellectual disabilities**](https://www.inclusion-europe.eu/complaint-ceds-inclusive-school-2021-etr/)

The [**European Committee of Social Rights**](https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-social-charter/european-committee-of-social-rights)

says that Belgium does not do enough   
for **inclusive education.**

The [**European Committee of Social Rights**](https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-social-charter/european-committee-of-social-rights)  
is a regional human rights body that   
protects **social rights**.

Social rights are like education, health   
or having a house.

**Inclusive education** means that all  
children can go to the same school  
and learn in the same classroom.

But Belgium does not do enough to  
make sure that all children with intellectual disabilities  
can go to inclusive education.

On Wednesday, the 3rd of February 2021  
the European Committee of Social Rights   
condemned Belgium.

They said it is true that the[**Wallonia Brussels Federation**](https://www.nrb.be/en/our-customers/public-social/federation-wallonie-bruxelles)  
does not do enough to make sure  
children with intellectual disabilities  
can have an inclusive education.

[**Paul Alford, Barriers to Employment - General Discussion at the CRPD Committee**](https://www.inclusion-europe.eu/paul-alford-barriers-to-employment-general-discussion-at-the-crpd-committee/)

A statement for the CRPD Committee hearing on employment, prepared with [**Inclusion Ireland**](https://inclusionireland.ie/).

**Inclusion Ireland** is a member of Inclusion Europe.

My name is Paul Alford.

I work with [**Inclusion Ireland**](https://inclusionireland.ie/).

I was in sheltered workshops.

I did a lot of work at the time but I   
didn’t get any money.

This was not right.

Those workshops are now closed,

but we need to make sure they don’t reopen.

Later on I started working in a shop

but I did not get a lot of money, just 2 or 3 euros per week.

Now, I get a good wage for my work and I have

plenty of money to[**live independently**](https://www.inclusion-europe.eu/easy-to-read-term/#IndependentLiving) in my own home.

I got no education.

When I started working with [**Inclusion Ireland**](https://inclusionireland.ie/),

I couldn’t read and write.

I did courses to learn to read and write   
and work on computers.

It is very important to get proper money for working,

a disability allowance and the support needed to work.

People are afraid of losing their benefits if they work.

People need to change their attitudes.

People with [**intellectual disabilities**](https://www.inclusion-europe.eu/easy-to-read-term/#IntellectualDisability) can do good work.

There needs to be more awareness for employers

to take on people with disabilities and

treat them the same as everyone.

People with disabilities should not be

bullied on transport or in work.

Finding a job can be hard.

We have some systems in Ireland   
but this doesn’t work for a lot of   
people as they need more support.

Many people just stay in day services  
and no one expects them to get a job.

Transport is really important for people to get to work, they need access to transport and training.

Everyone deserves the same chance   
to work and the support to make it happen   
and live a good life.

Working changed my life a lot and now   
I have a good life.

**Explanations**

**Accessible**

Something that is easy to use for people with disabilities.

Such as:

* Ramps to get into a building.
* Information in **easy-to-read.**
* Information in sign language.

**Commissioner at the European Commission**

A Commissioner is a person who is responsible

for a field of work at the **European Commission**

and manages a lot of people.

**Discrimination**

Discrimination means that you are treated worse than others or that you do not get the chances you deserve.

**Easy-to-read**

Easy to read is information that is written in a simple way

so that people with **intellectual disabilities**can understand.

It is important to use simple words and sentences.

If there are words that are difficult to understand,

an explanation is provided.

The text needs to be clear to see,

for example, black writing on a white background is good.

It needs to be well-spaced.

Easy-to-read often uses pictures

to explain what the text talks about.

Someone with an intellectual disability needs to

check the information is easy to understand.

Easy-to-read documents often have this logo,

so it is easier to find them.

There are rules on how easy-to-read should be done.

**Educate**

Educate means to teach.

It means to make sure people have access to training

so they can learn new skills.

**ÉFOÉSZ**

ÉFOÉSZ is an association of organisations that care and support the rehabilitation of people with intellectual disability in Hungary.

**Employment**

Employment is when a person works and gets paid for their work. It is usually based on a contract between the worker and the person who provides the job. This person is the employer.

**EPSA**

The European Platform of Self-Advocates

is made up of organisations of **self-advocates**

from different countries in Europe.

We call it EPSA for short.

It is a part of **Inclusion Europe.**

**European Commission**

The European Commission works

with the **European Parliament.**

The European Commission suggests laws

for the European Parliament

and the **Council of the European Union**to discuss.

It also makes sure that the laws

that have been decided upon

are being followed by the member states.

**European Parliament**

The European Parliament is a place where

important decisions of the **European Union** are made.

For example: laws.

The Members of the European Parliament (in short, MEPs)

make these decisions

and speak for all the people

who live in the European Union.

Every five years,

the people who live in the European Union

**vote** for their country’s MEPs.

**European Union**

The European Union (in short, EU) is a group of 28 countries.

We call these countries “member states”.

They have joined together

to be stronger politically and economically.

The EU makes laws on many important things for the people who live in

those countries.

The EU makes laws in different areas. Some examples are:

* Laws to protect the environment.
* Laws for farmers.
* Laws to protect consumers.

A consumer is someone who buys things.

The EU also makes laws that are important

for people with disabilities.

It also made a law that gives people with disabilities

more rights when they are travelling.

The EU also gives money to its member states.

Some of this money is used for people with disabilities.

**European Pilar of Social Rights**:

The European Pilar of Social Rights makes sure

people in the European Union have new and more effective rights.

**Government**

A government is a group of people   
that make decisions on how to run a country.   
For example,

* about where the money is spent,
* about public transport,
* about schools,
* about hospitals.

Every few years there are **elections**   
to **vote** for a new government.

**Guardianship**

Guardianship allows some people

to make life choices for others.

The person who makes choices for you

is your guardian.

Your guardian can decide things for you,

like where you live.

Sometimes, people under guardianship are not allowed

to vote, get married, or take care of their kids.

**Healthcare:**

Healthcare is the services given to someone

who is ill or who needs to take care of their health.

Healthcare involves going to the doctor, getting medicine

and getting support for health problems

of the body or the mind.

**Inclusion Europe**

Inclusion Europe is an organisation

for people with **intellectual disabilities**

and their families.

We fight for their equal rights and inclusion in Europe.

We also want to make a difference to the laws in Europe.

We started in 1988.

We have 79 members in 39 European countries.

We are based in Brussels in Belgium.

**Inclusive education, training, employment**

Inclusive education, training or employment

means that people with **intellectual disabilities**

can learn and work together

with other people without disabilities.

**Institutions**

Institutions are places where

people with **intellectual disabilities**live

with other people with intellectual disabilities.

They live apart from other people.

This is what we call “segregated”.

Sometimes this happens against their will.

People who live in institutions

have to follow the rules of the institution

and cannot decide for themselves.

**Intellectual disability**

If you have an intellectual disability,

that means it is more difficult for you

to understand information

and learn new skills than it is for other people.

This makes some parts of life harder.

People with intellectual disabilities

often need support in learning or at work.

Intellectual disability often starts before you are an adult.

It affects you for your whole life.

There are things that can make life easier

for people with intellectual disabilities.

For example, information in **easy-to-read** language.

Some people say learning disabilities

instead of intellectual disabilities.

**Lockdown:**

A lockdown happens when there is a need

to control a situation that can be harmful.

During a pandemic like the one of COVID-19,

the countries have lockdowns to

stop the spread of the virus.

**MEPs**

The members of the [**European Parliament**](https://www.inclusion-europe.eu/easy-to-read-term/#EP)

are the [**politicians**](https://www.inclusion-europe.eu/easy-to-read-term/#Politician) who sit

in the European Parliament.

We call them MEPs for short.

**NGO**

**Non-governmental organizations**

Non-governmental organizations, or NGOs are are generally defined as nonprofit and independent of governmental influence.

**Online Schooling:**

Online schooling is a way for students

to attend their classes using a computer

or another device to connect to the internet.

These classes happen with the help of

online applications for meetings or

online classrooms.

**Petition**

A request made for something desired, especially a respectful or humble request, as to a superior or to one of those in authority.

**Podcast**

Podcast is an audio file that anyone can listen to at any time - either with a podcast app, website or youtube channel.

**Policies**

Actions or practices of governments and institutions.

Policies are trying to make the situation better.

Policies can be a set of rules or guidelines

to follow in or to achieve a specific goal.

**Rights of people with disabilities:**

A right is a rule that makes sure people

are protected and they can have and do

what they need to live a life with respect and safety.

Rights of people with disabilities are rules

that are about the lives of people with disabilities.

For example, the right to get an education,

or the right to have a job and live independently.

**Self-Advocacy**

Self-advocacy is when

people with **intellectual disabilities**speak up for themselves.

These people are called self-advocates.

**Segregation**

Segregation is when someone is set apart from others for an unfair reason.

For example, because of their disability.

**UN CRPD**

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (in short, UN CRPD)   
is an important document.

It tries to make sure that the rights of people with disabilities are respected.

**Vote**

Voting means choosing

the **politicians**who represent us

and make decisions for us.

You can vote in different areas.

For example:

* in your town or city

when you elect a new mayor

* in your country

when you elect a new president

* or at the European elections**,**

when you choose the new

Members of the European Parliament (**MEPs**).

**Working conditions:**

Working conditions is the working environment

and the circumstances of the job.

This includes the working hours, legal rights and responsibilities.