

Impact of Coronavirus emergency on people with intellectual disabilities, families

On Thursday 2 April 2020, Inclusion Europe held an online meeting with the president of Inclusion Europe and Inclusion Finland, Jyrki Pinomaa, about the Coronavirus emergency and how it affects people with intellectual disabilities and families.

Finland is facing restriction of visits in care homes which makes our families isolated, but it's important to set up other means of communication through Skype and sign language. There are around 2 thousand cases of Coronavirus and we are all under lockdown and in the beginning especially some families expressed lack of support from the institutions.

In Europe there has been many developments and many people and institutions have been affected by the situation, and it reflected to the access to medical care, like in residential institutions in Spain, Poland and France where due to the lack of preparation and equipment for staff, the virus has spread quickly.

The outbreak of the virus is not an opportunity to discriminate, weather in health care or administration. Everyone has the same rights, and especially they don't go away during the crisis. **Again, we must be reminding governments and institutions that international conventions like the [UN CRPD still apply and human rights must be respected.](#)**

Positive side due to the outbreak of the virus, the authorities changed their approach in their communication and provision of guidance.

Q: Are there any restrictions or measures in daily lives?

Portugal: We have many organizations helping with systems in place the people with disabilities. The restrictions apply to everyone and we cannot go outside but with the permission we can visit people in need.

France: There are a lot of irregularities and situations where people with disabilities are faced with a lot of stress. The measures that try to lower the risks of infections need more cooperation between the institutions and families. There needs to be more conversation to hear the wishes and preferences of people with intellectual disabilities and their families. However, there are a lot of good practices of solidarity and easy to read materials (forms, information provision) and we need to continue to highlight them at this time. Schools are also providing more support, especially with reaching out to students with disabilities.

Inclusion Europe's material about the COVID-19

Inclusion Europe created a webpage gathering the [materials relevant to the Coronavirus emergency](#). The webpage is updated daily with new content and can be accessed [here](#).

Inclusion Europe organises online exchange about the Coronavirus emergency.

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[5 steps to prevent harm to people with intellectual disabilities and their families in Coronavirus emergency \(.pdf\)](#)

