



# Europe for us

**Employability and  
education**



Find explanations for words in **bold** at the end of Europe For Us on pages 32 to 41.

“Europe for us” is available in:

- English
- French
- German
- Hungarian
- Italian
- Romanian
- Spanish

Go to [www.inclusion-europe.eu/europe-for-us](http://www.inclusion-europe.eu/europe-for-us) to find the other language versions.

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# Editor's note

Hi my name is Soufiane El Amrani.

I am the easy-to-read editor at Inclusion Europe.

I am going to tell you about some of the articles that you will find in this Europe for us newsletter.

- Important decision made by the European Parliament on the rights of people with disabilities.
- Education is a right to be fought for

All these articles I have talked about are very important.

Thanks, from Soufiane El Amrani  
Easy to read editor and self-advocacy officer

# Important decision by the European Parliament on the rights of people with disabilities



On July 8th, the [European Parliament](#) approved a decision in defence of rights of people with [intellectual disabilities](#) in times of COVID-19 crisis.



This decision is based on a petition from [Inclusion Europe](#).

The petition calls for measures that protect people with intellectual disabilities during and after the COVID-19 emergency.

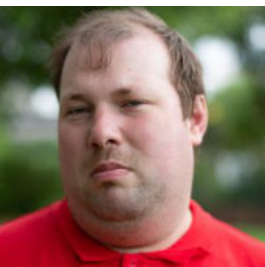
During the COVID-19 emergency, several European countries did not respect the rights of people with intellectual disabilities.



For example, there has been medical [discrimination](#) in hospitals.

It means that people with disabilities could not have access to healthcare.

László Bercse supported the petition.



László Bercse is the Vice-President of Inclusion Europe and the [chair](#) of [EPSA](#).

He said:

"we need to make sure our rights are respected and that we are not left behind."



The European Parliament approved the resolution by

- 682 votes in favor,
- 3 against,
- 10 non-voting.

The European Parliament recalls that post-coronavirus measures must be compatible with

- the European Charter of Fundamental Rights, describing all the rights of being a human in Europe;
- the [UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#).





The European Parliament also requests that all information about COVID-19 are:

- [easy-to-read](#),
- easy-to-understand.



Jyrki Pinomaa is the President of Inclusion Europe.

He is very happy about the decision of the European Parliament.

He appreciates that the European Parliament reassured people with intellectual disabilities and their families about their rights to have access to healthcare.



Helen Portal is the Policy Officer of Inclusion Europe.

She said that this vote is important to address the harm and damage done to people with intellectual disabilities.

Click [here](#) to find more information about our petition.

# Unfair situations during quarantine that show the world is not designed for people with intellectual disabilities



The world is not designed for people with intellectual disabilities.

We will tell you about several situations that have been happening during quarantine that prove it.



**The government banned people from going out on the streets.**

But they forgot that there are people who feel stressed if they do not go outside for a while.

Then the government gave permission to these people go outside.



**Many people with disabilities live in residential institutions.**

It is difficult to avoid infection in residential institutions.



It would be better if they lived in apartments with fewer people and in the community like all the people without disabilities.



### **Schools have closed.**

Schools are sending homework online, but many people forgot that people with disabilities can have a hard time using technology.

People with intellectual disabilities are being left out of education.



### **It is hard to understand the information about the coronavirus.**

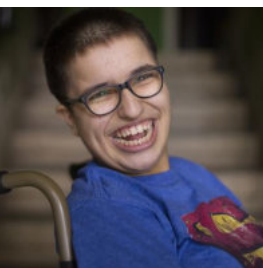
This shows that the government and the media forgot about people who have a hard time understanding things.



### **Many people are using technology to work and to connect with their families and friends.**

Technology is hard to understand, so people with disabilities and their families have a difficult time to connect with their families and friends.

# "Education is a right to be fought for"



Maria Alexandrova is an 18-year-old student from Bulgaria.

She lives with cerebral palsy.

Cerebral palsy is a group of disorders that affect person's ability to move.

Cerebral means having to do with the brain.



Palsy means weakness or problems with using the muscles.

Maria speaks perfect English.



But she could not take the **Cambridge Assessment English** because it was not accessible to her with her physical disability.



The Cambridge Assessment is an English exam organized by the University of Cambridge.

It is recognized by employees and universities as proof of ability to speak English.

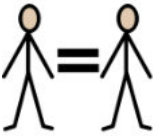
There are exam centers in 130 countries.

Maria moves her arms more slowly than her peers.

So, it was more difficult for her to complete the exam in the limited time required.



Maria asked the University of Cambridge to adapt its Advanced English examination to her needs.



For 3 months, she advocated for different examination conditions to give her equal chance of gaining this certificate.



The only difference she advocated for was for the writing module of the exam.

She would be using a computer instead of a notepad.

Maria never gave up.

She said:

**"If you have the drive to accomplish something, there is nothing impossible."**



The examining centre finally agreed to

- change the timing of the exam,
- let her use a computer.



Weeks later, she successfully passed the exam.

She has become  
the first person with disabilities in Bulgaria  
to receive this English certificate.



Maria said:

"Some people take education for granted, simply because it was given to them.

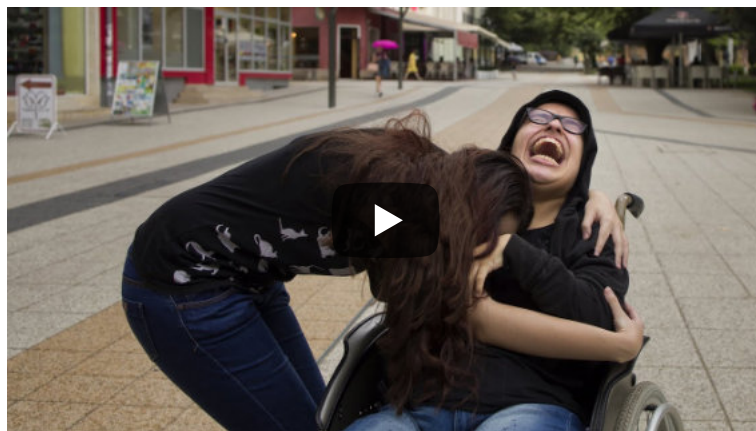
But for people like me, education is a right to be fought for".

Her fight allows other students with disabilities

- to take the exam,
- to increase their chances of going to university and finding a job.



You can watch her story  
with English subtitles here:



# Inclusive society can be more than a sweet dream



Christine Dufour is the founder of an NGO in Brussels.

She has a daughter with [intellectual disabilities](#).

Her name is Lisette.



[Inclusion Europe](#) did an interview with Christine Dufour.

She spoke about how [inclusive education](#) is good for everyone.



## How was the NGO founded?

The creation of the NGO was needed when I realized that Lisette needed help in the classroom.

Lisette has been attending mainstream school since the age of 3.



But I realized that it was essential to put in place something that could help her in her learning.

Then, I looked for someone who wanted to help Lisette understand the instructions, and adapt teaching materials to her needs.

A volunteer agreed  
to help my daughter in her classroom.

This was a real help for Lisette and her teacher.



That is how I came up with the idea  
of creating the NGO  
to help other children with disabilities  
to be included at school.

### **What does your NGO do?**



The NGO sets up individual  
support within mainstream schools.

A volunteer helps a child with disabilities in the class  
and becomes a support for the child and the teacher.

To this date, the NGO has about 60 volunteers,  
who help about 60 children with disabilities.

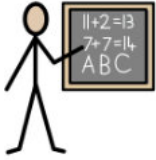
### **Do you have any future projects?**



We have the project to create an inclusive school.

This school would welcome:

- children with disabilities,
- children without disabilities.



Teachers would

- use new teaching methods,
- be trained to supervise any child with complex support needs.

### **What are the benefits of inclusive education?**



Inclusion of children with disabilities is good for everyone.

Children with support needs are pushed to do better.

Their inclusion in the class brings tolerance and empathy.

It is also a benefit for the teachers.

They are encouraged to adapt their learning methods to the needs of every child.

### **How does Lisette experience her inclusion in mainstream school?**



Being included at school helps Lisette understand the behaviors that are good and the behaviors that are not.

She starts reading, and she loves mathematics.

She is interested in many things.





Inclusive education plays a big role in all of this!

Her inclusion at school is good for her but also, for the other children.

The children develop a sense of mutual aid, and the teacher does not have to impose it!

### **What needs to be done for schools to be truly inclusive?**



Schools must have enough money and people to help implementing inclusion in classrooms.

The school system must also adapt to the needs of each child, not the other way around!

# "We need to change the way we look at education"



Anne-Marie Callus is a lecturer at the University of Malta.

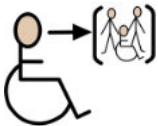
She lectures and researches about [inclusive education](#).



[Inclusion Europe](#) did an interview with Anne-Marie Callus.

She explains the importance for all children to receive a quality education.

## How do you define inclusive education?



Inclusion is about asking what we need to do to adapt the mainstream education setting to meet the individual needs of students with disabilities.

## What are the long-terms effects of inclusion at school?

Having students with and without disabilities in the same classroom is an important step towards achieving inclusion in society.

If children with disabilities are sent to segregated schools, they will be excluded from society when they are adults.



If children with disabilities are included in mainstream schools, they will be most probably socially included as adults.

### **How can inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities at university be improved?**

Universities need to work with self-advocacy organisations.



Together, they can examine:

- what the learning needs of students with intellectual disabilities are;
- what wishes students with intellectual disabilities have;
- what the university can offer to meet these needs and wishes.

## **What is the space allocated to the voice of students with intellectual disabilities in inclusion?**



All students with disabilities should have a voice in the planning of their education.

It is often assumed that students with intellectual disabilities cannot represent themselves.

So, they are often excluded from the discussion about education.

But they cannot learn how to make choices and express their wishes unless we give them the opportunities to do so.

## **What are the consequences of the COVID-19 crisis on education?**



With schools closed, the use of online platforms and other tools of distance learning are very valuable resources.

But some students do not have adequate support at home.

So, they are at risk of losing out their education.

**Do you think distance learning can be negative to the education experience of students with intellectual disabilities?**



Distance learning is a very valuable resource.

But it cannot replace the experience of students being in the same class together with their teachers.

Students with intellectual disabilities require one-to-one support.

It is difficult to provide this support through a computer screen.

# Videos supporting employment of people with intellectual disabilities



The project was funded by the  
European Union's Rights,  
Equality and Citizenship  
Programme (2014-2020)

Most people with intellectual disabilities do not work.



Those who work often do not get a fair salary.

The “My Talents for Diversity” is a project that tackles this issue.



We call it MTFD for short.

The project is led by Inclusion Europe and 3 partners:

- Plena Inclusión (in Spain),
- EVPIT (in Estonia),
- Antwerp Management School (in Belgium).



They have produced videos to share examples of companies that employ people with intellectual disabilities.

## Follow Thibeau on his working day at Antwerp Management School



Thibeau works at Antwerp Management School in Belgium.

He is a researcher for the MTFD project.



His job consists in interviewing people in companies that employ people with intellectual disabilities.

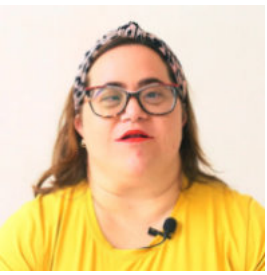
Thibeau can count on the help of two colleagues that support him with practical matters.

You can watch the video here:





# Customised employment for Manuela



Manuela Cambreiro has been working in a market in Tenerife for many years.

Ana Peña is a job coach.

Hugo Pérez is a supermarket manager.

Together, they have created a customised job for Manuela.

Manuela's job has been created according to:

- her skills,
- the things that she enjoyed,
- the needs of the market on site.

You can watch the video here:





## Reasonable accommodations at OACEX

OACEX is an office in Spain.

Aroa Rico is an employee at OACEX.



When she started, she received an easy-to-read version of the manual explaining the functioning of the company.

With reasonable accommodations, people with intellectual disabilities can work with the same autonomy as any other employee.

You can watch the video here:



# How having a job coach helped Laura to achieve her dream?



Job coaches provide support to employees with intellectual disabilities when they start a new job.



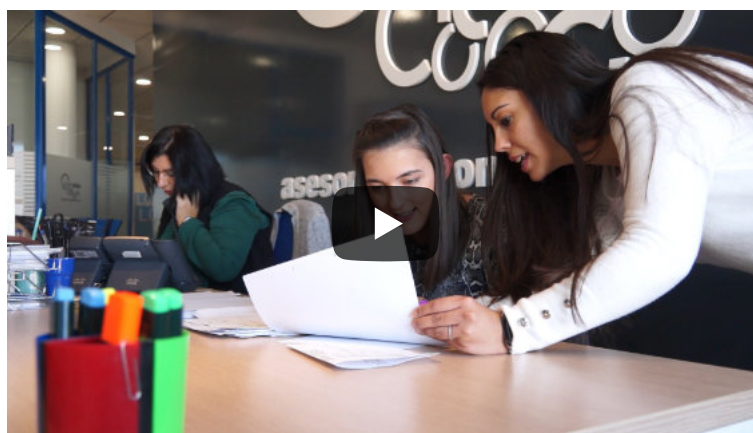
Laura Pereira Barahona has been working as an administrative assistant for nearly 5 years.

Her job coach accompanied her from the start to help her understand



- the job,
- the tasks,
- the functioning of the company.

You can watch the video here:





## Follow Toomas during his specialised training

Toomas Niitepõld is employee at Rimi supermarket chain in Estonia.



Before starting his job, he received a training of job environment and security.

His working tasks and duties were taught onsite by elder colleagues.

You can watch the video here:



# How are families important in supporting people with intellectual disability to work?



The process of entering the job market is supported by the family of people with disability.

The families provide support regarding the hopes and abilities of the person's employment future.

You can watch the video here:



# Ivo Vykydal, former president of Inclusion Europe, died aged 56

Ivo was a board member of Inclusion Europe since 2008 for 5 years and also, as Secretary-General before.

He worked on the first [EU Disability Strategy](#) and the [Children's rights for all \(.pdf\)](#) report.


Ivo Vykydal served also as the president of Inclusion Czechia between 2002 and 2011.

Ivo Vykydal was a member of the Czech Parliament in 2002-2006.

Inclusion Europe expresses sincere condolences to Ivo's family and friends.

Jyrki Pinomaa, president of Inclusion Europe, said:

"It is with great sadness that I have received the news of Ivo Vykydal's death.



My thoughts go to his wife Karin and his children, who have lost their husband and father far too early."

Maureen Piggot, Inclusion Europe president 2011-2018, said:

"I was shocked and saddened to hear of Ivo's untimely death.

It is a sad day for his family, his country and the Inclusion family, which he served at national, regional and global level."

# Explanations



## Accessible

Something that is easy to use for people with disabilities.

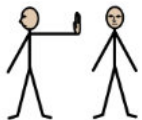
Such as:

- 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.

It is discrimination when it happens because of your disability.



It can also happen to other people.  
For example, people who have a different skin colour.  
Or older people.

## 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.



## 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.



## 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.



## 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.



## MEPs

The members of the **European Parliament** are the **politicians** who sit in the European Parliament.

We call them MEPs for short.



## NGO Non-governmental organizations

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



## Petition

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



## 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**).



Ambitions. Rights. Belonging.

## Contact us and share your self-advocacy stories!



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