**Employment, education and living in isolation**

# Soufiane about life and work in 2021

During the coronavirus

the hardest thing for me was not

being allowed to go to

the office to see my colleagues.

The other hard thing for me

was that I could not have

more than 2 people

come for dinner.

Also, not being able to

go to the cinema like

I did before Covid-19.

To keep myself busy

during Covid-19

I finished a lot of books

and played video games.

I also did a lot of puzzles

and I ordered things

from the Internet.

I learn how to put all my books

in order and I even re-arranged

my whole flat.

I got a lot of help from

my colleagues when I

was working from home.

I am looking forward to

the Covid-19 ending and

life going back to normal.

If we get sick it is ok,

we must just take care

of each other.

My family is doing great and

I saw them more during the

Covid-19 and it was nice.

Remember you are not alone

and you have to take life by the horns.

And say this covid-19 is

not going to stop me doing

all the things I did.

And also remember we

are all in the same boat.

Interviews with Croatian self-advocates

## Interview with self-advocate Biserka Sambol

How do you spend your time in isolation?

I cook, I go to walk but I keep the distance.

I pray a lot at noon and in the evening.

I also celebrated my birthday.

At first, this situation was hard for me,

but I somehow got used to it.

I talk to family and friends

on a video call and on the telephone.

I follow the daily reports on corona virus.

Did you learn some new things during this time?

Now I am spending more time

with the people I love.

I put everything in God's hands.

## Interview with self-advocate Snježana Kanjir

How do you spend your days at home during Coronavirus?

I liked to take walks

in my neighborhood,

I went for a massage and

to my hairdresser.

I always wear a mask and

gloves when I go out.

I help my mom to

clean the apartment.

Were you scared of an earthquake?

I was scared a little bit,

I ran down the stairs.

The wall in the apartment cracked.

I’m a little bored

and can’t wait to go to work.

Sometimes I talk to my friends

over the phone and see

my brother when he visits me.

Do you have a message for self-advocates?

Be careful so we can start

to work as soon as possible.

## Interview with self-advocate Božidar Kobasić

What was the hardest thing for you in this corona virus crisis?

I heard about corona virus in March.

At first I didn’t know how dangerous it was.

In those first days I went on my own

for a little walk.

Only now I see how dangerous it was.

Now, I can’t wait for this coronavirus to end

so I can go out of my house independently.

I learned I must be very careful about corona virus.

How was it for you when the earthquake happened in Zagreb?

Everything started to shake, the walls cracked

and the picture fell from the wall.

Were you afraid?

Yes, I was.

My partner and I went out of the apartment.

We didn’t know what could happen next.

Do you have a message for the self-advocates

Everyone should be very careful

and protect themselves from corona virus.

Be informed.

The interviews were originally published in the Newsletter of the Association for Self-Advocacy in Croatia. http://www.samozastupanje.hr/

# Six people talk about the importance of employment

In Spain there are

more than 200 thousand people

with intellectual disabilities.

Plena Inclusion asked six

people with intellectual a question.

The question was:

Why is employment important for people

with intellectual disabilities?



**Cristian Moya**

Employment is very important

for people with disabilities,

because they improve our quality of life

and we feel more fulfilled.



**Patricia Gasco**

Because I believe that we have

every right to work

because we are citizens

like everyone else.



**Pablo Buhigas**

It is important because we have

the same rights as people

to work in any job,

as all people with disabilities

and without disabilities.



**Vanesa Alonso**

Because in this way we can have a

more independent life in the future.

The right to employment

is a right included

in the UN Convention

for people with disabilities.



**Eduardo Gimeno**

Because it gives you stability,

it fulfills you as a person,

you feel more useful and if you are

lucky enough to have good companionship,

you cannot ask for more.



**Ana Martinez**

It is important to be able

to access a job

and to be valued in the society.

Stories originally published by Plena Inclusion.   
<http://planetafacil.plenainclusion.org/por-que-es-importante-el-empleo-para-las-personas-con-discapacidad-intelectual-o-del-desarrollo/>

# The Power of people platform in Spain

More than 500 people

with intellectual or developmental disabilities

have participated in the State Meeting

The meeting was called

The Power of the People.

This meeting was held in Toledo

on Friday, September 24.

It is the first time

people with intellectual disabilities

have an organization

of representatives from

all over Spain.

The Queen of Spain welcomed

the founding of the platform.

The Queen said “Power of people platform

will ensure you can unite

common interests to improve life.

Each of you is important."

“We have been silent for many years,

but that is now over.

We are citizens like the rest,

And that is why we want

our rights to be respected

and that we are not be discriminated against.

We also fight

so that our organizations

Give us space to participate

and decide on the issues that affect us.

That is the Power of the People »

Maribel Cáceres.

The platform's website is at elpoderdelaspersonas.org

# Why we care about education

Living in your own place.

Having friends.

Making your own choices.

Being good at something.

Belonging.

We all share these goals.

For ourselves.

For others.

Parents for their children.

Teachers for the students.

School is where it starts.

School is very important for children.

It is a place where they learn about things.

School is a place where students

prepare for future work.

School is a place where children

play together and make friends.

We need schools where

all children can be together.

Because they learn to work

and to be with one another.

To understand and respect each other.

To look beyond differences.

School is a place to learn new skills.

Students can learn how to look for answers.

Students can find out what they are good at.

We need schools where

teachers give the right support.

Where teachers find ways

to bring out the best in all students.

A mother says:

“Inclusion at school is good for

my daughter because it

teaches her new skills.

She can deal with hard problems

while being with other students”.

**There is progress**

Inclusion Europe worked a lot

to make education of children

with disabilities a reality.

Some progress was made.

Some children with intellectual disabilities

go to school with children without disabilities.

More and more people know

inclusive education is good.

All children have the right

to get a good education.

**It’s not enough**

But there are still many

children that are not going to school.

Children and students

with intellectual disabilities

have the right to learn together.

Separation of children with

and without disabilities in schools is bad.

It breaks relations between children.

It limits future job possibilities.

It makes it more difficult

for families and society afterwards.

But the world of education is changing!

**What we should do**

Separated education

should be in the past.

There are a few things

that we should do.

We should promote

and make sure that

all the students are

in the same classroom.

That education methods

are adapted to every student.

That teachers have enough skills,

time and tools.

The government should spend

enough money on inclusive

education to make it accessible.

We must make sure education

continues at every age.

Online education must also

be possible and accessible.

People with intellectual disabilities

should be able to teach

and do research.

Everyone should be heard:

- People with intellectual disabilities

- Disability organisations

- Parents

- People who went in inclusive education

- Other victims of exclusion

- Teachers

Some words should not be used:

The word “special” should not be used

for people with intellectual disabilities.

The word “alternative” should not

be used for education

because education should be “inclusive”.

Make sure we do not get confused:

- Integration is not inclusion

- It is not inclusive education

if there is no accommodation,

no support and no full participation