**Europe for us**

Number 3 / 2018

**Inclusion Europe at the World Congress:**

**a big success!**

The World Congress of **Inclusion International**   
took place from 30 May to 1 June 2018.  
It happened in Birmingham, in the United Kingdom.

Inclusion Europe was a partner in the event.

Around 1,000 people came to the World Congress.  
500 of them have an **intellectual disability**.  
Others came because they have a family member  
with an intellectual disability.

Some people came because they work on topics  
to do with intellectual disabilities.

Some came as support workers.  
They came from 71 countries, all over the world.

The theme was “Learn, Inspire, Lead”.  
There were workshops and talks where people  
worked on campaigns and shared their personal stories.

**Inclusion Europe** organised lots of workshops.  
For example, about the brothers and sisters  
of people with intellectual disabilities.

The **Global Self-Advocacy Summit** also   
took place during the World Congress.  
**Self-advocates** got together   
to talk about the big issues for them.

They launched calls to action,  
saying what needs to change to make inclusion happen.

The event showed that people with intellectual disabilities  
all over the world are asking for similar things.

For example:

* Being part of the community,
* Having the same rights as other people,

including the right to vote,

* Having a real job,
* Inclusive education,
* Closing [institutions](http://inclusion-europe.eu/?page_id=2844#SeparateInstitutions).

Inclusion Europe also had its 30th birthday party!  
The theme of the party was   
“Flavours of European Inclusion”.  
Our members from 30 countries   
shared their national foods  
and showed how they work for inclusion.

There was a wish tree at the party.  
This was a tree made of balloons.  
People wrote down what they wish   
for the future of inclusion   
on a piece of paper and tied it to the tree.

Here are a couple of the wishes:

* To make sure there is enough money   
  to support [self-advocates](http://inclusion-europe.eu/?page_id=2844#SelfAdvocacy) all over the world.
* For there to be people with intellectual disabilities in government.

The **European Platform of Self-Advocates** met at the World Congress.  
They talked about their activities in 2017.

At the congress, Sara Pickard was elected to continue her role  
as the self-advocate who stands for Europe in **Inclusion International**.

You can also catch up with what people said through  
the hashtag #LearnInspireLead on Twitter.

European Platform of Self-Advocates

How much do you know about

the European Platform of Self-Advocates?

We have put together some facts about it below.

What is the European Platform

of Self-Advocates?

The European Platform of Self-Advocates

is called EPSA for short.

EPSA started in the year 2000.

It is part of **Inclusion Europe.**

It is made up of **self-advocacy** groups   
from different countries in Europe.

EPSA’s goals

EPSA wants to make

the self-advocacy movement stronger.

It wants people to know about the rights and needs   
of people with **intellectual disabilities.**

It also wants people to know about all the things   
that people with intellectual disabilities can do.

EPSA’s activities

Here are some of the things EPSA does:

EPSA publishes **accessible** information   
about important European issues.

For example, EPSA writes about:

* how to get proper support,
* rules for accessible meetings,
* the EU’s plans about people with disabilities,
* **legal capacity**.

EPSA organises meetings for self-advocates

to get to know each other and share ideas.

EPSA trains self-advocates to speak up for themselves.

With EPSA’s support, self-advocates

talk to people who make decisions

about the way things are run.

For example, people in **politics**.

How to take part in EPSA:

* To find out more, go to the EPSA website:

www.self-advocacy.eu

* Or simply send us an email to:

self-advocacy@inclusion-europe.org

* Read our articles about self-advocacy here:

bit.ly/SelfAdvocacyArticles

Europe needs more **self-advocates**

to help make a better life   
for people with intellectual disabilities!

History of

self-advocacy in Europe

* 1997

Inclusion Europe organised   
the first meeting led by self-advocates in Europe.

* 2000

EPSA started as part of **Inclusion Europe**.

* 2003

**EPSA** held its first big meeting,

called “Empowerment. Together against discrimination!”

* 2007

“Europe for Us” is published for the 1st time.

* 2011

EPSA held its second big meeting,

called “Hear our voices”.

EPSA decided to call all its future meetings “Hear our voices”.

* 2017

There was the 5th “Hear our voices” event.

There was also

the **European Disability Parliament**.

A record number of people

with intellectual disabilities came.

Harry Roche, who is part of EPSA

and Inclusion Europe,

spoke at the event.

Celebrating 30  
years of inclusion

As well as our party at the **World Congress**,

we are celebrating our birthday online.

For example, by talking about the people

who have worked towards inclusion in Europe.

Every month, we talk about a new Inclusion Hero.

Two of our Inclusion Heroes are

Elisabeta Moldovan and Aimée Richardson.

They are **self-advocates**.

Over the next few pages,

you can read our interviews with them.

Find out about our birthday on social media

by clicking #30yearsofInclusion on Facebook and Twitter.

Interview

with Aimée Richardson

Aimée Richardson is from Ireland,

and has done a lot of great things.

She plays 6 instruments and

has done the voice for a famous Irish cartoon.

She is part of a group in a talent show on TV.

Her work shows   
what people with **intellectual disabilities**

can do when they are fully included.

We asked Aimée about her work,

and what needs to change   
so more people with disabilities can do work like her.

Question 1:

What instruments do you play?

I play lots of instruments, including

* the harp,
* the ukulele,
* and the flute.

I also play some traditional Irish instruments, such as:

* the tin whistle
* the low whistle
* and the bodhrán, which is a sort of drum.

Question 2:

What do you like about your instruments?

I love all of them for their different sounds.

The harp is beautiful.

It is hard to play but I want to learn.

I find the tin whistle is the easiest to play.

I love it.

It is small, so it can be played anywhere.

It has a strong sound.

It gets people dancing.

Question 3:

You did the voice for the TV series Punky.

Punky is the first cartoon with a main character

who has Down’s Syndrome.

What was it like when Punky got so famous in Ireland?

It was great!

I did a lot of interviews for the radio, TV, and newspapers.

I went on a Saturday night TV show twice.

People knew who I was in public!  
  
Question 4:

You are studying acting at college.

You are doing a course for young adults

with learning disabilities.

Yes, I am in my second year.

I love it!

What do you learn at the drama college?

I learn many different things.

For example,

* how to warm up my voice,
* perform long speeches,
* and dance.

We also study old theatre.

Question 4:

What do you think needs to change   
so more people with intellectual disabilities can be actors?

First, there needs to be more support

for people with **intellectual disabilities**

to study acting.

Teachers need more training to know

how to work with people with intellectual disabilities.

More film roles need to be made   
for people with disabilities.  
  
More people with disabilities should get roles.

People with disabilities have lots of talents!  
  
This was just part of the interview.  
You can read the full interview here:   
bit.ly/AimeeETR

Interview   
with Elisabeta Moldovan

Elisabeta has spent most of her life in **institutions**.  
  
In 2012, Elisabeta moved from an institution   
to living on her own.  
  
She started working at   
an organisation for **self-advocates**in Romania called Ceva de Spus.  
  
Ceva de Spus is a member of Inclusion Europe.  
  
She is also a member of the **European Platform of Self-Advocates**.  
  
A book was written about Elisabeta.  
It is called Becoming Eli.  
You can get it in Romanian and English.  
  
We asked Elisabeta some questions:  
  
Question 1:   
Why did you become a **self-advocate**?  
  
I became a self-advocate because  
I wanted to learn about my own rights.  
I was treated badly in institutions.

I wanted to make sure other people are not treated badly.

Question 2:

How are people with **intellectual disabilities**

treated in Romania?

People with intellectual disabilities

are often treated badly in Romania.

People with intellectual disabilities are starting   
to learn more about their rights in Romania.

But they still face **discrimination**

by many people.

Question 3:

What have you learned and achieved

through working at **EPSA**?

I have learned a lot.

For example, how to talk with others and speak in public.

I have learned about topics such as

violence against women.

I have learned   
what **discrimination** looks like.

Question 4:

Who came up with the idea of writing Becoming Eli?

Many people wanted me to make my story public.

My friend turned my story into a book with pictures.

I found it hard to share what happened to me.

But I want people to know about

life in **institutions**.

I hope that parents will not leave

their children in institutions any more.  
  
I hope that people who live in institutions

can get out of there

and have a chance for a better life.

Question 5:

How long did it take you to tell your story?

It took 2 years to write the book.

I met my friend who drew the pictures

once every month in a coffee shop.

We worked on 1 story at a time,

and then put all the stories together.

Question 6:

How did it feel to hold the book in your hands

for the first time?

I was happy and felt proud.

What changes would you like to see in Europe?

I would like people with intellectual disabilities

to be able to **live independently**.

People with intellectual disabilities

have the right to a good life, like everyone else.

You can find out more about the book Becoming Eli

and where to buy it   
here: bit.ly/BecomingEli

Self-advocates   
in Peniche  
  
  
In April, **self-advocates** from **EPSA**  
had a meeting in Peniche.  
  
Peniche is a town in Portugal.  
  
At the meeting, they talked about different things.  
  
They talked about **Inclusion Europe’s**  
Life After Violence project.  
The project is about   
violence in **institutions**.  
  
Women with disabilities are often   
victims of violence in institutions.  
  
Juultje Holla and Ellis Jongerius   
did a presentation about the project.  
  
Ellis is a self-advocate.  
  
She works with Juultje,  
who is a researcher on the project.  
  
At the meeting, **self-advocates**  
also talked about different kinds of violence.  
  
They talked about what to do   
when they see violence happening.  
  
They heard about how the police in Portugal   
have been trained to deal with violence   
against people with **intellectual disabilities**.

In Peniche, people also talked about  
the work they do as part of **EPSA**.  
  
They made some calls to action   
to share at the **World Congress.**  
  
A call to action is when you ask someone   
to do something to make things better.  
  
In a call to action, first you explain a problem.  
Then you say what should be done to solve the problem.  
  
They also planned their talks about   
the **elections** for the **European Parliament**.  
The elections are happening next year.   
  
**Inclusion Europe** is writing   
a **manifesto** for the elections.  
In this document, we will say what we want to happen.  
  
The calls to action that EPSA  
made for the **World Congress**  
will be used to help make the manifesto.  
  
They also talked about the  
European representative for **Inclusion International**.

This person is the link person   
between Inclusion International and EPSA.  
They collect information from other **self-advocates**   
to tell Inclusion International.  
  
In Peniche, the EPSA members decided that  
the European representative will take part   
in all EPSA meetings and events.  
The EPSA members agreed that they wanted   
Sara Pickard to remain the European representative.  
  
Participants really liked being in Peniche.  
They found the meeting useful.  
  
You can read more here:   
bit.ly/EPSAPeniche

Definitions

Abuse

Abuse is when someone treats you badly.

It can be that the person shouts at you.

It can also be that the person hurts you

or is violent in another way.

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.

Discrimination

Discrimination means that you are treated unfairly

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.

Easy-to-read documents often have a logo,

so it is easier to find them.

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

You can read the European standards   
of easy-to-read information here: easy-to-read.eu

Elections

An election is when people can decide   
about who should speak for them   
and make choices for them.

Elections happen in different areas.

For example in your town or city,

when you can elect a new mayor.

Or in your country, when you can elect a new president.

European Disability Parliament

The European Disability Parliament is a meeting

of people with disabilities who live in Europe.

It takes place in Brussels in Belgium.

It has taken place 4 times so far.

The last time it happened was 2017.

EPSA

See **European Platform of Self-Advocates**.

European Parliament

The European Parliament is a place

where important decisions

of the **EU** are made.

For example: laws and budgets.

Members of the European Parliament (in short, MEPs)

make these decisions and represent all the people

who live in the EU.

Every five years, the people who live in the EU

vote for their country’s MEPs.

European Platform of Self-Advocates

The European Platform of Self-Advocates

is made up of **self-advocacy**

groups from different countries in Europe.

It is called EPSA for short.

It started in the year 2000.

It is part of **Inclusion Europe**.

EU  
  
EU is short for the European Union.

The EU is a group of 28 countries in Europe.

We call these countries “member states”.

They have joined together to be stronger.

The EU makes laws on many important things

for the people who live in these countries.

The EU makes laws in different areas.

For example:

* Laws to protect the environment.
* Laws for farmers.
* Laws to protect consumers.   
  A consumer is someone who buys things.

Global Self-Advocacy Summit

The Global Self-Advocacy Summit was a big meeting

for self-advocates from all around the world.

The meeting took place on 31st May 2018.

It was part of the

Inclusion International World Congress.

It happened in Birmingham,

in the United Kingdom.

Independent living

Independent living is when

people with intellectual disabilities

live in the community and have support.

It means they can:

* Choose who to live with and where to live.
* Decide how they want to spend their time.
* Have the same experiences as all other people.

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 policies in Europe.

We started in 1988.

We have 75 members in 39 European countries.

We are based in Brussels in Belgium.

Inclusion International

Inclusion International is an organisation

for people with intellectual disabilities and their families.

It fights for their equal rights

and inclusion in all aspects of life.

It started over 50 years ago.

It has 200 members in 115 countries all over the world.

Inclusion International is based in London in the UK.

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.

The people who live in institutions   
must follow the rules of the institution   
and cannot make their own decisions.

Intellectual disability

Intellectual disability means being less able than others

to understand information and to use new skills.

This makes it more difficult to manage some parts of life.

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, easy-to-read information.

Legal capacity

Capacity means being able to make   
a decision or choice at one point in time.

There are laws about how to decide

if someone has capacity.

Then it is called legal capacity.

Having legal capacity means that

people with intellectual disabilities

can do things on their own.

For example, they can:

* Make choices about their lives.
* Get married, start a family and raise children.
* Sign contracts (including working contracts).
* Take part in politics and have the right to vote.

Manifesto

A manifesto is a text that explains the goals of a person or an organisation.

It is often made before an election

by a person or organisation that wants to be elected.

Everyone can read it.

Politics

Politics are the activities to do with running

a group of people, such as in a country.

Self-advocacy

Self-advocacy is when people with intellectual disabilities

speak up for themselves   
and for other people with intellectual disabilities.

World Congress

This year, the World Congress of Inclusion International

took place in Europe.

The World Congress was a big event   
for self-advocates, their families

and for people who work with

people with intellectual disabilities.

The title of the event was Learn, Inspire, Lead.

It happened in Birmingham in England,

from Wednesday 30 May to Friday 1 June.

Summary

You have read a lot of important things today.

Maybe you would like to let others know about them.

Tell your friends what you read:

1) What is the European Platform of Self-Advocates?

2) What is the name of the first cartoon

with a main character who has Down’s Syndrome?

3) What is the book about Elisabeta Moldovan’s life called?

Contact us, and share your self-advocacy stories!

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