



Europe for us



News for self-advocates

Number 2 / 2018



Celebrating

3



years of inclusion



**World
Congress
Edition**

“Europe for us” is available in: **English**
French
German
Hungarian
Romanian
Spanish

Go to <http://bit.ly/europeforum>
to find the other language versions.

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European Platform of Self Advocates

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 (definition page 30)**.



It is made up of **self-advocacy (definition page 33)**
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 (definition page 31)**.

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 (definition page 26)** 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 (definition page 32)**.



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 (definition page 33)**.

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

A yellow puzzle piece with the words "SELF-ADVOCACY" written in black, bold, uppercase letters. The puzzle piece is set against a background of blue and green puzzle pieces. The word "SELF-" is on the top line and "-ADVOCACY" is on the bottom line. The puzzle piece has a tab on the top and a blank on the right side.

**SELF-
-ADVOCACY**

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 (definition page 30) organised the 1st meeting led by self-advocates in Europe.

2000

EPSA (definition page 28) started as part of Inclusion Europe.

2003

EPSA held its 1st big meeting, called “Empowerment. Together against discrimination!”



2007

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

2011

EPSA (definition page 28) held its 2nd 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 (definition page 27)**. A record number of people with **intellectual disabilities (definition page 31)** came. Harry Roche, who is part of EPSA and **Inclusion Europe (definition page 30)**, spoke at the event.

Celebrating 30 years of inclusion



This year, **Inclusion Europe (definition page 30)** celebrates its 30th birthday!

Our organisation was set up in the year 1988.

We are celebrating our birthday in lots of ways.



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 (definition page 33)**. 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 (definition page 31)** 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.



Aimée Richardson and
Lindsey Sedgewick,
the writer who made Punky.

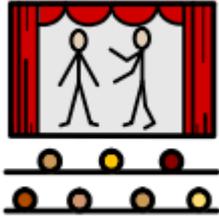
You did the voice for the TV series Punky.

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 3:
You are studying acting at college.
You are doing a course for young adults
with learning disabilities.

Yes, I am in my 2nd 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.

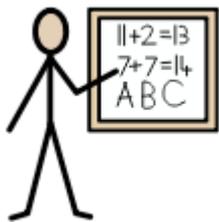


Jacob McCarthy and Aimée Richardson, who are in the film, *The Drummer and the Keeper*.

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 (definition page 31)** 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:

<http://bit.ly/AimeeETR>

Interview with Elisabeta Moldovan



Elisabeta Moldovan on the right, with Andreea-Raluca Herbei and Zoltán Szövérdfi-Szé.



Elisabeta has spent most of her life in **institutions (definition page 31)**.

In 2012, Elisabeta moved from an institution to living on her own.

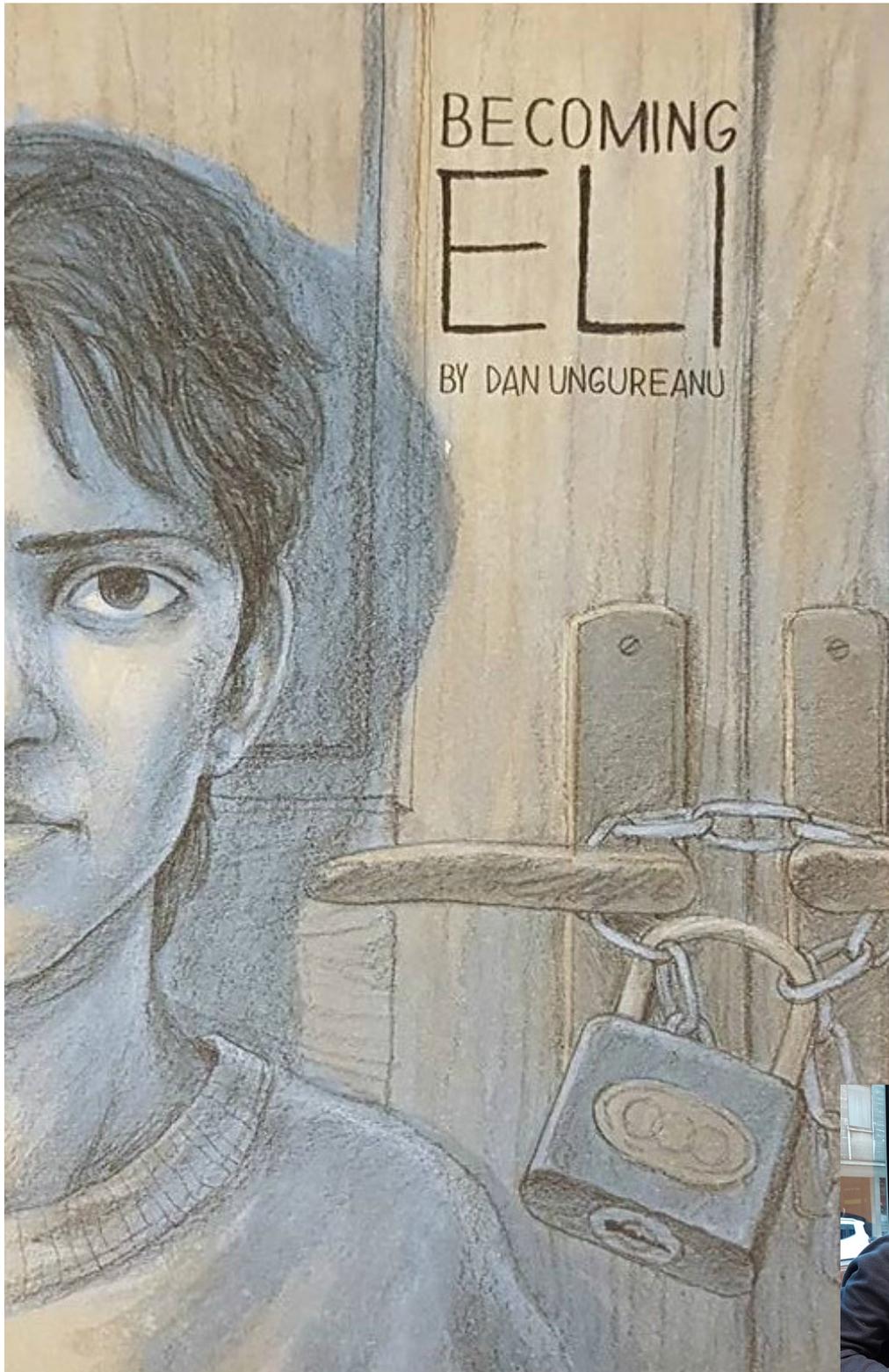


She started working at an organisation for **self-advocates (definition page 33)** in Romania called Ceva de Spus.

Ceva de Spus is a member of Inclusion Europe.



She is also a member of the **European Platform of Self-Advocates (definition page 28)**.



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 (definition page 33)?



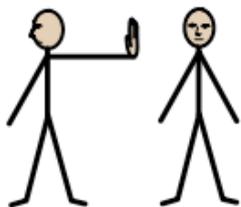
I became a self-advocate because
I wanted to learn about my own rights.
I was treated badly in institutions.

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



Question 2:
How are
people with **intellectual disabilities (definition page 31)**
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 (definition page 26)**
by many people.

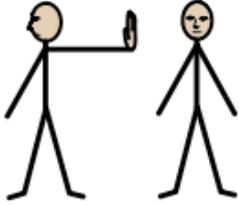


Question 3:
What have you learned and achieved
through working at **EPSA (definition page 28)?**

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 (definition page 26)** looks like.

Question 4:
Who came up with the idea of writing *Becoming Eli*?

Many people wanted me to make my story public.

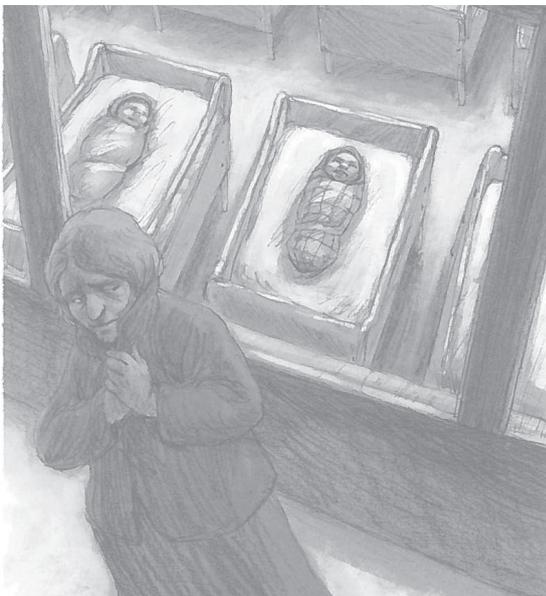
My friend turned my story into a book with pictures.



I found it hard to share what happened to me.

But I want people to know about life in **institutions (definition page 31)**.

I hope that parents will not leave their children in institutions any more.



This is a drawing from *Becoming Eli* that shows a mother leaving her baby in an institution.

“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 (definition page 30)**.

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: <http://bit.ly/BecomingEli>

Self-advocates in Peniche

Self-advocates (definition page 33)
from EPSA (definition page 28)
had a meeting in Peniche.



Peniche is a town in Portugal.



This is a photo of Peniche, in Portugal.



At the meeting, they talked about different things.

They talked about **Inclusion Europe's (definition page 30)** Life After Violence project.

The project is about violence in **institutions (definition page 31)**.

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.

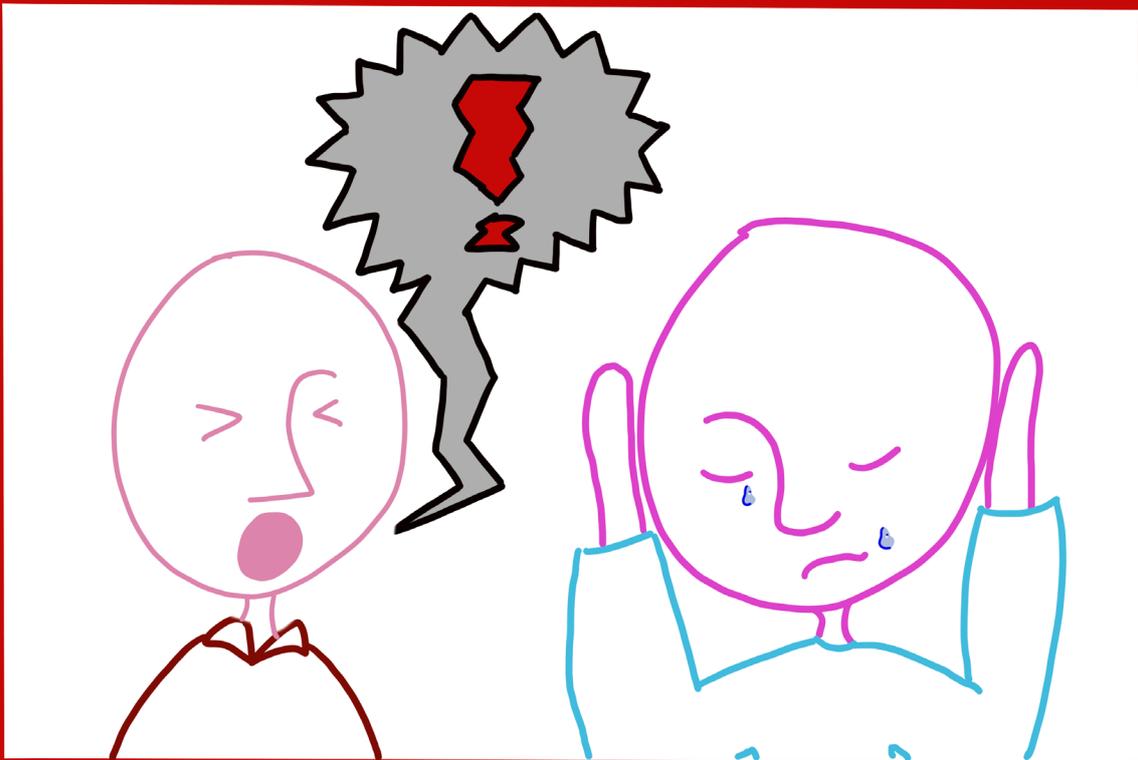
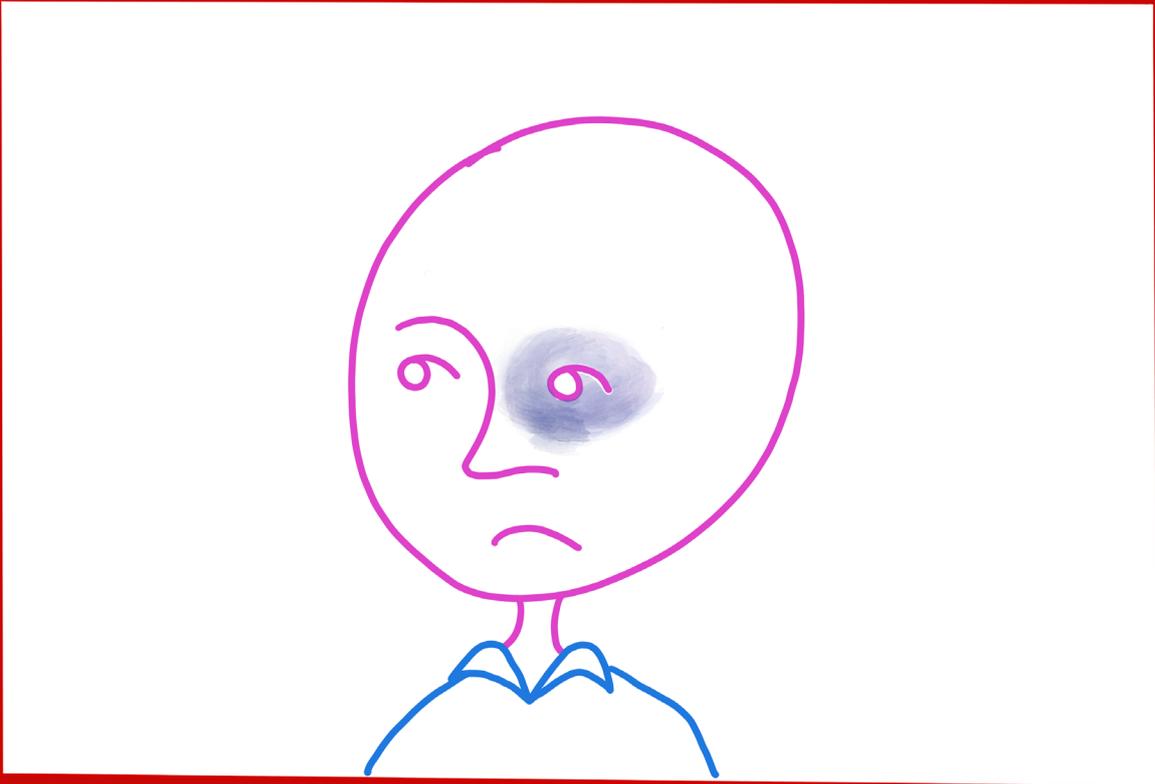


She works with Juultje, who is a researcher on the project.



At the meeting, **self-advocates (definition page 33)** 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 (definition page 31)**.



These are drawings by Juultje that show some of the kinds of violence that women with **intellectual disabilities (definition page 31)** experience. The top picture shows physical violence. The bottom picture shows **abuse (definition page 27)** with words.

In Peniche, people also talked about the **Global Self-Advocacy Summit (definition page 29)**.

The Global Self-Advocacy Summit is happening during the **World Congress (definition page 33)**.



Self-advocates together!



European Platform
of Self Advocates

EPSA (definition page 28) has made some calls to action to share at the summit.

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.

The self-advocates in Peniche talked about the **EPSA (definition page 28)** General Meeting too.

The EPSA General Meeting is also happening during the World Congress.

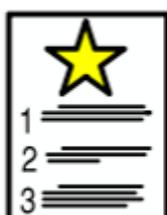
At the meeting, people in EPSA will be talking about their work.



These self-advocates are part of EPSA.
From left to right:
Senada Halilčević, Harry Roche,
Elisabeta Moldovan, and Luminița Căldăraș.



They will also be talking about the **elections (definition page 27)** for the **European Parliament (definition page 28)**. The elections are happening next year.



Inclusion Europe (definition page 30) is writing a **manifesto (definition page 32)** for the elections. In this document, we will say what we want to happen.

The calls to action that **EPSA (definition page 29)** has made for the **World Congress (definition page 33)** will be used to help make the manifesto.

They also talked about who from EPSA could stand for Europe at **Inclusion International (definition page 30)**.



This person is called the European representative. At the moment, the European representative is Sara Pickard.

Sara Pickard is a self-advocate from the United Kingdom. Sara says,

“As the European representative, I collect information from other **self-advocates (definition page 34)** to tell Inclusion International.

I am also a link person between Inclusion International and EPSA.

I am also standing for Europe in a self-advocacy programme called Empower Us.”

Sara Pickard said she would like to keep doing this job. The EPSA members agreed that she should remain the European representative.

At the World Congress, Inclusion International will vote on if Sara will continue her role.

From now on, the European representative will take part in all EPSA meetings and events.

Participants really liked being in Peniche. They found the meeting useful.

You can read more here:
<http://bit.ly/EPsAPeniche>

Definitions

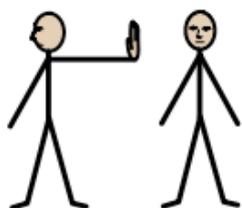
Abuse

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 this 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: www.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 (definition on this page, below)**.



European Parliament

European Parliament

The European Parliament is a place where important decisions of the **EU (definition page xy)** 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 (definition page xy)** groups from different countries in Europe.

It is called EPSA for short.

It started in the year 2000.

It is part of **Inclusion Europe (definition page 30)**.



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 is a big meeting
for self-advocates from all around the world.

The meeting will take place on 31st May 2018.
It is part of the
Inclusion International World Congress.
It will be 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 71 members in 38 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.

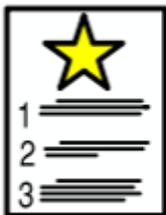
There are laws about how to decide if someone has capacity. Then it is called legal capacity.

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 will take place in Europe.

The World Congress will be a big event for self-advocates, their families and for people who work with people with intellectual disabilities.

The title of the event is Learn, Inspire, Lead. It will happen 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?



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Sign up here: bit.ly/EuropeForUs

Contact us, and share your self-advocacy stories!

Email: s.el-amrani@inclusion-europe.org

Telephone: +32 2 502 28 15

Address: Rue d'Arlon 55, 1040 Brussels, Belgium

Website: <http://inclusion-europe.eu>



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