



Manifesto for the 2014 elections to the European Parliament

European citizens with intellectual disabilities and their families cannot be denied equal rights and equal opportunities

As member of Inclusion Europe, the European voice and representation of people with intellectual disabilities and their families, we call on Members of the European Parliament to make equal rights and equal opportunities for children and adults with intellectual disabilities and their families a reality in the European Union.

More than 5 million Europeans with intellectual disabilities and their families still face discrimination and exclusion from society. Often they are denied their rights to vote, to political participation, or to live included in society. Abuses and denials of rights continue on a large scale within the European Union.

The new European Parliament, representing European citizens with and without a disability, must take the lead in ensuring that people with intellectual disabilities and their families are equally considered in all European policies and programmes. We demand that all the rights enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities are implemented in a way that allows full access to and enjoyment of these rights by European citizens with an intellectual disability.

Europeans with an intellectual disability, their family members and their organisations ask all candidates and political groups participating in the elections to the European Parliament for a commitment to action in six critical areas:

1. Commitment to uphold the right to vote and full participation in political life for all.

European citizens with intellectual disabilities are often denied their right to vote; even in the European Parliament 2014 elections. Full participation in politics and in civil society is the basis for good government. We demand:

- that the European Union and its Parliament take the lead in abolishing all measures that exclude citizens with disabilities from the right to vote.
- that all political groups or parties nominating candidates for the 2014 elections produce accessible and understandable manifestos and programmes.
- independent election monitoring and supervision as well as effective complaints mechanisms to ensure that no person with a disability is denied the right to vote in the 2014 European Parliament elections.
- support for and consultation with representative organisations of people with disabilities and their families as an active part of civil society at local, national and European levels.

2. Commitment to the full implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the European Union and beyond.

The CRPD enshrines the most important obligations of governments towards disabled citizens, but often it is not implemented in a way that is meaningful for people with intellectual disabilities and their families. Therefore we demand:

- cooperation with people with intellectual disabilities, their families and their organisations to ensure full implementation of the CRPD.
- that in international aid and disaster relief the EU takes account of the human rights of persons with disabilities.

3. Commitment to equal recognition before the law and equal access to justice.

People with intellectual disabilities have the right to be recognized as equal citizens with full rights before the law. This cannot be realized if other people, for example legal guardians, still take decisions for them and not with them. The CRPD Committee has published on its website a Draft General Comment on Article 12 on legal capacity that explains how this article should be implemented by replacing substitute decision-making regimes by supported decision-making systems. We demand:

- full and unequivocal support for the Draft General Comment on Article 12 by all Members of the European Parliament.
- European support measures for the creation of systems of support for decision-making by promoting, in cooperation with people with intellectual disabilities and their organisations, policy and practice exchanges, research and awareness raising.

4. Commitment to ensuring that people with intellectual disabilities can live included in their communities.

Citizens with intellectual disabilities want to choose where and with whom they live. Most do not want to live where they are isolated from the broader community and/or compelled to live together. Support for independent living must be available where they live. We thus demand:

- a stop to financial support from European funds for residential institutions, both inside the European Union and in other countries.
- European support for the exchange of good practice, stakeholder training, and for the development of flexible support services in the community.
- European long-term monitoring of the life situation of people with disabilities in residential institutions and in the community in all EU countries.
- support for a process that will lead to a ban on placing children in institutions anywhere in the European Union.

5. Commitment to protect people with disabilities from the destructive consequences of austerity measures put in place by national governments.

People with intellectual disabilities and their families need constant, reliable and high-quality support to be able to contribute to society. We thus demand:

- continuous support for the inclusion of persons with disabilities, in particular in the fields of employment, inclusive education, access to health services, social protection and accessibility.
- measures to prevent disability-based discrimination in access to mainstream services in all areas of life.

6. Commitment to making goods and services accessible for everyone.

Mainstream goods, services and information must be accessible also for people with intellectual disabilities. We demand:

- support for European legislation and processes to make public websites as well as goods and services accessible to people with intellectual disabilities.

More information about concrete steps MEPs could take and about our campaign for the European Parliament Elections 2014 is available in most EU languages at the website:

www.voting-for-all.eu