

Europe for us!

The Newsletter of the European Self-Advocates Movement

August 2004



Editorial

European elections took place in June 2004. It was organized in all countries of the European Union. In these elections the citizens choose the people who will represent them in the European Parliament. for the Members of European Parliament. Each democratic country has got elections on several levels. Elections are very important event for all citizens. It is important to know about elections in your country. The politicians that win the elections make very important decisions about the life of all the citizens

Ulla Topi
President of EPSA

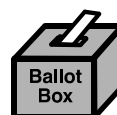


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What are the elections

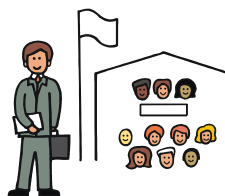
Election is when you choose a politician who will represent you.



This politician can represent you on different levels.

There are politicians that represent you on:

- **Local level**
In the government of your city or region.
- **National level**
In the national government
- **European level**
In the European Parliament



The politicians on all these levels are very important. They are important because they decide important things.

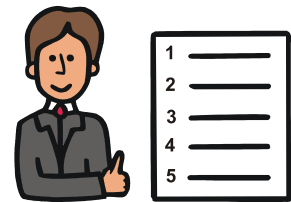
Some of the things they decide are about people with disabilities.



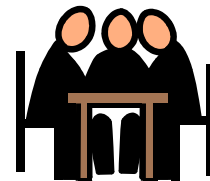
With support of the
European
Community

How to choose the right politician?

Before each election there is election campaign. In the election campaign the political parties should introduce their politicians. They should also introduce the **election program**. In the election program they should explain about things they want to change and how they want to help the citizens. The politicians should distribute their election programs to the people.



The party should also invite people to **election meetings**. Anybody can go there and ask the politicians questions. You can go and ask the politicians how they want to help people with disabilities.



There are also programs on TV. On the programs the political parties present their election program and introduce the politicians.

It is important to gather information before the election about the politicians that run for the election. Then you can choose to vote for the person who will represent your needs.

What people represent you?

There are politicians that represent you on different levels.

On local level there are politicians who work in a regional government or in the government of your city.

You vote for these people in the regional elections.

These people decide about different things in your region or city. For example about money for services for people with intellectual disability.



On national level there are politicians work in the parliament and the government of your country.

You vote for these people in the national election.

These people decide about things that concern your country. For example about laws that concern education for people with disabilities.

Ask your support worker or family member to help you to contact the politicians in the regional and the national government.

The countries that are members of the European Union have in addition politicians who represent the country on European level.



European Election

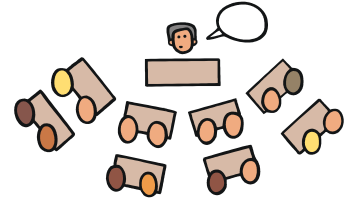
European elections take place in all the countries that are members of the European Union.

In the election the citizens of these countries vote for Members of the European Parliament.

In short MEPs.

MEPs represent the citizens of their country in the European Parliament.

In the European Parliament the MEPs decide about things that are common for all the countries that are members of the European Union. Sometimes they decide about things that are important for people with disabilities.



European Election are once in 5 years. That means that every 5 years the MEPs change.

The last election was this year in June.

How to find about the new MEPs

Each country has several MEPs in the European Parliament.

These MEPs work in the European Parliament in Brussels and in Strasbourg.

They work in groups.

Sometime they all meet together.



But you don't have to travel all the way to Brussels or Strasbourg to meet your MEP.

The MEPs have an office in the country that they represent.

You can also write to your MEP.

You can also ask him to visit your organisation.



To find on Internet who is your MEP for the next four years go on:

www.europarl.eu.int

The information there are in all the languages of the members of the EU.

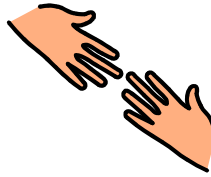
You will find the address and the telephone number of your MEP there.

The information is not in easy-to-read.

You might need someone to help you.

What can you ask the politicians

The politicians on all the levels represent the citizens. They represent you as well. Because they represent you they should be able to help you. It is their job.



Even the politicians that you didn't vote for should help you.

It is good to contact the politicians and ask them for help.

Of course they can't help you to solve all your problems. It is better if you first talk to your support worker or family member.

They will help you to decide who to contact.



- To get information
- To tell us about news and meetings

Please contact us!

Inclusion Europe

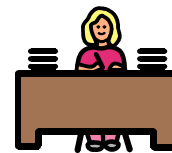
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What can the politicians do for you

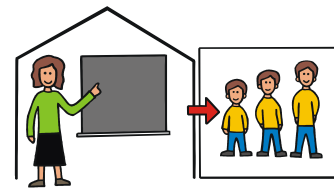
• Jobs

They cannot help you to find a job. But they can make better laws that concern jobs of people with disability.



• School

They cannot help you to find a good school. But they can make better laws about education for people with intellectual disability.



• Transport

They cannot give you a car and private driver. But they can make sure that the transport in your city is accessible for people with disabilities.



• Discrimination

They cannot go and tell off people who are not nice to you. But they can make laws that protect people from being discriminated.



The politicians can do much more for you.

Therefore it is important to vote for people who will represent you well and help you when you need.