

Europe for us!

The Newsletter of the European Self-Advocates Movement

Nov-Dec 2005



Editorial

This is the last Europe for Us of the year 2005.

We present you here 2 new associations of self-advocates.
1 in Spain and 1 in Portugal.



We also present you 1 new project.

I wish that 2006 will bring us many more new associations,
many more new projects,
and many more opportunities to meet and exchange
around self-advocacy.



Best wishes to all of you,

Ulla Topi, President of EPSA.

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A new project called "Innovation"

Text written by Cédric Mametz, Vice-president of Nous Aussi, France
Member of EPSA

On the 9-10-11 and 12 December 2005,
I went to Graz, in Austria, for a new project
called "Innovation and Cooperation beyond borders".
This project is funded by the European Commission.
This project is led by ATEMPO, with Inclusion Europe, EPSA
and EASPD (the European Association of Service Providers).



Our first task in this project is
to select 15 European projects that deal with work
for people with intellectual disabilities
and that are really innovative.



Innovative means that they must do something new
for the employment of people with intellectual disabilities,
something that has never been done before.



We made a list of criteria that we will evaluate
to select these projects.

These are for example the tools for the training, the content,
the methodology, the integration, the impacts of the project.

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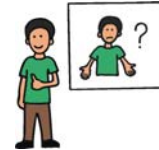
With support of the
European
Community

Self-Advocacy in Portugal

FENACERCI is the Portuguese association for people with intellectual disabilities. More than 50 cooperatives work within FENACERCI. All of them work with people with intellectual disabilities.



5 years ago FENACERCI decided to support a self-advocacy department. This department would represent the users of the cooperatives that work within FENACERCI.



The first Board for the self-advocacy was elected at FENACERCI's Annual Meeting. The elections took place during a general assembly of Self-Advocates. 25 cooperatives were represented.



Since then, we have had 2 elections. Our group has been elected during the last ones in 2003.

First, we had meetings to discuss our lives, to discuss the way we were treated at home and at the institutions.



Then we participated in several projects. We started to speak about other things, like the right to vote, citizenship and the right to choose what to do.



In 2004 we made a survey. We asked our cooperatives about self-advocacy. Only 22 out of 50 cooperatives answered our questionnaire. We learned that 12 had a self-advocacy group that meets regularly, together with professionals as supporters.



But all the groups depend on the cooperatives to "survive". They have no money by themselves. This is something that we want to change, but we do not know how.



For 2006 our main objectives are

1. to organise a national meeting of self-advocates and
2. to provide training on self-advocacy for self-advocates and professionals.



We are 5 people at the Department.



Carlos Pires - Ana Isabel Lopes - Hélder Arsénio - Bruno Cunha - André Canhoto

Well, now you know us all!

We are committed to talk about self-advocacy here in Portugal, and to fight for the rights of people with intellectual disability.

We know this is a long road but we are not afraid to walk!

If you want more information about us, about our meetings or conferences, or about FENACERCI, you can have a look at www.fenacerci.pt

APDEMA opens to self-advocacy mouvement

APDEMA is a Spanish Association for persons with intellectual disabilities.

In 1994, APDEMA started to organise discussions about sexuality.

6 persons with intellectual disability wanted to join these discussions.

But they were not allowed to.



They decided to go and speak with the director of APDEMA, called « Natxo ». It created a small revolution.

At the time, persons with intellectual disabilities were not able to participate.



One day, Natxo organised a group of discussions. It had a lot of success.

Eveybody liked it.

It was the first stone of what exists today:

5 groups of self-advocates.

4 of these groups are based in Vitoria-Gasteiz.

1 is based in Amurrio.

Not less than 61 persons are part of these groups.

Amelia Andrés is our support person.



After 10 years, we can say that we shared lots of things.

We have been through good and bad moments.

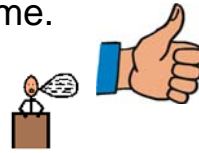
What was seen before as a revolution is now seen as a right !



See how the things can change !

A new project called "Innovation" - end

On the 24-25 April 2006, there will be a big fair in Graz. The leaders of these 15 best projects will come. They will present and explain their project in front of the guests and participants.



During this fair, there will also be a lot of time to exchange with these leaders.



People will exchange information, training material and maybe organise some "trainees exchange" (the persons with intellectual disabilities could go for a week or two learn a job in another country).



Everybody is welcome to this fair to meet the 15 best European projects in terms of employment for persons with intellectual disabilities.

If you would like more information, or if you would like to register for the fair, you can find the documents on the website



www.atempo.at



Click on Projects, then on "Innovation and Cooperation", then on "Conferences and fairs".

During the annual congress of Inclusion Europe, in Bruxelles, from the 18 to 20 May 2006, the 3 best projects will also be presented.

This congress Europe in Action 2006 will speak about life-long learning. It will be a very important congress for self-advocates.



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

Please contact us!

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The European Day of Disabled People 2005

On the 1 and 2 December 2005, the Disability Unit of the European Commission organised the European Day of Disabled People.

The theme of the conference was « Living together in Society ».



It was a very important theme for the persons with intellectual disabilities.

For the first time, this European conference was accessible for persons with intellectual disabilities.

7 self-advocates from EPSA and from Belgium attended the conference.

They learned a lot and even asked questions in the plenary sessions.



If you want to read the papers in easy-to-read that were done for this conference, you can find them on the website



europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/emplweb/events/event_en.cfm?id=245