

Europe for us!

The Newsletter of the European Movement of Self-Advocates

Mar-Jun 2006



Editorial

Hello everyone!

Thank you for electing me president of EPSA.

I wish to thank Ulla Topi for her good work as past president.

Welcome to the 5 groups that have just joined EPSA.

Welcome to the 4 other new members of the steering group.

You can find out about the groups

and the steering group later in this newsletter.



The Mainstreaming Mental Disability Policy project

is helping self advocates to start groups in 8 countries.

This is an exciting time as we grow stronger.



I will do my best to make sure we all work together

and the voices of self advocates are heard all over Europe.

Andrew Doyle, President of EPSA.



Information

Editorial 1

EPSA General Meeting 2006 1

Annual report 2005 2

Work plan 2006-2008 3

New EPSA members 4

New Steering Group 5

Futur events 6

EPSA General Meeting 2006

On Thursday 17 May 2006, EPSA hold its annual general meeting.



Past-president Ulla Topi reported about the year 2005.

The work-plan for 2006-2008 was presented and voted.

5 new EPSA members were welcomed.

Then the General Assembly of EPSA voted for a new Steering Group.



1 new president was elected.

His name is Andrew Doyle and he comes from Scotland.

2 representatives of EPSA at the board of Inclusion Europe were also elected.

Their names are Paul Alford, from Ireland and Zdenka Petrovic, from Croatia.



Finally, Cédric Mametz from France

and Liisi Paananen from Finland

were also elected as EPSA Steering Group members.



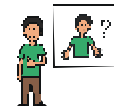
With support of the European Commission and Inclusion Europe

Report about the work of the Steering Group for 2005

The Steering Group of EPSA met 4 times during the year 2005. They worked hard to implement the work plan that was decided in 2004. Here are some of the activities that they developed.



- The project Mainstreaming Mental Disability Policy trained people with intellectual disabilities from the Eastern countries to become self-advocates. However, these self-advocates will still need support from EPSA.



- Each year, the European Commission organises conferences for the European Day of Disabled People. For the first time, in 2005, this conference was accessible for persons with intellectual disabilities. This was a very good achievement. 8 persons with intellectual disabilities attended this conference. Some members of the Steering Group were part of them.



- The European Disability Forum has translated part of its annual report into easy-to-read.



- The Steering Group attended other meetings to express the views of EPSA
 1. workshop on the convention of the United Nations on disabled people,
 2. the European Disability Forum's women committee,
 3. a national self-advocacy conference in Ireland,
 4. the European conference of the Ministers of Transport



- To reach all the self-advocates from Europe, the pages on self-advocacy from Inclusion Europe's website were translated into 20 languages.

- EPSA took contact with the European Commission to have more accessible website. The result will be the website of the Anti-Discrimination Unit translated into easy-to-read in 2006. Moreover, the European Disability Forum has also agreed to have an easy-to-read section on its new website.



- The Steering Group also collaborated in the publication of
 1. a new leaflet on EPSA
 2. the newsletter "Europe for us" every two months
 3. an easy-to-read brochure on the European Constitution
 4. an easy-to-read brochure on the work of the United Nations
 5. an easy-to-read brochure on the new Directive for Employment
 6. two easy-to-read brochures with "Justice, Rights and Inclusion"



To have the full report of the work of EPSA during the year 2005, you can contact the self-advocacy officer at self-advocacy@inclusion-europe.org

The work plan 2006-2008

EPSA had 4 objectives between 2004 and 2006.

1. Help people to decide more by themselves
2. Tell people about the abilities of people with intellectual disabilities
3. Help groups of self-advocates at local level
4. Get more accessible information and websites



You have read in the report for the year 2005 that lot of things has been done to implement this work plan 2004-2006.

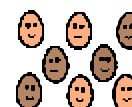


However, when speaking about the work plan 2006-2008, the Steering Group decided that

- Point 2 should be more implemented
- Point 3 should be kept in the work plan because people and local organisations will still need support in the future.
- More websites of the Commission and of the European NGO, more annual reports, more laws, etc. should be translated into easy-to-read (→ point 4).



As new point, the Steering Group also decided that EPSA should develop itself, get more members and be more known.



So this gives a work plan for 2006-2008 with 4 targets:

1. Tell to other people about the abilities of people with intellectual disabilities
2. Help groups of self-advocates at local level
3. Get more accessible information and websites
4. Promote EPSA + raise membership



The 5 new EPSA members

Until May 2006, EPSA had 8 members:

- Enable Ace, from Scotland
- Me Itse ry, from Finland
- Nous Aussi, from France
- Klippan, from Sweden
- Center Dolfke Bostjancic Draga, from Slovenia
- Sebeobhajci Praha, from Czech Republic
- Step by step, from Finland
- ULF, from Denmark



At the last General Meeting, EPSA welcomed 5 new members.

- **The Union on The Hill Self-Advocacy Group**, from Ireland.
It is a regional group and they have 12 members.
They currently have no regular funding
but seek grants and support from different agencies.
- **Mouvement Personne d'Abord**, from Belgium.
It is a national association with 3 local groups.
They have been existing for 12 years and meet once every week.
- **EVPIT**, from Estonia.
It is a national parent association supporting self-advocacy groups.
They have 4 local groups and 40 members.
They are supported by the Estonian parents association.
- **Association for Self-Advocates**, from Croatia.
It is a local and national group.
It is the only group of its kind in Croatia.
They receive money from State, private funds
and international organisations.
- **FENACERCI**, from Portugal.
It is a national parent organisation
that created a department of self-advocacy.
They have 1 meeting every 2 months.

The new Steering Group members

Andrew Doyle, new president of EPSA.

I am 48 years old and I come from Scotland.

I live with my fiancée and I get support from a housing association.

I work 3 days a week in a factory but I am looking for another job.

I have been involved with ACE since 1997

(ACE stands for Advisory Committee of Enable).

The role of ACE is to speak up about things that are important for us and to lead campaigns.

In the past, I have been the chairperson of the national ACE committee.

As a member of ACE, I sit on 2 committees to tell the Scottish Parliament what services people with intellectual disabilities want.

I am also Chairperson of a company that provides advocacy for people with intellectual disabilities all over Scotland.

I would like to help spread self-advocacy skills to people in Europe.

I believe that we can all learn a lot from each other.



Paul Alford, representative of EPSA at the board of Inclusion Europe.

I am 42 years old and I come from Ireland.

The most important thing for me is speaking for disability rights and for my own rights.

I have worked with the Union of the Hill for 5 years.

We did posters about rights in workshops.

We organized days about disability rights.

I want all people with intellectual disabilities to have equal rights in Europe and all over the world.



Zdenka Petrovic, representative of EPSA at the board of Inclusion Europe.

I was born in 1965 in Zagreb.

I live in an apartment and I work in a chain store which sells cosmetics.

Since I started attending evening school, I'm going to class two times weekly.

I am an active member of our group for self advocacy since 1999.

The members of our NGO meet 3 times a week and discuss different issues.

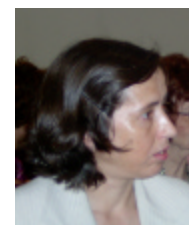
We also organize and participate in conferences and meetings with other associations and governmental bodies.

There, we discuss about rights of people with intellectual disabilities in Croatia.

We try to inform the public about our work.

We try to fight for the rights of people with intellectual disabilities.

We also started to produce easy-to-read materials.



The new Steering Group members

Cédric Mametz, EPSA Steering Group member.
I am 27 years old and I have a girlfriend with whom I live in a flat in France.
I work in a sheltered workshop.
I am very active in the local branch of Nous Aussi.
I am Vice-President of Nous Aussi (national section).
I want us to walk altogether towards more rights, good attitudes and listening.



Liisi Paananen, EPSA Steering Group member.
I am 30 and live by myself in Finland.
I live in a flat home.
I work 4 days a week at normal workplace.
I am vice president of the board of Me Itse Ry local group.
This Me Itse local group has been very active when we have done our advocacy work.
"Together we can do more and we can influence our own things and services", says Liisi.



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

Please contact us!

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Futur events

On 6 and 7 October 2006, Inclusion Europe organises a European Conference. The aim of this conference is to tell the decision-makers from all over Europe to not forget people with intellectual disabilities when they write new policies.

More information on www.inclusion-europe.org/mainstreaming

From 7 November to 10 November 2006, Inclusion International organises its 14th world congress. This congress will take place in Mexico. Its title is « Building an inclusive futur: a challenge for globalisation. » One representative from EPSA will certainly attend that meeting.



More information on www.inclusion-international.org/site_uploads/File/BULLETIN.doc

This is your newsletter!

If you want to make some announcement or if you want to let us know about what is going in your country in terms of self-advocacy, please write us to self-advocacy@inclusion-europe.org

