

# Europe for us!

The Newsletter of the European Movement of Self-Advocates

Sept-Oct 2006



## Editorial

Welcome to the new edition of Europe for Us!

The new EPSA steering group's meeting went well. This year we want to tell more people about EPSA and get more members from all over Europe.



It is also great to hear about the conference in Romania. It shows us that more people are becoming self advocates and are starting to speak up and have a say in their lives. This article should make all self advocates feel proud of the things that we can do.



Andrew Doyle  
President of EPSA



## Information

Editorial 1

First self-advocacy conference in Romania 1

First self-advocacy conference in Romania 2

Meeting of the new EPSA Steering Group 3

Training for students on intellectual disability 4

## First self-advocacy conference in Romania

On 4 and 5 September 2006 the first conference for self-advocates took place in Romania. It was organised by Pentru Voi, the Romanian association for persons with intellectual disabilities. The conference was held in Mamaia, near the Black Sea.



More than 35 persons participated at the conference.



2 representatives of the National Romanian Authority of Persons with Handicap attended the conference.



With support of the European Commission and Inclusion Europe

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## First self-advocacy conference in Romania

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The conference was part of a project called “Parents Mobility Action Group”.  
This project is financed by SHIA Sweden.



The following topics were discussed in the conference:

- what is “self-advocacy”;
- what is the European Union;
- what is the role of a personal assistant;
- what is the United Nations Convention for Persons with Disabilities.

The following statements were made as the conclusions of this conference:

1. We know that life in institutions is very difficult.  
There are no activities.  
The staff treat us badly.  
Our belongings are often stolen.  
Therefore, we want institutions to be closed.  
We want to live in the community.



2. We want to live in regular flats or group flats.  
We want to share it with persons we feel comfortable living with.



3. We want day centers and we want to work in workshops.

4. We want to train for employment in workshops.

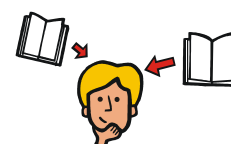


5. We want to receive our disability allowance even if we are working.



6. We want to make it easier for us to reach different services.  
For example, we want to be able to use VISA cards.

7. We want to have opportunities to attend trainings.  
We want to learn all the time something new.  
We want to be trained for jobs.



8. We do not like just being at home.  
We want to go to day centers and to be together with our colleagues.  
There are no day centers in the villages in Romania.  
This is not good because persons with disabilities are isolated.



9. We want to have friends, with or without disabilities.  
We want to have opportunities to share and have fun together.
10. We want that laws are respected,  
We want the State to ask us for our opinion  
when taking decisions that influence our lives.
11. We want to be self-advocates,  
to be listened to and treated with respect.



This was a very successful conference.  
Congratulations to the speakers, the organisers  
and the Romanian self-advocates.  
Let's hope that there will be  
lots of other events like that in Romania in the future.




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## First meeting of the new EPSA Steering Group

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On Saturday 7 and Sunday 8 October  
was the first meeting of the new steering group of EPSA.  
Andrew Doyle, the president, welcomed the Steering Group members.  
He asked everyone to present themselves.



After this introduction, they spoke about EPSA history and targets.  
It is important to know where EPSA comes from.  
It is important to know what you are working for.  
It is important to know who you represent.



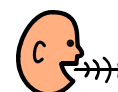
Then they evaluated Europe in Action 2006 and the EPSA General Meeting.  
EPSA Steering Group members said that  
“Life long learning” was a very good topic.  
It was a shame that some speakers spoke too fast.



Regarding the EPSA General Meeting,  
everybody said that it was great chance to meet other self-advocates.



Then they worked on the work plan for 2006 – 2008.  
They said that in this period lots of things should be done.  
They would like to tell others about self-advocates abilities,  
to help at local level, provide accessible Information,  
promote EPSA and raise EPSA membership.



## First meeting of the Steering Group

At the end, they discussed about Inclusions International Board meeting. Zdenka will participate in this meeting. So other members gave her advises and told her what they expected from this meeting



The Steering Group did not have enough time to discuss all issues on the agenda. They are looking forward to the next meeting to keep on the discussion.



This was a really good first meeting. The Steering Group members are really dynamic and hope to make great things with and for EPSA.



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

Please contact us!

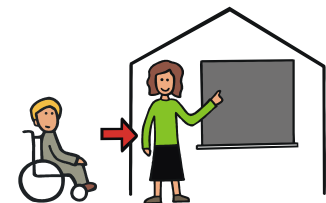
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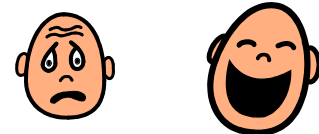
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## Training for students on intellectual disability

In some countries, people with intellectual disabilities can attend normal schools, with other people who are not disabled. It is called inclusive education.



In many countries, people with intellectual disabilities have to go to special schools. Then other students do not know them. Students might be afraid or make some stupid jokes.



In Switzerland, they have decided that this should not happen anymore.



Thanks to this book called "I am normal, you are normal, who is normal?", they want to teach "normal" students about intellectual disabilities.

This book is written in French and in German. It is targeting students between 12 and 16 years old. If you want more information or if you want to order this book, you can write to Mrs Santi at [F.santi@insieme.ch](mailto:F.santi@insieme.ch)

In our next newsletter, we will tell you more about the importance of inclusive education.

