

# Europe for us!

The Newsletter of the European Movement of Self-Advocates

July-Sept 2007



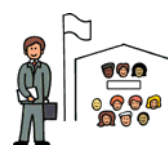
## Editorial

Welcome to the new edition of Europe for Us. In this issue you can read about how people with disabilities are having more of a say in the services they use.



There will be a conference in Prague to talk about this. I hope that many people with disabilities will be able to go and learn more about this.

You can also read about the Latvian self advocates. They have met with the Minister for Education.



I hope you enjoy the newsletter.



Andrew Doyle  
President of EPSA



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## People with disabilities lead their services

Many people with intellectual disabilities are helped by support services in their daily life.

Those services help for example

- to find a job,
- to live independently,
- or to organise activities

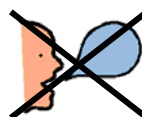
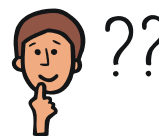


Unfortunately, very often, those services are run by parents or professionals.

So people with intellectual disabilities

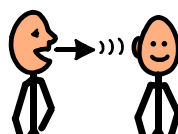
do not have anything to say

about the way those services are working.



Inclusion Europe thinks that people with intellectual disabilities should have a say

in the way their support services are working.



With support of the  
European Commission  
and Inclusion Europe

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## People with disabilities lead their services

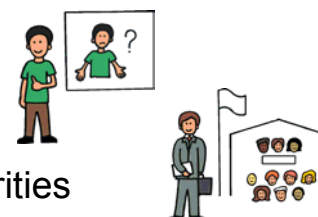
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This is why Inclusion Europe is organising a seminar called « People with disabilities lead their services ». This seminar will take place in Prague, on 26-27 October 2007.



There will be 5 important topics to be discussed:

1. How people with intellectual disabilities can participate in the planning of the service
2. How do User Councils work
3. Why people with intellectual disabilities should have a say in staff recruitment and training of staff
4. How to involve people with intellectual disabilities in the evaluation of the services
5. How User Councils can promote self-advocacy and put political pressure on their local or national authorities



It will be a really important seminar for the European self-advocacy movement.



If you would like to participate in this seminar, you should write to [self-advocacy@inclusion-europe.org](mailto:self-advocacy@inclusion-europe.org)

There are only a few places left, so you should be fast.

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## Self-advocates in Latvia meet the Minister of Education

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On the 29 May 2007, a group of 24 Latvian self-advocates met with the Latvian Minister of Education.

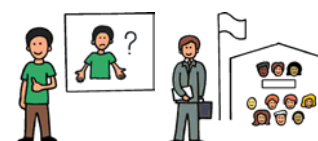
Her name is Mrs. Baiba Rivža

The self-advocates came from day centres and institutions.

Other important persons were also attending this meeting, like the heads of the Vocational department and a representative of the newly created Sate Special Education Centre.

Self-advocates prepared questions about primary schools and about vocational training.

Vocational training means being trained to do a job.

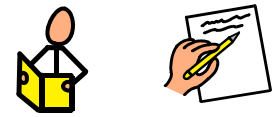
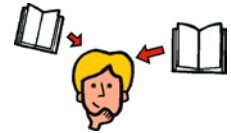


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## Self-advocates in Latvia meet the Minister of Education

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Self-advocates prepared a letter with some questions too. They asked about the possibilities to learn how to read and write when persons are adult or when special education has been finished.



Sometimes, adult persons cannot read and cannot write. Then it is a big barrier for taking vocational courses and learning a job.

The discussions during the meeting were very fruitful. “The Minister was very interested in the discussions and find our ideas good” said a Latvian self-advocate.



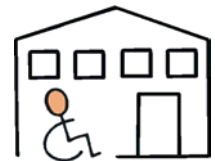
After a short discussion with other representatives of the Ministry, the Minister of Education promised to prepare a special programme for “evening school” for adults.



She asked self-advocates to prepare a list of institutions where it is necessary to organize courses for adults.



This question is very important because a lot of adults in institutions do not have any education and cannot read nor write.

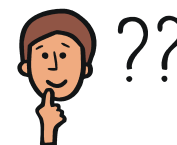


In the end the self-advocates took a photo (Minister is in green with flowers). “The meeting was really good with concrete steps” said a self-advocate. There was a very good dialogue with the Minister. Latvian self-advocates and staff are quite satisfied.



## Over 100 Spanish self-advocates get together

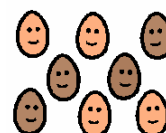
FEAPS is the Spanish association of organisations in favour of the persons with intellectual disabilities.



On the 8 June 2007, FEAPS organised the 6<sup>th</sup> self-advocacy meeting in Murcia. Murcia is a region and a town in the south of Spain.



Over 100 people with intellectual disabilities participated. They came from all over Spain. They stayed together for 2 days.



Joaquín Barberá, the vice president of FEAPS region Murcia, was there to speak to all participants. He honoured the good work of all self-advocates in the region of Murcia.



The federation of Murcia is celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year.



Pedro Serrano, the president of FEAPS Spain was speaking as well. He thanked all self-advocates for coming and for their good work.



“With the help of all self-advocates the organisations opened their eyes” he said. “With the help of all self-advocates, FEAPS understood that people with intellectual disabilities have their own life and can decide for themselves.



In the past, organisations were often hiding or overprotecting people with intellectual disabilities. But people with intellectual disabilities want to be included and to be asked what they want. FEAPS learned this from all active self-advocates.”



Cristina Rubio, the advisor for employment and social policies congratulated FEAPS for its work. She said that FEAPS worked really hard in the last 25 years for the integration of people with intellectual disabilities.



Cristina Rubio promised that the regional government will also continue working for the integration of people with intellectual disabilities.



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## Over 100 Spanish self-advocates get together

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After the opening ceremony 4 different people came for a discussion:

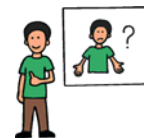
a teacher,



a psychologist,



a mother of a child with intellectual disability,



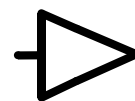
and a self-advocate.

They were talking about the future of people with intellectual disabilities.

They all had different views.

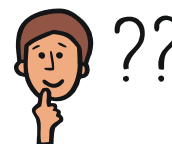
But at the end, they all agreed

that the future of people with intellectual disabilities is a very important theme.



2 self-advocates said: "We are worried about our future.

What happens when our parents will not be there anymore?"



The people in the auditory were very active

and they had a lot of questions

for the people who were sitting at the round table.



The meeting ended with two more workshops:

- about the future of people with intellectual disabilities,
- and about the law for more personal autonomy in life.

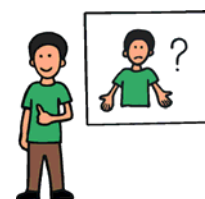


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## 4 new books to promote self-advocacy

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John Tufail and Kate Lyon from UK have published 4 interesting books on advocacy and self-advocacy.



The 4 books in the « Speaking Up » set promote self-advocacy.

It is meant for disabled individuals

who want to learn to speak up for themselves.

Each book has colour illustrations.

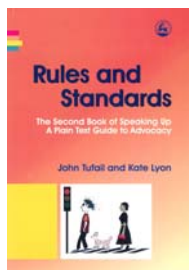
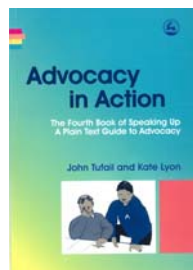
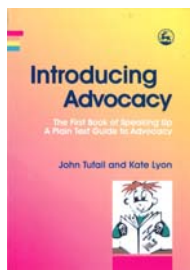
They also present case studies showing the good results of self-advocacy for the individuals themselves, as well as for their families and carers.



## 4 new books to promote self-advocacy

Those 4 books are in English only.

If you want to order them, please feel free to contact Keith Nicholson by writing at [knicholson@jkp.com](mailto:knicholson@jkp.com)



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

Please contact us!

### Inclusion Europe

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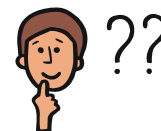
[self-advocacy@inclusion-europe.org](mailto:self-advocacy@inclusion-europe.org)

## A new project on the accessibility of adult education

Inclusion Europe will soon lead a new project called « Pathways to Adult Education for People with Intellectual Disabilities ». It will aim at making Lifelong Learning Programmes more accessible for people with intellectual disabilities



It is very important for people with intellectual disabilities to be able to learn all their life. Unfortunately, many courses are not accessible for them.



The project will work on easy-to-read so that everybody around Europe agrees on what is an easy-to-read text. Partners will also develop a tool that can test what is the level of accessibility of a text. Then they will write a document on how people with intellectual disabilities should be involved in the writing of easy-to-read text. Finally, they will teach to teachers and trainers of lifelong learning programmes how to write in easy-to-read.



We will keep on giving you information about the activities and material developed with this new project.

