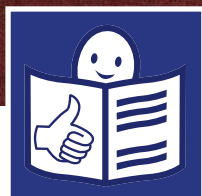
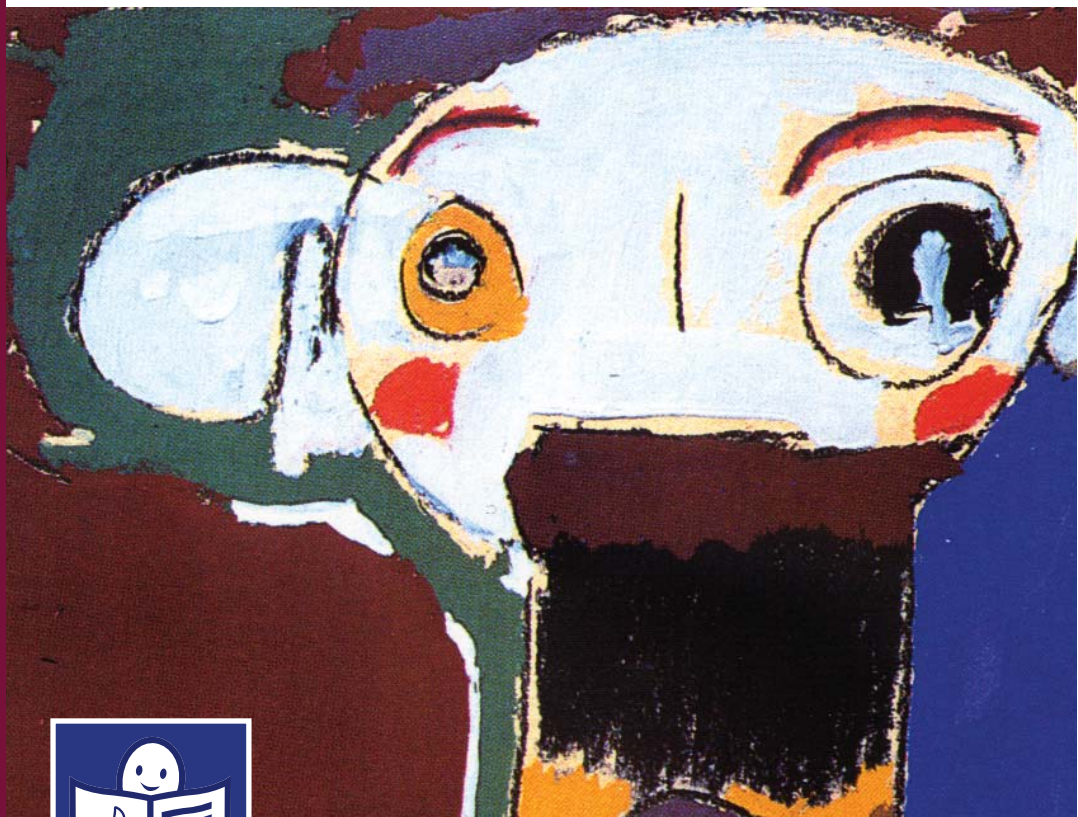


Your rights as citizens

Being a person before the Law



Inclusion Europe



Report

Inclusion Europe and its 47 members in these 33 countries are fighting against discrimination:

- Austria
- Belgium
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Hungary
- Iceland
- Ireland
- Israel
- Italy
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Macedonia (FYROM)
- Moldova
- Netherlands
- Norway
- Poland
- Portugal
- Romania
- Russian Federation
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- United Kingdom

Our members in English-speaking countries are:

MENCAP

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London EC1Y 0RT
United Kingdom
Tel.: (44) 207-454.04.54

NAMHI

5 Fitzwilliam Place
Dublin 2
Ireland
Tel.: (353) 1-676.60.35

ENABLE

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Scotland
Tel.: (44) 141-226.45.41

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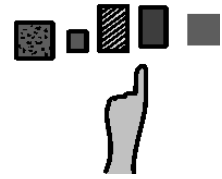
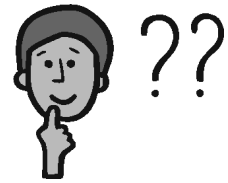
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Introduction

In the past, people thought that persons with intellectual disabilities could not take any decisions at all. Today, we know that this is wrong. Everybody can take some decisions.



Taking decisions is sometimes difficult. Sometimes you know exactly what you want. Sometimes you do not really know.

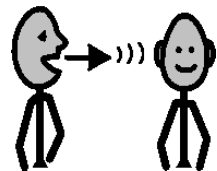


Then, you might need help.



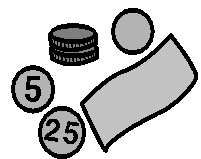
Some people can take only simple decisions. They need a lot of help for taking good decisions. Sometimes, someone else has to take decisions for them. This can be the case for some people with severe intellectual disabilities.

Other people can take most decisions by themselves.

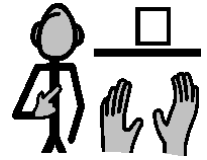


They might just need a good friend to talk about what they want.

They might need help with some special things. For example, many people need help with their money.



Inclusion Europe believes that you should make your own choices. We also want that there is someone to help you if you need help with your decisions.



All people take sometimes good and sometimes bad decisions. People then have to live with the good or with the bad results.



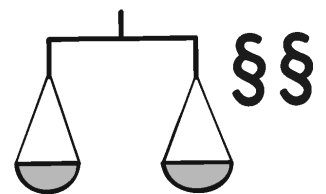
Inclusion Europe wants you to be protected if you cannot understand the results of a decision.

Many laws are made for people who have difficulties to take their own decisions.

These laws rule the help and protection of these people.

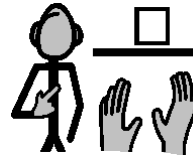
For children, it is always the parents who take decisions for them.

But for adults, a judge has to decide how best to support and protect them.



We wrote some guidelines on how this should be organized. But you will have to ask for the laws of your own country to know exactly about your rights.

Make your own choices

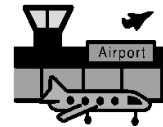


All people have the right to make their own choices.

This means that you can decide what you want.

You should decide for example the following things:

- Where you want to go.
- Where you want to live.
- If you want to take medicine.
- If you want to have other medical treatments.
- What you want to buy.



These rights should not be taken away from you only because other people do not understand you.

But sometimes you do not really know what is the best decision.

Sometimes choices are very difficult to make.

Then you don't know what to do and you might take a wrong decision.

Everybody takes a wrong decision sometimes.

For example, if you buy something for which you really do not have enough money.



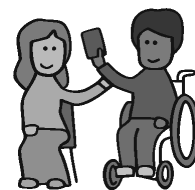
How people can be protected

There are many ways to protect you from wrong decisions.

They do not need to take away your rights.

When the choice is difficult, there should be someone to help you.

You should be able to act together with another person, who will help you.

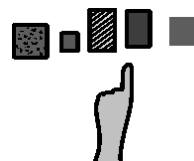


You have the right to choose this person.

You should not be told whom you have to ask.

You should trust the person who helps you.

The laws of your country should help you keep this right.



You should also have the possibility to get help only with the things you cannot do alone.

And you should keep your right to take decisions alone in all other areas.

The person who helps you is called a guardian.

In some countries, this person is also called supporter.

Guardians should not do whatever they want.

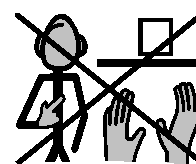
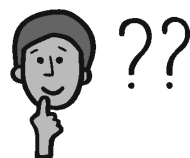
It is important that a judge decides about the rights of the guardian.

It is also important that the judge checks if the guardian does the right things.

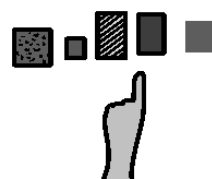
And it is important that the decision is checked again after some years.



In some countries,
persons with intellectual disabilities do not
have the right to make their own choices.
They cannot choose a person to help them.
They must follow all decisions of their guardian.
The guardian has the right to decide,
not the person with intellectual disability.

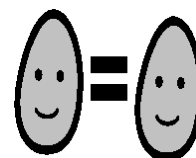


Inclusion Europe is against those laws.
Inclusion Europe believes that all people
can take some decisions by themselves.
If the decision is difficult,
people should choose a person who will help them.



Keeping all your rights!

Inclusion Europe believes that all people should keep
all their rights to make decisions.
We believe in equal rights for everybody.
We believe that all citizens are equal.



When people need help and support,
they should have a right to get it.
The support should be free.

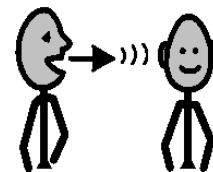


A judge should decide about the form of help.
The judge should talk with people
about the help they need.
The judge should not take decisions
only because of a doctor's opinion.



How the judge should decide

When the judge thinks that you need a person to help you, he should ask for your opinion. He should not decide about that before somebody has talked with you about your life.



At the court, there should be someone to help you. This help should be free if you do not have enough money. You should have the right to talk to the judge yourself.

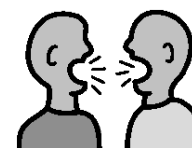


The judge may decide that it is necessary to give you a guardian for help.



The judge should explain the decision to you. He should explain it with words that you understand. He should answer all your questions about it. Perhaps you will not like the decision of the judge. Then you should have the right to ask to change it.

Sometimes a guardian is good for you only for some time.



Then you may start to disagree with each other. You may want to have another guardian.

The judge should allow you to ask for a different guardian.

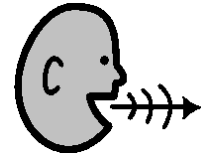
The judge should check after some years if everything is going well.

You and your guardian



It is important that the guardian knows you well.

When you have a difficult choice to make, you should talk about it with your guardian. You should tell your guardian what you think.



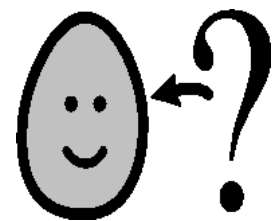
Your guardian will help you to choose what is the best for you.

Your guardian will help you to understand why it is a good choice or a bad choice.



Sometimes your guardian will do something for you if you can't do it yourself. But you should always know what the guardian does for you.

Your guardian should always ask you about your wishes. Your guardian should tell the judge if you don't need the support any more.



Decisions about your money

To take the right decisions about money is often difficult.

Sometimes you do not really understand what the decision is about.

You should ask for help and advice if you need it.

You may have to ask your guardian for all decisions about money.



In all decisions about money one thing is important to remember:

It is **your** money

and not the money of your guardian.

You have the right to know about everything that happens to your money.



Decisions about your health

If you can decide by yourself about your health, nobody else should do this for you.

Only when you cannot decide, the doctors should take a decision about your health for you.

They can do this only when

- this decision is good for you
- the person who helps you has given them the right to decide.



Inclusion Europe

The European Association of Societies
of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities
and their Families

Inclusion Europe represents people with
intellectual disabilities and their families.
Organisations of self-advocates and
parents from 36 countries in Europe are
our members.

Inclusion Europe works with the
European Commission and the European
Parliament.

Inclusion Europe works in 3 main areas :

1. The fight against discrimination
2. Human Rights of people with
intellectual disabilities
3. Inclusion of all people in society

Inclusion Europe publishes many
documents and organises many
conferences in Europe.

We work closely together
with all our members.



Inclusion Europe

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