

Inclusion Europe

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

ÉFOÉSZ

The Hungarian Association for Persons with Intellectual Disability

People with intellectual disability and their families
in Hungary

Position Paper

This paper includes
summaries in easy-to-
read language for
people with intellectual
disability.



ÉFOÉSZ in cooperation with Inclusion Europe has undertaken a detailed survey of the human rights situation of persons with intellectual disability and their families in Hungary. On the basis of the UN Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for People with Disabilities, this survey has revealed many problems and shortcomings in Hungary. The findings of the survey have been presented in English and Hungarian at European and National level. The main issues for Hungary are the following:

Lack of alternative services forces disabled people to live in institutions

Since in Hungary there is a lack of alternative housing options, most persons with intellectual disability live with their families or in large residential institutions. According to the law, all large residential homes should be closed by 2010. Although the process has started, lack of financial resources of the government will probably lead to serious delays.

The other side of this problem is that because of the lacking support services for families, many families are forced to put their child into institutions. The creation of these complex services has also started some years ago, but this process must be accelerated.

Families do not get enough money to pay for the special services their children might need, even if those services exist. An alternative would be that the services could be free and the service providers financed by the state.

There is a need to improve the attitude of staff working with persons with intellectual disability in institutions. Exchange programs should be organised for them, to see good models in EU countries.

Awareness raising against prejudices

Most people in society still have prejudices against people with intellectual disability. Reason for that could be a lack of knowledge. Therefore the media should present a positive image of disabled persons. There is also a need for more schools where disabled people are included.

Students should learn about the special needs and possibilities of persons with intellectual disability. Elementary school books should contain stories of children with disability. Also at every level of professional training this topic has to be included, for example for future doctors, nurses, teachers, officials etc.

ÉFOÉSZ from Hungary and Inclusion Europe have collected information on the situation of people with intellectual disability. There are many problems. Brochures were published in English and Hungarian. They include the following information:

Institutions and services

Small homes should be built instead of large institutions.

But the government does not give enough money for small homes.

Families need support services to help them to take care of their disabled children.

Families should be able to pay for the help their disabled children need.

Staff in institutions needs better training. They should learn from other countries.

A better image of disabled people

Many people think badly about disabled people.

This must be changed.

Radio, TV and newspapers should report about disabled people.

Persons with intellectual disability need continuous adult education and this should include self-advocacy. Teachers and other helpers should be taught first what it is all about and they need to get experience from other countries.

To improve the situation of persons with intellectual disability in Hungary, ÉFOÉSZ and Inclusion Europe challenge

- the European Commission

- to provide possibilities for co-financing the development of community-based living facilities and support services for families.
- to create or finance exchange programs for teachers and other staff to learn from the experiences in other European countries.

- Members of the European Parliament

- to include the topic of human rights of disabled persons on the agenda of the meetings of the Joint Parliamentary Committee.
- to ensure that the European Commission provides financial resources for the improvement of the situation of persons with intellectual disability and their families in Hungary.

- the Government of Hungary

- to change the education system, including adult education, for more inclusion of disabled people in mainstream education and to provide the necessary financial resources.
- to finance new community-based living facilities and support services for families.
- to publish documents in easy-to-read language and to otherwise support the movement of self-advocacy of persons with intellectual disability.

Children with disability should learn in normal schools.

Persons with intellectual disability should learn to speak for themselves.

ÉFOÉSZ and Inclusion Europe want the following:

The European Commission should help Hungary to create small homes and family support.
Teachers and other staff should learn from other countries.

Members of the European Parliament should speak about disabled people with Hungarian Members of Parliament.
They should also make sure that the European Commission gives money for disabled people in Hungary.

The government of Hungary should support the inclusion of disabled people in all schools.
It should also give money for small homes and family support.
The government should support the self-advocacy movement.

- **the Permanent Representation of Hungary to the European Union**

- to advance in cooperation with the European Commission and the Hungarian government the participation of Hungarian NGOs in all community programmes.

The “embassy” of Hungary to the European Union should make sure that disabled people can participate in all programmes.

- **the Council of Europe**

- to work with members of the Hungarian Parliament to facilitate a quicker implementation of the developed policies, especially those on non-discrimination.

The Council of Europe should speak with Hungarian Members of Parliament about better support for disabled people.

- **the Hungarian media**

- to inform more about disability issues and to present positive images of people with intellectual disability.

Newspapers, TV and Radio should report more about disabled people. They should say good things about them.