

Inclusion Europe

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

SPMP

Association for Help to the Mentally Handicapped in the Czech Republic

“To become myself, I need you”
(Martin Buber)

People with intellectual disability and their families
in the Czech Republic

Position Paper

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



SPMP in co-operation with Inclusion Europe has undertaken a detailed survey of the human rights situation of persons with intellectual disability and their families in the Czech Republic. 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 the Czech Republic. The findings of the survey have been presented in English and Czech at European and national level. The main issues for the Czech Republic were:

Process of de-institutionalisation has not been fully started

The State legally guarantees and finances on a regular basis only two kinds of social services: community/home care for the elderly and institutional care run by regional governments or municipalities. This system puts NGOs, which provide community based social services, into an unequal position. Therefore, care in institutions largely exceeds community based services. Inclusion, empowerment of adults with intellectual disabilities and their further opportunities remain limited.

Lack of work opportunities

Persons with intellectual disability are threatened by the decrease of work opportunities more than anyone else in society. Despite of the state support, sheltered workshops have little chance to provide work opportunities for a sufficient number of people with intellectual disability. The improved legal protection of employees with intellectual disability does not fulfil its aims.

Early care and intervention

Outdated legislation in social care works against the necessary multidisciplinary approach in early care and intervention. Respective professional fields, such as education, health care and social care are fragmented. Moreover, the respective ministries hold different views on organising early care centres. Therefore, the early care centres run by NGOs work in permanent financial uncertainty. Low public awareness of the general public and professionals about the development of a child with intellectual disability plays a negative role for disabled children.

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

People with intellectual disability have very little chance to live anywhere, but in institutions. Old laws do not allow community-based services. There is little inclusion of people with disabilities.

People with intellectual disability have very little opportunities to work. They get little support to work in a normal job.

Professionals in early care for young children must work together. They can be educators, medical doctors or social workers. The law does not allow them to work together.

To improve the situation of persons with intellectual disability in the Czech Republic, SPMP and Inclusion Europe challenge

- the European Commission

- to call on the Czech governmental bodies to take necessary actions in creating conditions for developing community based services and work opportunities for people with intellectual disability on the open labour market
- to support the Czech NGOs in their struggle to put modern forms of services for people with intellectual disability into practice

- Members of the European Parliament

- to support the process of transformation of social services
- to contact the sister political parties in the Czech Republic with the aim to support all actions which will lead to passing a bill on social services and its implementation

- the Government of the Czech republic

- to recognise the impact of outdated legislation in social care on the lives of people with intellectual disability.
- to pass a bill on social services and to implement it.

- the Permanent Representation of the Czech Republic to the European Union

- to search for good practice in the transformation of social services and the empowerment of people with intellectual disability within EU member states.
- to mediate experience of European Union member states in assuring equal rights of people with disabilities to the Czech Republic.

SPMP and Inclusion Europe want the following:

The European Commission should tell the Czech government that people with intellectual disability should not live in institutions, but in their communities.

Members of the European Parliament should ask their Czech political colleagues about services for people with intellectual disabilities. They should also talk about good practice with the Czech colleagues.

Old laws make work for people with intellectual disability difficult. It also is not good for the work of disability organisations. The Czech government should change the old laws.

The “embassy” of the Czech Republic to the European Union should support the exchange of experience between the European Union and the Czech Republic.

- the Council of Europe

- to help to assure that the principle of the rule of law and guaranteeing human rights and fundamental freedoms to people with intellectual disability is accepted in the Czech Republic.
- To seek solutions to problems facing the Czech Republic in discrimination to people with intellectual disability and to support their empowerment

The Council of Europe should make sure that people with intellectual disability have human rights and freedom. It should help to fight against discrimination.