



Annual Report 2009

In 2008 EPSA Steering Group wrote a new work plan for the years 2008 to 2010.

The new work plan had 4 priorities:

1. Tell other people about the abilities of people with intellectual disabilities
2. Help groups of self-advocates at a local level
3. Get more training for self-advocates and make the training more accessible
4. Promote networking at European and national level

To help us know about the impact our work had on our members we sent them a questionnaire.
9 organizations replied to it.

During 2009 there were some activities that helped to meet those priorities.

But we also had some setbacks.

This report will highlight both aspects.



European Platform of Self-Advocates

Priority 1

Tell people about the abilities of people with intellectual disabilities

In 2009 we made 4 issues of Europe for Us.

The issues talked about:

- The Conference for the European day of people with disabilities;
The European Commission Report on
how to include people with disabilities in society;
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of
Persons with Disabilities, that says people with disabilities should have the
same rights as all other people;
- The Europe in Action 2009 Conference, and the conference for self-
advocates;
- The Global Conference on Inclusive Education and the Resolution about
inclusive education;
- The Inclusion International World Conference 2010, where people from all
over the world will discuss about
the importance of the UN Convention;
- The “Friends” Project, a project to make sure
people with intellectual disabilities are included in society;
- The UNIQ Project, a project to help people with
intellectual disabilities to evaluate and choose
the services they use;



European Platform of Self-Advocates

- The “Pathways” Project, a project that aims to make life-long learning programmes more accessible for people with intellectual disabilities;
- The “Let disabled people vote” Project, a project that wants to make elections more accessible for people with disabilities across Europe;
- EPSA General meeting in Tampere, Finland.

We also informed our members and other self-advocacy groups about our Facebook site and how to access it.

During our General meeting we also adopted some Recommendations on legal capacity.

They are:

1. People with intellectual disabilities have the same rights as other citizens;
2. People with intellectual disabilities must have full legal capacity;
3. People with intellectual disabilities must decide themselves about their lives;
4. Plenary guardianship must be abolished;
5. Alternative solutions must be developed;
6. The respect for our choices must be ensured through good support;
7. Our protection must be ensured;



European Platform of Self-Advocates

8. Inform and train people about their rights;
9. Provide accessible information;
10. More support for self-advocacy.

Although we produced a lot of important information in 2009 it seems that most of it did not reach our members.

Regarding Europe for Us, most organizations know about it but did not read it.

One of the reasons pointed out is that the organizations do not have resources to translate it.

Regarding EPSA Recommendations on legal capacity more than half have not heard about them.

To make sure we meet priority 1 we need to make sure our information reaches self-advocates and their organizations.

But this is not enough.

We have to find ways that people will be able to understand.

We must think about ways to do this in the next years.



European Platform of Self-Advocates

Priority 2

Help groups of self-advocates at local level

We do not have a lot of feed-back from our members regarding this priority.
We know that some meetings were organized in Scotland, France and Croatia.
But we believe that EPSA can do more.
We need good materials in our own languages.
We need to train our members so they can talk in public and disseminate our work.

Priority 3

Training for self-advocates

EPSA members that participated in Pathway meetings helped to develop training and guidelines in Easy to Read and understand.
Some members talked about this work in their countries.
They informed self-advocates about Easy to Read and understand.

However, there is a lot to be done in the future.
Training for self-advocates must happen at local level.
There are a lot of materials already available.
We should use these materials.



European Platform of Self-Advocates

Priority 4

Promotion of networking

In 2009 we did not receive any new applications for EPSA.
And most of our members are not involved in our activities.
It is really difficult to get feed-back from them.
We must find ways to make them more interested in our work.
And we must find out why they do not get involved.

We had 1 organization that dropped out.
They could not afford the membership fee.
We know that lack of financial resources is one of the
problems faced by our members.

The role of the supporters is very important to promote networking.
They can help with language barriers.
They can also help with the use of technology.
We believe that Inclusion Europe can help us to network.
They have a lot of contacts.



The Future

EPSA is very worried about the future.

Without proper support from Inclusion Europe it will be really difficult to work.

We think that we must stick to some of our priorities for 2008-2010.

Priorities 1, 2 and 3 are really important.

We need to make sure people know about the abilities and achievements of people with intellectual disabilities.

We need to help self-advocacy groups at a local level.

We need to meet more often and to exchange experiences.

We need to find ways to support training for self-advocates.

It is really important that our members talk with us.

They should look at EPSA as a resource and an organisation that will represent and advocate for them.

EPSA must find ways to make this happen.

Finding money to support our activities is very important.

If we do not have projects that can support this, we must find other ways.

We will need help from Inclusion Europe to meet our goals.

EPSA needs someone that can help us organize and implement our Work Plan.



European Platform of Self-Advocates

It is not enough to have a Communication Officer.

We can help Inclusion Europe with our knowledge about
real problems real people face everyday.

We can help to make people with intellectual disabilities more visible.