



## **Activity Report 2016**

### **Key activities 2016**

#### **General Meeting**

Preparation for the General Meeting started at our face2face meeting in March.

The General Meeting took place in May,  
during the Europe in Action Conference.

More than 50 people attended, most of them self-advocates.

11 EPSA members attended the General Meeting.

In 2016 EPSA received 2 applications for membership,

Selbstvertretungszentrum für Menschen mit Lernschwierigkeiten from Austria  
and LFB from the Netherlands.

Both organisations presented themselves at the General Meeting,  
by sending PowerPoint presentations.

The activity report was approved by all members present.

Our member from France, Nous Aussi, presented their work.

She told us about her meeting with the French President.

She told the president about the difficulties faced by self-advocates in France.

We have also shared with all participants the  
conclusions from the Hear our Voices conference.

### **Session on Independent Living for Self-advocates**

Part of the General meeting was used to talk about independent living and deinstitutionalization.

The aim was to identify self-advocates that had life experiences that would be worth to share with others.

It was also to discuss about myths and realities regarding independent living.

### **Preparing Hear our Voices 2017**

In September the steering group met and one of the topics was the Hear our Voices conference.

During that meeting it was decided that the theme will be related with Community Inclusion.

The Conference will take place in Belgium.

### **Implementing EPSA Website**

Although there was an attempt to improve EPSA webpage this was not possible in 2016.

## **Representation of EPSA at different levels**

### European and International

- Harry Roche represented EPSA at Inclusion International annual conference, in Orlando. He also talked about EPSA at MENCAP radio station.
- Luminita Caldaras attended the meeting of the Woman Commission of European Disability Forum.
- Senada Halicevic talked about discrimination at the Equinet conference of the European Network of Equality Bodies. She also presented EPSA work at the Self-Advocates Day in Slovenia. She gave a 5 days training for assistants and self-advocates in Macedonia.
- Our member from Hungary, ÉFOÉSZ, was involved at ENIL's photo campaign and held an event on the European Independent living day. They also attended the Europe in Action 2016 Conference and the Inclusion International World Congress. They were involved on a self-advocacy project from the V4 countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia).

### Local and National level

- Senada Halilcevic took part at the protest against discrimination and violence against LGBT persons, in Zagreb. She presided the National Conference of self-advocates, that discussed about property rights and legal capacity.

She mentored, supervised and supported self-advocates from Karlovac, in order to start a self-advocacy group.

She was involved at public consultations regarding changing the legal capacity laws.

ASA issued 4 number of Voice of Self-advocates.

- Harry Roche spoke about employment opportunities at the Mansion House.

He also talked about negative attitudes at the University College of London.

- Luminita Caldaras was involved in 31 working sessions from Pentru Voi. At these sessions self-advocates discussed about rights, social rules, confidentiality, freedom, discrimination, social networks, support, etc.

Pentru Voi organized 2 National Conferences – Nothing about us, without us. Those conferences were attended by more than 50 people.

She visited the Lugoj Centre of Neuropsychiatric Recovery and Rehabilitation, where she talked with residents with intellectual disabilities and promoted self-advocacy.

She was involved at the proposal for amending the Civil Code in Romania in what concerns guardianship.

- Our member from Czech Republic did several videos about self-advocacy and the work they do.

They have also organized a self-advocates meeting in Prague. Self-

advocates from Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Czech Republic attended the conference.

- Our member from Hungary, ÉFOÉSZ, wrote to the UN CRPD committee to the list of issues.

They have written about independent living.

They have launched a blog.

This blog has news about self-advocacy, independent living and supported decision making.

They have organized training for supporters, on how to support self-advocates.

They have been invited to speak at several national conferences and events.

- Our member from Estonia, EVPIT, trained self-advocates on how to advocate for themselves.

They have also trained officials on how to work with people with intellectual disabilities.

- One of our Austrian members, People First, organized meetings for people with intellectual disabilities on topics like violence, health, guardianship, inclusion and work.

They have attended the conference on Monitoring of Human Rights.

They have also attended the annual meeting of the Austrian Network of Self-advocates.

They have organized workshops and talked about the UN Convention,

Easy-to-Understand and self-advocacy in institutions.

They have been awarded with the Austrian Price for Inclusion.

- Nous Aussi, our member from France, organized a National Congress with more than 600 participants.

This congress was attended by the Minister for Persons with Disabilities.

They have also been involved at the election process, making sure that the information is accessible for all.

## **Key results 2016**

We have successfully organized our General Meeting.

EPSA has grown.

We have been represented in several working groups.

We have been delivering training on how to start self-advocacy groups in Austria, Croatia, Estonia, Hungary, Italy and Romania.

We have been advocating for accessibility, deinstitutionalisation, independent living, legal capacity and supported decision making, in our own countries and also at the European Commission and the UN.

## **Outstanding issues**

### **EPSA Website**

EPSA website is still an “unfinished business” for us.

It is outdated.

There is not a relation between the [www.self-advocacy.eu](http://www.self-advocacy.eu) website and the

information on IE website.

All the proposals from the Steering Group were not implemented.

This should be a priority for 2017.

### **Changing of rules – General meeting every 2 years**

It was discussed with IE President the need to make sure our General Meetings have as much as self-advocates attending as possible.

One way to have this would be to have our General Meetings during the Hear our Voices Conferences.

This means having it every 2 years and not once a year.

It would also mean that we would need one extra half-day at Hear our Voices.

### **Changing of rules to allow for extended mandates**

We also realised that self-advocates need a lot of time to be “good” Steering Group members and EPSA Chair.

This would mean to change the rules to allow them to stand up for elections more than the 3 terms they have now.

The time you have as a steering group member should not count for the time you have as EPSA chair.

It is also important that the “new” chair can learn with the previous one.

## **Number of Steering Group members**

We are still struggling with the fact that we are not able to get more people interested in apply for the steering group.

Reasons for that are, according to our members,  
the lack of time to invest on EPSA steering group activities,  
the changes in support,  
the lack of financial means to attend the meetings and events.  
This has some negative impact on our level of representation  
at the different forums.

## **Involvement of members**

Communication between EPSA and the members is still poor.  
Members only seem to “wake up” for the Hear our Voices Conference.  
We have not been able to identify the reasons for this and  
to find ways to overcome it.

## **Next 12 months**

Hear our Voices 2017

EPSA website

EPSA General Assembly

Election of Steering Group