

Report on independent living for disabled people in Europe



Contents

Page



About this report

3



Problems ANED have had

5



Institutional Care

6



Care in the Community

7



Choices & Funding from the EU

8



What Countries in Europe need to do

9



What ANED thinks is important

10



What ANED thinks should be done

11



What Organisations to do with human rights should do

15



What the Council of Europe Commissioner for human rights should do

16



About this report

This is a report by a group called **ANED**.

ANED stands for **Academic Network of European Disability Experts**.



The group know a lot about disability and study it.



The report has been written for the **European Commission**.



The **European Commission** makes laws and decisions about the **European Union**.



The **European Union** is a group of countries whose governments work together.



This report is about how different countries in Europe are making sure people with a disability:

- Can get housing and support to live independently
- Are welcomed and able to take part in their community





ANED have studied 35 European countries and collected information about:

- Where children and adults with learning disabilities live and how they are supported



- How much money is spent on different types of care



- What different European countries plan to do to support people with disabilities



- How much money the different countries spend on helping more people to live independently



- How they check what they do



- How they ask people with a disability for their views

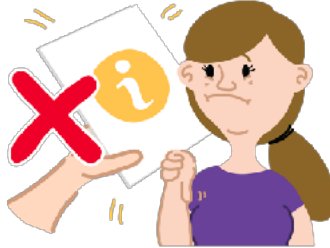


- How the work each country does makes a difference to people's lives



Problems ANED have had

Sometimes people do not agree on what disability means.



Collecting information for this report has been difficult.

Sometimes there is not enough information to study about disability.



But ANED use the information they have.



And they can report on what different countries are doing.



The report has also used information from the group called **United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**.



Some of the ways in which community care is understood is different.

This can affect what countries think they have to do.



Institutional care



Institutional care is when people are cared for somewhere like a hospital or large care home.



A lot of countries in Europe still have institutional care.



This means people with a disability are not given their **human rights**.



Human rights are the rights every person should have.



Also this type of care is very expensive.



Some countries have made plans to try to close these institutions.



But this is taking a long time.

Support to live in the community



A lot of people with a disability need support to be independent.



Some people live with family but some live in supported accommodation with other people.



This type of housing may not be classed as institutional care.



And it may be in the community.



However, people living there are still separate from others.



And people may not get the choices to live how they want.



This means that they may still be like institutional care.

Choices



There is some good work being done in a lot of countries to make sure people have choices.



However, these projects tend to be small.



There are not enough services that support people to have choice and control over their lives.



A lot of time is given to closing institutional care. But this is not enough.

Funding from the European Union



A lot of the money used to pay for services for people with a disability comes from the European Union.

What countries in Europe need to do



A lot of countries seem to find it hard to make sure there is enough support in the community for people.



And making sure this support is about what the person needs.



So people end up getting institutional care.



Countries need more plans for how they will make sure there is more support in the community.



And they need to stop more institutions being built.

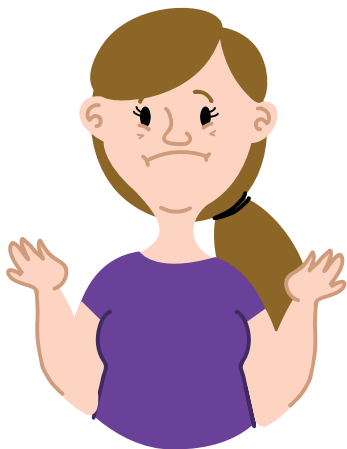
What ANED thinks is important:



It is difficult to measure whether countries are just making changes because they have to.



But they need to do it to make sure people with a disability can be more independent and have more control over their lives.



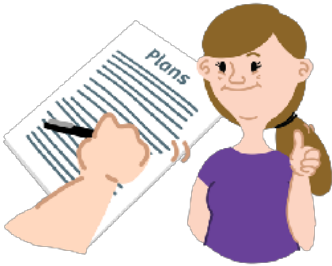
Otherwise it is not making enough of a difference to people's lives.



Although a lot of countries have done good work much more needs to be done.

What ANED thinks should be done:

All European countries should:



- Make plans to make sure people with a disability have the right to be independent



- And plans that to make sure they are included in the community



- Make sure organisations of people with disabilities get involved and have a say in the plans



- Make sure there are more housing and support options for people with a disability



- Make sure people have more choice and control. For example, through people having a say about how they want things to be done



- And through people having more control over how their care and support money is spent



- And through **peer support**



Peer support is when people with similar needs support one another.



- Change laws to give people more rights about where they want to live



- Collect information better and check services better



- Teach people in society about the importance of including disabled people



- Listen to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

What the European Commission should do:



- It should make sure more countries in the European Union make changes to help people with a disability be more independent



- The European Commission should understand the work of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Person's with Disabilities



- The European Commission should understand the importance of independence for people with a disability



- Make sure services are not about institutional care. Even if they are based in the community



- Say what 'independence' should mean



- Say what 'institutional care' means



- Give clearer advice to make sure that they are really supporting independent living for disabled people



- Make sure countries have enough housing and support choices for people with a disability



- Support countries to apply for money to develop more services that give choice and control to people with a disability.



- Support countries to apply for money to make communities better for people with a disability



- Support countries to apply for money to help set up organisations that are run by people with a disability

What organisations to do with human rights should do:



- Check institutional care organisations and those based in the community



- Check how well organisations are doing to make sure people can be independent and get involved in their community



- Make sure people with a disability are able to make a complaint easily



- Use the law when it is needed

What The Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights should do:



The Commissioner for Human Rights is the person who is in charge of protecting human rights and works at the Council of Europe.



- Keep making sure people with a disability can be independent and included in the community



- Make sure all countries can understand independent living in the same way



- Think about how information and technology can support people with a disability



- And what the risks could be

This report has been written by Neil Crowther.

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