



Hear our Voices! self-advocacy conference 2025

Be part of it!

Organise events in your country.

Dear Self-Advocates.

I want to invite you to join the Hear Our Voices! self-advocacy conference!

To help us create the self-advocacy conference anywhere in Europe.

To be part of our movement.

We need you to make changes happen!

We want self-advocates' voices to sound strong in Europe.

This year, Hear our Voices! self-advocacy conference is about

"Being Heard, Being Seen".

The conference is a series of events
organised by self-advocates all over Europe.

You can organise discussions online or in person.

We want to build an inclusive Europe.

I believe that we can do it together!

László Bersce,

Chair of the European Platform of Self-Advocates,
Vice-President of Inclusion Europe



What is Hear Our Voices! self-advocacy conference

Hear Our Voices is a **big self-advocacy event**.

It happens every two years in different countries in Europe.

It is a time for self-advocates to meet, talk, and make change happen!

The conference is **organised by self-advocates for self-advocates**.

The European Platform of Self-Advocates (EPSA) organises the event, deciding on topics and speakers.

EPSA is part of Inclusion Europe.

More than 1,300 people have attended Hear our Voices! self-advocacy conferences since the first conference in 2009.

Most of the participants are people with intellectual disabilities.

Don't miss the opportunity to be one of them.



"I came here to learn from you.

I want to be a successful self-advocate and stand up for my rights.

My friends want this too!"

Anton Onyshchuk,

self-advocate from Ukraine, Hear our Voices! 2023

Proud tradition of bringing self-advocates together in Europe:

- **2009 – Brussels, Belgium**

The first event where self-advocates spoke up together.

- **2011 – Peniche, Portugal**

More than 130 self-advocates and supporters gathered for 3 days.

"Know that we are here to stay! Believe in us! We must take risks and make our own choices. Listen! We have something to say. We are the experts!"

- **2013 – Zagreb, Croatia: “Citizens First”**

More than 160 self-advocates and supporters came together to talk about all the things we do when we are citizens – voting, getting married, working, going to school and so many other things.

“People with a learning disability should have the right to get married if they want to.” Ciara Lawrence, UK

- **2015 – Madrid, Spain: “My Life, My Decisions!”**

More than 350 participants from 27 countries talked about what is important for self-advocates, and the right to make decisions.

- **2017 – Brussels: Hear our Voices! “Strong, Loud and Clear!”**

70 self-advocates and supporters gathered to talk about topics such as being a board member in an organisation, being included in the community, setting up a self-advocacy group or the right to vote.

“Meeting with fellow self-advocates is the only way to discuss about common problems and find out how others have solved them!”

Senada Halilčević, Croatia.

- **2019 – Graz, Austria: Hear our Voices! “My Voice Counts!”**

150 participants from 18 countries.

They talked about how to be active in politics, employment, moving out of institutions and accessibility.

- **2021 – across Europe: Hear our Voices!**

More than 300 self-advocates were involved in events all over Europe.

Not being able to get together because of Covid was hard.

But we discovered that we can still work together

even if we are in our own countries.

- **2023 – Tallin, Estonia: Hear our Voices! “Make it Real!”**

150 self-advocates from 11 countries created Make it real! manifesto about their rights.

“We are not asking.

We are claiming our rights.

Hear our voices!”



Why you should organise an event

Be part of the strong tradition of self-advocacy in Europe:

Self-advocates come together for Hear our Voices! self-advocacy conferences since 2009.

Support self-advocates – Help people with intellectual disabilities speak up.

Contribute to a strong movement – Connect with other self-advocates in Europe.

Make a difference – What self-advocates say at your event will be shared and heard in Europe!

New connections – Meet self-advocates from your country and beyond.

Stronger voice – Learn how to advocate for your rights.

Recognition – Your ideas and stories will be shared across Europe.

Inspiration – Hear from others who have made a difference!



When and where?

Local events:

- 6 – 19 October 2025
- Organised by different organisations across Europe
- This is the event you can organise to join Hear our Voices!

Final event:

- November 2025
- Organised by Inclusion Europe in Brussels and online

When you organise an event as part of Hear our Voices!
it means self-advocates in your country can take part.

Having the conference done as local events
makes it easier for many people to participate.

The local event can be in the self-advocates' own language,
and does not need international travel.

How can you organise an event?

Your event can be:

- **A discussion** – A small meeting where people share ideas.
- **A workshop** – Where self-advocates learn together.

- **A conference** – A big event with speakers and different sessions.
- **An online event** – To include more people who cannot travel.

You choose the topic that is most important in your country!

The European Platform of Self-Advocates suggests these topics:

- **Speaking up** – Learning to be a strong self-advocate.
- **Accessibility** – Making sure all places and services are for everyone.
- **Education and jobs** – Fighting for the right to learn and work.
- **Independent living** – Having control over your own life.
- **Health and well-being** – Getting fair access to healthcare.
- **Politics** – The right to vote and be part of decisions.

How to choose a topic from the list?

You can ask self-advocates in your country what they would like to discuss.

See what the big challenges for inclusion in your country are.

Organise events about them.

Ok, I want to be part of this. What do I need to do?

1. Plan your event

Choose a day or more, if you have more than one event (during 6 – 19 October 2025).

Choose your topic.

Decide who you want to invite.

2. Create an invitation with the Hear our Voices! logo.

Show everyone that your event is a part of something bigger.

3. Sent the invitation to us.

So we can add you to the list of events organised as Hear our Voices!

Email self-advocacy@inclusion.eu

4. Organise the event.

Good luck and good fun!

5. Tell us all about it.

How many people came to the event?

Who were the speakers, and what did they talked about?

Do you have any quotes from self-advocates?

Email self-advocacy@inclusion.eu

And don't forget to share some pictures too.

Other important information

Inclusion Europe cannot give money for your event.

Inclusion Europe will organise the final event in Brussels, and some self-advocates will be invited to speak there.

This event will take place in November 2025.

Would you like to organise an event as part of Hear our Voices! self-advocacy conference?

- Let EPSA know [with this short survey.](#)



Inclusion Europe

Inclusion Europe speaks up for people with intellectual disabilities and their families since 1988.



We advocate for equal rights and full inclusion in all aspects of life representing 20 million people with intellectual disabilities and their families.

We are a European organisation with members in over 30 countries representing in a democratic way the rights and interests of all people with intellectual disabilities and their families in Europe.

www.inclusion.eu

The [European Platform of Self-Advocates](#) is part of Inclusion Europe.

You can reach EPSA at self-advocacy@inclusion.eu.



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