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## TOWARDS EUROPEAN VALUES

# PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AS EQUAL CITIZENS



## GUIDE FOR SELF-ADVOCACY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION





Towards european values

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Persons with disabilities  
as equal citizens

## ABOUT THE PROJECT

Beginning of the Fall 2016., Serbian Association for Promoting Inclusion-SAPI started the project “Towards European values - persons with disabilities as equal citizens” in partnership with organisations from 7 countries: Serbia (Center for Society orientation- COD, Association "Halfway there" Pancevo, School with dormitory for students with hearing and speech impairments “11th may” Jagodina, Association with mental disabilities Nis, Inclusive center, Novi Sad), Italy (Rittmeyer Regional Institute for the blind of Trieste), Slovenia (Institute for the deaf Ljubljana), Croatia (Josip Matos Primary school, Vukovar), Montenegro (Association of parents of the children with disabilities "Ray of hope“ Pljevlja), Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (Republic center for support of persons with intellectual disability „PORAKA“ Skopje) and Bosnia and Herzegovina (Social educational center – SEC, Banja Luka). The Project is financed by the EU through Europe for citizens Programme of the European Union.

The project aims to contribute to the full integration and civic participation of persons with disabilities in society, in accordance to European values and principles. The specific objective of the project is to develop a model of the empowerment of persons with disabilities, with special focus on people with intellectual disabilities, so that they can take an active role in creating an inclusive society and to influence policy making processes at national and European level.



The project will use the experience and knowledge in the field of inclusion and civic empowerment of persons with disabilities across the EU member states and candidate countries, in order to strengthen democratic participation of all citizens, including those on the margins of society. More

specifically, the project is focused on organizing educational workshops, debates and dialogues for and among people with disabilities in 7 countries (Serbia, Italy, Slovenia, Croatia, Montenegro, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina), including service providers and self-advocates in relation to self-advocacy, volunteering, integration in employment and social entrepreneurship. All thematic areas will be processed through the exchange of best practices from all participating countries. Strong transnational component of the project will be reflected in the equal representation of providers and persons with disabilities in all project activities from all member countries.

The project is implemented during period of one year.

### FIVE KEY POINTS

In order to fully and effectively contribute to achieving the objective of the project, ie. the development of a comprehensive model of empowering people with disabilities so that they can take an active role in creating an inclusive democratic society and to influence policy making processes at national and European level, the project partners identified five key points. Those are:

- self-advocacy,
- peer support,
- volunteering,
- work engagement,
- entrepreneurship and the development of social entrepreneurship.

Each of these five points is equally important when it comes to social inclusion and ensuring the equal status of people with disabilities in European countries. However, assuming that each of them involves competence of citizens, regardless of their personal characteristics, to express their interests and beliefs to make choices, make decisions and solve everyday problems and participate in solving more general, social problems it can be said that self-advocacy is the basis of any of the herein mentioned processes.

# Self-advocacy for people with intellectual disabilities

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## Basics of self-advocacy

Self-advocacy for people with intellectual disabilities is a social movement that aims to strengthen this group of people in terms of making decisions and making choices that directly affect their lives. Self-advocacy means first of all that these people speak on their own behalf, advocate for their civil rights and their views, in front of other groups, in front of the decision makers and the general public as a whole.

We are often in a situation, when meeting people with intellectual disabilities to represent their interests and that out of the "best intentions" make decisions on their behalf, considering ourselves competent.

On the path of empowerment of self-advocacy skills of people with intellectual disabilities, the first step is **self-determination**. Self-determined person is in a position to define their goals and to take the initiative for achieving them. Self-determination is a commitment to their rights and responsibilities and empowerment in defending their own beliefs. This means that self-determined person is able to choose what they will do, how to live, to learn, to participate in the group if necessary to achieve goals and develop skills that are useful in the fight to represent their own needs and achieving independence. In short, to be self-determined person means knowing how to make choices, to know their wishes and ways of their realization. Self-determined person acts autonomously, self-determined, respect itself, shows initiative, reacts to the events from the environment

empowered psychologically, it is self-achieved.

When a self-determined person expresses their interests and beliefs when making choices, make decisions and solve problems, then we can talk about self-advocacy. In this regard, **self-advocacy** can be defined as any activity that promotes self-determination skills. Self-advocacy is not just a verbalization of feelings and everything that a person sees or hears; self-advocacy brings positive changes in his life, a self-advocate defend its interests and those of peers. Among other things, self-advocacy is a way to defend oneself, to say “yes” or “no” on the basis of an assessment of the situation, to know our civil rights and the ability to execute them, to get any information essential in the process of decision-making, to make a choice and to persevere despite the obstacles, to try again if there is any obstacle, and persist in demanding respect in all situations.

Self-advocacy can be implemented at two levels: at the level of the group and individual level. Self-advocacy at the individual level can be defined as the acquisition of control over the circumstances in our own lives. This primarily means to independently represent the wishes of a lifestyle, relationships within the family and community. For most people, this practice is common, however, for people with intellectual disabilities an individual advocacy has much more visible and larger meaning.

Self-advocacy at group level involves joint operation of associated persons with intellectual disabilities in order to achieve justice through mutual assistance in regaining control over their lives. Also, the group seeks to reduce the level of discrimination in society towards people with intellectual disabilities. Through self-advocacy group members acquire the skills necessary to make decisions and choices, and the establishment of control over their lives. Self-advocates learn about their rights and obligations, provide each other with support and help each other in acquiring security for the public expression of their own beliefs.

Members of the self-advocacy movement are seeking to participate in all social processes, to meet with decision-makers and service providers, to seek changes, to testify at public events and seminars, write letters, participate in various protests, to work in various commissions and committees. Finally, self-advocates join the struggle of the wider civil society in the field of advocacy for human rights, to establish laws that support them.

Self-advocacy appeared around 40 years ago in Sweden, and then quickly spread, especially to Western Europe and America. It was created when parents' associations became stronger and more aware of the problem, so parents and professionals have recognized the need of

persons with intellectual disabilities to speak for themselves. Not only the need, but also the importance and impact on society, towards struggle for their rights. First self-advocacy group was named “People first”, because of the value that stood out for, and that is that people with intellectual disabilities should be valued primarily as a person. This self-advocacy group developed into a huge worldwide association over time- “People first international” (<http://www.peoplefirst.org>), which still exists today, and has different branches all over the world. Today there are many other associations and organizations at the global and European level, whose members are primarily people with intellectual disabilities, but also their assistants for self-advocacy. One of the most important is the organization Inclusion Europe, within which functions independently the body of people with intellectual disabilities - self-advocates, called the European Platform of self-advocates (<http://inclusion-europe.org/sr/icon-cart-samozastupanje>). This organization brings together various associations of self-advocates from Europe, and fight for equal rights for people with intellectual and other disabilities at the European level.

### *An example of good practice. Self-advocacy group of Serbian Association for Promoting Inclusion-SAPI*

The group was formed in 2008. and counts 16 members, 10 females and 6 males. The youngest member of the group is 30 years old and the oldest 53 years old. All members of the self-advocacy group are people who have had the experience of living in a Home for children and youth with disabilities Sremčica. At the initiative of SAPI expert team, they were relocated from institution and since then live in an open environment within the Community based housing service.

The Group has its own management structure: the president, vice president and cashier. Over the past 8 years of work, self-advocates have been meeting once a week. On this occasion they organized workshops with aim to strengthen the capacity of each individual, according to the individual plan of support to self-advocacy. Workshop participants learn primarily about creating a positive image of themselves, making decisions, making choices, civil rights, the means through which it is possible to equally participate in the life of the local community.

Assistant for self-advocacy is the one providing support to self advocacy group members. Assistant provides support in: independent decision making, providing information on human rights, empowerment for

participation in improving the quality of life, developing self-awareness, development of communication skills in obtaining information regarding ways of meeting needs in the development of personal responsibility, but also support for specific Self-advocacy skills (leadership discussions, public organization activities, etc.).

The most important rights discussed during the workshops are: the right to live in an open environment, the right to work and employment and the right to vote.



Self-advocates have, over the years, often organized activities, through which they informed the public about their civil rights and urged policy-makers to ask for their opinion when it comes to decisions affecting their lives. In this regard, members of the group were designing the leaflets and brochures, implemented workshops on self-advocacy in the institutions and associations dealing with people with intellectual disabilities, visited universities as guests (Faculty of Philosophy and Singidunum FMK), participated in various meetings and forums where they spoke on their own behalf about their rights, wrote a letter to the Mayor of Belgrade, spoke at the City Assembly, participated in the job fair (Top Job), participated in discussions organized by the Ombudsman, spoke about the problems of people with disabilities in the Serbian Parliament, were hosted as guest in media (RTS , Studio B, B92, TV Metropolis), took part in the European conference of self-advocates (Zagreb 2013).

In this way, self-advocates took matters into their own hands and openly spoke about all the obstacles they face in the way of their civil rights. The most significant achievement of several years of work is that the president of self-advocacy group was the first person with intellectual disabilities who has ever in Serbia actively participated in the implementation of the Declaration “Better health, better life” (World Health Organization). Finding that participation of self-advocates is one of the basic prerequisites of work of every organization and institution dealing with human rights and support to social inclusion, SAPI has a practice to include, engage at least two members of self-advocacy group in all projects implemented by SAPI.

During project Towards European values - persons with disabilities as equal citizens, self-advocates were actively engaged, both in discussions at the workshops, and in transfer of their self-advocacy experience to project partners and their beneficiaries. They also implemented various activities in the community, held a conference/tribune at the Faculty of Media and Communications, University Singidunum, but also participated in various media activities and conferences during which they talked about their fundamental rights, through activities aimed at decision-makers at the highest state level.

### *Self-advocacy within project “Towards European values - persons with disabilities as equal citizens.”*

Within this project, self-advocacy as a basic premise of the project and a precondition for equal participation of persons with disabilities in social processes, and, more specifically, decision-making processes, was approached on two levels. First level involved implementation of a series of trainings for strengthening the capacity of partners to support self-advocacy, and their introduction to SAPI's self-advocacy model. The second level involved the formation of self-advocacy groups by partners and implementation of self-advocacy activities in their local communities.

When it comes to strengthening the capacity for self-advocacy and support to self-advocacy, two training sessions were implemented. The first one was a three-day training in the field of civil rights and self-advocacy for people with intellectual disabilities, involving following topics:

1. Interpretation of the human rights of persons with disabilities and disability models with special emphasis on the paradigm shift from the medical model of disability towards a model based on human rights.
2. Review of the human rights principles of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its key concepts, as well as important articles

of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities with special focus on the practical implementation of this important document; the position of persons with disabilities as equal members of society at a global level; question of opportunities and obstacles to the achievement of equality in society.

3. Presentation of good practice examples of beneficiaries involvement in all phases of support services provision, next to the workshop which was aimed to establish models of beneficiaries involvement in all phases of service delivery that could be applied within organizations from which participants come.

4. Workshops aimed at introducing training participants with self-determination of people with intellectual disabilities, ways of practical work that encourage self-determination as the basis for development of self-advocacy skills.

5. The workshops aimed to familiarize the participants with self-advocacy movement of persons with intellectual disabilities, self-advocacy types and models of self-advocacy groups.

6. The workshops aimed at introducing participants to model the behavior of professionals who deal with self-advocacy of people with intellectual disabilities, sensitization of environment and skills of promoting the civil rights.



Through the second, also three-day training, the emphasis was on deepening the self-advocacy skills and support for self-advocacy skills, primarily through public self-advocacy self-advocacy activism of persons with disabilities. Participants were dealing with the following issues:

1. Defining the problem, participants and the aims of public advocacy of persons with disabilities
2. Defining the audience, mapping the support, opposition and neutral participants in public advocacy of persons with disabilities; creating a network of support
3. Creating a message and specifying a channel of communication for public advocacy of persons with disabilities
4. Defining the strategies and techniques of advocacy, possibilities of information, non-lobbying news, media pressure
5. Planning the activities and reflection the steps in advocacy of persons with disabilities
6. Action Plan, defining the required resources, timeframes and responsible persons for advocacy of persons with disabilities.



The main purpose of this training was to empower individuals, both single people with intellectual disabilities and providers of support for self-advocacy and self-determination and encourage them to self-advocacy activism as a method for achieving a more equal position of persons with disabilities in society. The purpose of the training was also to transfer good practice examples and provide a basis for the development of a common model of self-advocacy for people with disabilities as a mean to express their needs, opinions and attitudes and to contribute to the debate on key social issues.

*An example of good practice - Primary school "Josip Matoš", Vukovar, Croatia*

Based on the experience and knowledge gained during self-advocacy training, the first self-advocacy group for people with intellectual disabilities in Vukovar was formed within primary school "Josip Matoš". This self-advocacy group, formed in March 2016, has 8 members, and has meetings once a month. Members of this self-advocacy group realized self-advocacy workshops regularly, during the previous period, 1 month, during which they learned about their rights and ways of achieving them. It is significant that the decision was made to introduce self-advocacy workshops for PwDs into school program as a regular extracurricular activity.



"To advocate yourself means to be yourself. To speak on your own behalf, and not let others speak instead of me. I have the right to make decisions about my spare time, the right to work and get paid. To earn at least 500,00 kn."  
V. M., Vukovar, Croatia



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## Volunteering

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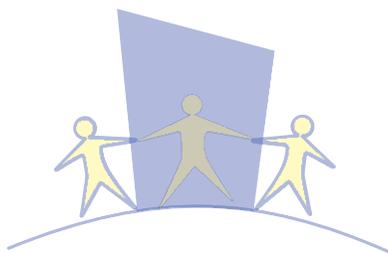
## *Basics of volunteering*

In the world, volunteering is defined in different ways and have different dimensions, but we can safely say that it is, in its widest definition, unpaid, noncareer, non-profit, freely chosen action that occurs in various forms. Most states today have some form of legal regulation of volunteerism. *Today, volunteering in the community is considered one of the fundamental values of a democratic society, which raises the quality of life. The report on the state of volunteerism in the world from 2011 (UN Volunteers, [http://www.unv.org/fileadmin/docdb/pdf/2011/SWVR/English/SWVR2011\\_full.pdf](http://www.unv.org/fileadmin/docdb/pdf/2011/SWVR/English/SWVR2011_full.pdf)) emphasizes the following: "Volunteering is a fundamental expression of social and human relations. It is a human need to participate in society and feel that they are important to other people. We firmly believe that the social relationships specific for volunteering are key to the well-being of individuals and communities. The ethos of volunteerism is infused with values including solidarity, reciprocity, trust, belonging and empowerment, which contribute significantly to quality of life. People around the world volunteer for a variety of reasons: to help in eradicating poverty and improving basic health and education, to ensure a safe water supply and adequate sanitation, to deal with environmental issues and climate change, reduce the risk of disasters and fought against social exclusion and violent conflict. In all these areas, volunteerism contributes to peace and development by creating well-being for people and their communities. Volunteering is also the backbone of many national and international non-governmental organizations and other civil society organizations, as well as the social and political movements. It is also present in public sector, and its importance in private sector grows."* (Taken from <http://vcos.hr/programi/volonterstvo>).

In order to prevent any possible 'exploitation' of volunteers and / or persons and communities that need support of volunteers, most of the laws and / or regulations in different countries stipulate certain conditions necessary for volunteering, starting from form, manner, the length of volunteering and the necessary preconditions for volunteering (eg. training of volunteers, code of ethics, contract on volunteering) to the age at which one can begin to volunteer.

The duties of volunteer organizers are especially emphasized, in terms of volunteers training, technical assistance and supervision, in situations where volunteers work with vulnerable groups such as children, PwDs, the old and sick persons or persons who are fully or partially deprived of legal capacity.

Organizing of volunteers is usually provided through volunteer centers that are focused on implementation of various projects involving volunteers, but are also a place where you can contact people who want to volunteer, or those in need of volunteer support. In addition to promoting the values of civil society and volunteerism, the purpose of the existence of volunteer centers is the stimulation of the community development through strengthening social capital that relies on civic engagement, and supporting the functioning of individuals and organized groups of citizens or active participation in local community development through initiatives and actions for the general welfare.



Асоцијација за промовисање  
инклузије Србије-АПИ Србије

Serbian Association for  
Promoting Inclusion - SAPI

### *An example of good practice. Elementary School Josip Matos*

Elementary School Josip Matos as school for students with disabilities has always been an institution in which volunteers are happy to come, whether they are in high school, students, adults and retirees. However, students of our school at one point wanted to help other people and thus contribute to the quality of life of the local community which naturally belong. Therefore, the project team in co-operation with elementary schools from Skopje (Macedonia) and Bucharest (Romania) created a project in which students of higher elementary grades are given the opportunity to be useful members of society.

The project, entitled "When our small hands come together" was implemented in the school year 2011/2012 in the framework of the Academy of Central European Schools (ACES). The main objectives of the project were to develop a positive relationship with the community in which we live through volunteer work and acceptance of diversity through knowledge of other cultures. The specific objectives of the project were to develop a positive attitude towards the people of the third age, to develop the need to help other people (people who need help, such as the elderly), acceptance of diversity and development of tolerance through learning about different cultures, to develop a positive self-image, self-esteem and self-confidence in students (through positive emotions experienced by helping others- pleasure, necessity, gratitude). Along with the director, teachers and school psychologists, students of 8th -older educational group, aged over 15 years participated in this project.

Within this project a number of different activities were planned and implemented, taking place from time to time with the consent of the parents of students, in order to be in accordance with the valid Law on Volunteering at that moment. In cooperation with the Chamber for the elderly and disabled Vukovar we "adopted" grandmother Ljubica and grandfather Marko, who did not have their own families, and visited them regularly. The aim of the visit was to spend time together, talking about past times (what and how they did) as well as assistance in performing daily activities (shopping, walking, going to the hairdresser). Also, grandparents occasionally came to the school, where they had active part in making cakes together with students, giving them advice on developing a garden and attended events. Given that project participants were also students from schools in Bucharest and Skopje, we organized mutual visits during which we got to know the way of life in the countries that are similar culturally but linguistically different from our own, and realized that besides some

differences we actually have a lot more similarities. One of the similarities is the attitude towards the elderly, the relationship with the elderly people where they are treated with respect and special concern.

All project activities were promoted through school's website and local newspapers, and at the end of project implementation we published a brochure containing short texts created based on the stories told to students of the school by grandmother Ljubica and grandfather Marko. School Josip Matos obtained special award- the Jury Prize at the Central Academy School for special achievement in the category of "special bonus", together with project partners. The project was recognized at the local community level, and awarded with „Zaklade Royal“ that takes care of elder people.



During the moments students spent together with grandmother Ljubica and grandfather Marko, they built a special relationship, therefore the students expressed their wish to continue visiting the grandparents after the project. Even today we visit our grandmother Ljubica, although she rarely visits school because of illness. Grandpa Marko died, but we visit his grave every year. Through implementation of project activities, we concluded that the voluntary work pays off, and that everyone needs help, anyone can help others, especially children and young people with disabilities who thus become useful members of society.

## *Volunteering within project "Towards European values - persons with disabilities as equal citizens"*

Volunteering was, as one of the five key points of the project, the central theme of 3rd project activity, a fourth meeting of project partners, training entitled "Volunteering as a way of inclusion of persons with disabilities". The meeting was held in Vukovar, 11 -13. December 2015. The host and organizer of the meeting was Josip Matos School, Vukovar, in cooperation with SAPI. Throughout the three-day training, different topics related to volunteers and volunteering were covered, starting from basic concepts and examples of good practice, exchange of experience from aspect of participants who come from different countries. Participants of the training were acquainted with the ways and forms of involvement of volunteers in the daily work of organizations / associations that take care of people with disabilities and exchanged ideas and experiences between the partner organizations and associations.

The three-day training included the following topics:

- Volunteering of students - presentation of Josip Matos school project "When our small hands come together"
- Volunteerism in Elementary school
- Trough volunteering to our place in society
- Red Cross - organization that relies on volunteer work
- On volunteers and volunteering
- Cooperation and partnerships at the local level - preconditions for engagement of volunteers
- Volunteer work and responsibilities - volunteer management
- Laws and by-laws governing the area of volunteering in Serbia
- Volunteer Center of School for primary and secondary education with the boarding "Milan Petrovic"; Volunteer management; Training of volunteers for work with children and young people with disabilities through the methods and techniques of the school for primary and secondary education with boarding "Milan Petrovic"; Volunteer work and volunteer programs in the local community; Volunteer experience in school for primary and secondary education "Milan Petrovic"
- Volunteer service of high school and elementary school students within NGO Ray of Hope and Day Care Center Pljevlja - successes and challenges in the work from 2009 to the present (NGO Ray of Hope-volunteer center)

The training was attended by representatives of partner organizations. The work was organized through presentations, exchange of practical experience, and targeted workshops.

The aim of the training was to inform and empower participants to develop volunteerism as a way of inclusion of persons with disabilities. During work a high level of interaction and exchange of ideas, as well as the possibilities of association and application for future Call for Proposals, thus opening opportunities for greater participation of persons with disabilities in community activities.

Volunteers and volunteering contribute to the implementation of policies of social inclusion and help to its development, and can be used as a tool to encourage active and responsible civic engagement in the European Union, which is essential in achieving the European ideals and values such as democracy, solidarity and participation in society. Therefore, it is important to promote the value of volunteerism from an early age through educational system and informal ways of learning - through education for volunteering. We could say, the person is not born a volunteer, but becomes one!



*An example of good practice – Social – educational center “SEC”, Banja Luka, BIH*

During implementation of this project, adult education institution "Social-educational center" (SEC) from Banja Luka, project partner organization, encouraged by exchange of experience and knowledge, developed a training program called "Management of volunteers". Training is created for 12-15 participants, and training objective is to familiarize students with the techniques and methods of coordination of engagement and supervision of volunteers. Training content was divided into 6 areas / modules for a period of 36 hours.

You can find information about the training via the following link:  
<http://sec.ba/neformalnie-obuke/menadzment-volontera/>



Adult education institution "Social-educational center" (SEC) is proud to be part of the project "Towards European values - persons with disabilities as equal citizens", carried out within Europe for citizens programme. One of the training entitled "Volunteerism as a way of inclusion of persons with disabilities" was held from 11 - 13 December 2015 in Vukovar, further motivated SEC to develop a new training program in its offer, entitled "Management of volunteers".

I. L., SEC, Banja Luka, BIH



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## Peer support

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## *Basics of peer support for people with disabilities.*

The state of social exclusion involves a situation in which individual citizens or groups of citizens can not participate in the activities of the community, because factors that are beyond their control make it impossible.

People with disabilities, especially those with intellectual disabilities are among the most socially excluded groups of the population of Serbia. Not only that the state of social exclusion affects them - entire families, which they are members of, are being socially excluded. In order to become socially involved, equal and contributing members of the community, they need support, and involvement in meaningful activities in the community in which they will feel that they are useful members of society.

The only way that society can systematically confront with a situation of social exclusion of a large part of its citizens is through development of social services, ie support services in the local community.

One of those social services in the community can be a peer support of people with intellectual disabilities to other people with disabilities and other people in need.

Such service as general aims holds:

- Identification, training and engagement of people with Ds that can be active in supporting other persons
- Identifying people with (intellectual) disabilities and their families who need this kind of support
- Social inclusion support services, including:
  - strengthening the competence in life skills
  - strengthening social competence and fostering social interaction
  - ensuring the availability of activities and events in the local community.

Peer support service is designed primarily **for people with intellectual, but also with other types of disabilities**, who are in a situation of social exclusion.

Specifically, the service is intended for:

- People with intellectual and / or other associated disabilities
- who are in a situation of social exclusion
- who are not included in the existing social services, regardless of the service provider
- who do not have adequate informal support for an active life in the local community
- who are mobile, with or without the help or support
- who are interested in this type of service.

Service is, indirectly intended for family members of persons with intellectual and other types of disabilities - service also improves social inclusion of other family members (parents, brothers-sisters, etc.).

Peer support service consists of two services: Professional Support Service, and Direct support service. Professional support service includes experts of different profiles, according to the needs of potential beneficiaries. It is essential that Professional Support Service, besides service providers themselves, include representatives of the local Centre for Social Work. Direct support service consists of: Assistants trained for work within support services, as well as persons with disabilities, trained to provide support.

Service provision itself is defined through a 6-month personal support plans. Personal support plans are created for every individual, and based on his / her specific needs, preferences, interests and abilities. In creation of personal plan participate: beneficiary, parent-legal guardian, coordinator of peer support service, as well as the person with disability himself - provider of peer support.

Peer support service is defined through 3 phases.

Phase of identification includes:

- Identification of potential service beneficiaries
- Identification of beneficiaries needs for support
- Creation of personal support plan

Phase of support provision includes:

- Support to adoption of everyday life skills
- Support to inclusion of beneficiaries in local community activities
- Support to family members of beneficiaries

Last phase consists of evaluation, and includes:

- Internal evaluation of the project cycle and the effects of the project
- External evaluation of the project
- Evaluation of personal support plans
- Modification and / or creation of new personal support plans

## *An example of good practice - SAPI*

SAPI is implementing the project of community based housing for people with disabilities for already 12 years. Thanks to this project, a group of 23 people with intellectual disabilities had the opportunity to go out of the gates of Home for children and youth with disabilities Sremčica, and start a life in an open environment, in Belgrade.

During the 12-years of living in community based housing program implemented by SAPI, these people gained enough competence for an active life in the social environment. At the same time, these people, through self-advocacy groups significantly improved their awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities, and acquired competence in active advocacy for the rights of persons with disabilities. During meetings of the self advocacy group, they discussed the rights of persons with disabilities to live in the open environment.

The idea to launch a project for support to people with disabilities to get involved in their community, where PwDs - members of the self-advocacy group would have a major role.

The main element of peer support service of SAPI are, therefore, persons with disabilities themselves, members of support service, and main characteristic of their involvement is personal motivation and commitment to help other people with disabilities.

One of the peer support providers, a person with intellectual disabilities, describes his experience in providing peer support: „I was in a house, with one boy. He can not do anything, he is the house for a whole day, doesn't know how to wash his face, to take a shower, I've bathed him yesterday. He can not do anything alone. He needs a lot of help. He lives with his grandmother, she can not do alot with him, she recently had a heart attack, and now can not take care of him. We cleaned up outside the house, we swept the yard, watered the flowers, for start, and later I'll try to take him out to take a walk around. That's not fair, he needs help. He has no mother or father, only a grandmother and no one else. I'm glad to help. He needs help. There are many difficult things to see in the houses, and you will see if you go there. People need help, the young and old, who are sick and can't go anywhere, we should help them to come out and take a walk. "

Peer support service beneficiaries themselves say this about it:

- “It is especially useful approach to R. as a human being, R. became interested in other people, in toys, new games“
- „N. keeps asking to visit F and others from the support in their apartment,

he likes to spend time with them“

- „Great program. Our girls need an individual approach, and this program provides it“
- „Extremely useful, everyone in the house need support, I feel i m bursting out of despair“
- " I. blooms next to J, showing hapiness on her face and movement as soon as she sees her "
- "J. made an effort to make real contact and developed the right measure in dancing and massage, J. enjoys „
- "N. walked, socialized, loved B."
- „Pleasant hours of service, good socializing, the walks please me the most of all"
- „She established good contact with A., they always have program and animation for M. „
- "S. Is a wonderfull and communicative girl, we have a lot in common, she helps me a lot to understand my thoughts. If she was not there, i would be lonely, no one visits me except her".



*Peer support within project “Towards European values - persons with disabilities as equal citizens.*

Within this project, peer support, as one of the key mechanisms for the advancement of people with disabilities and their social inclusion, was approached at two levels. The first level included training implementation in order to strengthen the knowledge and capacity of partners to provide support to inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in activities of peer support provision. The second level involved application of acquired knowledge by the partners who have

recognized the needs and opportunities in their local communities, forming a team that will provide peer support and peer support activities to people with intellectual and other disabilities.



3-day training in the area of Peer support and service implementation included following topics:

1. Sustainable social services in the community
2. Needs and Resources
3. The quality of social services
4. Management of local social services
5. Planning as a development component of social services
6. Staff development - improving the competencies of service providers as a precondition for service quality
7. Monitoring and Evaluation Services
8. The importance of peer support services for Community Living
9. From first contact to active support – service provision phases
10. People with disabilities as members of Support Service

The aim of this training is to familiarize the participants with an innovative approach of support where PwDs are trained to assist their peers or older people in their communities. Peer support was implemented through training where PwDs were in the role of educators as experienced peer support providers. Participants were introduced to the topic through presentations, discussions, group exercises and role playing. The quality of this training is enhanced with participation of persons with disabilities, who spoke about their active participation in social service provision.

*An example of good practice - NGO "Ray of hope", Pljevlja, Montenegro*

Based on experience and knowledge acquired during training for peer support, the first department of peer support for people with disabilities was formed in Pljevlja within NGO "Ray of hope", and, practically, the first in Montenegro. During project, support was provided for five people with disabilities at their homes. Psychosocial support was provided by psychologists, and peer support by other PwDs trained to provide peer support under this project.



"Now for the first time I have friends who come to my house. With them I joke and laugh, talking about things about which I can't with my parents."  
M.R., Pljevlja, Montenegro



Serbian Association for  
Promoting Inclusion - SAPI

## Work engagement

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### *Basics of work engagement*

According to Article 27 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, persons with disabilities have the right to work on an equal basis with others; This includes the ability to earn a living by freely chosen or accepted work in the labor market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities". The Law on Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with disabilities of the Republic of Serbia shall determine the conditions and opportunities for employment of persons with disabilities. In Serbia, from about 700,000 people with disabilities, only around 90 000 are employed. Out of that number, the smallest, almost negligible number of employees are persons with intellectual disabilities, although this number is slowly increasing. In addition, the law and the practice does not recognize sufficiently the concept of employment and work opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities, therefore only a few organizations are profiled as providers of supported employment services, employers still do not recognize the possibilities and importance of e supported employment and work engagement and often don t have clear information on where and to whom they should turn to for possible employment of people with intellectual disabilities.

### *Supported employment*

represents paid labor of people with disabilities in an open environment with adequate support. There are several models, ie access to employment, ie, supported work engagement, such as individual model of supported employment, supported group employment model and mobile teams.

In each of these models, **employment and work engagement support service** has the key role, consisting of a coordinator - specialist, with experience, working assistant (s) - trained non-professionals who provide direct support in the workplace, as well as other professionals (psychologist, a physician, and others), according to beneficiaries and employers, ie the workplace needs. The aim of supported employment service is to find and adapt meaningful jobs in the community and to provide adequate training and support in the workplace to person with disabilities, as well as support to the employer regarding preparation of conditions for work of people with disabilities in the workplace.

Supported employment and work engagement is important for people with disabilities themselves, but also for employers. For people with disabilities, this is important because they open the possibility to obtain or increase revenues (economic independence), the opportunity to acquire knowledge and develop their skills, leading to an increase in self-esteem, as well as

more respect and better acceptance by the family and wider environment, which leads to greater satisfaction of other family members, but also to minimizing the negative attitudes and prejudices towards people with intellectual disabilities. Finally, employment and work engagement leads to increased level of social inclusion of people with disabilities, ie, to better acceptance in the community, as well as a greater quality of life. For employers, this is important because PwDs are economically viable, employers gain valuable employees who are rarely absent from work, workers who are more loyal to their employer and express greater job satisfaction. Besides, there is less employee turnover, it is possible to ensure a free job coach support, and demand their right to incentive measures. Finally, the employer is promoted as a socially responsible organization and in the business community and in society.

### *How to employ / engage a person with disability with the support?*

First of all, it is necessary to make a decision about employment / work engagement of person with disability, based on an analysis of their capacities and needs. After that, it is necessary to contact the National Employment Service, or organization who provides services of support to employment/ work engagement of PwDs. Finally, it is necessary to be prepared for proposals and cooperation with coordinator of supported employment, in order to find the most optimal solutions in interest of both employers and people with disabilities.

### *Who and under what circumstances can be employed or work-engaged with the support?*

People with disabilities who have the legal capacity to work, who are qualified for the job, who have no vocation, can sign work contract. However, people with disabilities deprived of legal capacity who can perform work-related activities with the support of the open labor market, cooperative work – within work centers, production of decorative and useful objects, and similar, may conclude an agreement on work activities, and / or cooperation agreement between the service for supported employment (work center) and the employer.

### *An example of good practice. Work Center “Milan Petrović”*

Within School for elementary and secondary education "Milan Petrovic" from Novi Sad, the access to work engagement and supported employment of people with disabilities, mainly students and former students of this school, but also other people with disabilities in need, is double: through already formed work center and employment support service in open environment.

Work Center was established in 2005. Within it, the support is being provided to: young people with disabilities who are beneficiaries of the Daycare after reaching 27 years of age, young people who acquired the title for one of the professions in one year, two year, three year duration at the secondary school, young people with disabilities registered with the National employment service, individuals who have received information about existence of Working Centre in the local community, as well as beneficiaries of supported housing service for people with disabilities. Within Work Centre, there are many active workshops: weaving, tailoring and sewing, laundry services, pottery, recycling of secondary raw materials, production of herbs, aromatic plants, production of mushrooms (shiitake, oyster mushrooms), agricultural production, cardboard, craft production of liquid soap and hygiene items, production of items from recycled paper, production of educational materials. All working persons with disabilities receive material compensation from products sale and performed services.



### *Employment support service in the open environment*

has professional training, work inclusion and monitoring of persons with disabilities as its mission, towards gaining the necessary competences to engage in a job that matches their skills. The main activities of this service are: sensitization of the labor market for persons with disabilities, job seeking, definition of desires, needs and competences of job-seekers, career counseling provision, job training in the workplace, support provision for future employment, support provision for start-up entrepreneurship, information provision about the possibilities and manner of retraining and additional training, legal support regarding work engagement. Support service itself includes: a multidisciplinary school team, parents of persons with disabilities as well as representative of the Committee for the care of persons with special needs in employment sector.

## *Work engagement within project “Towards European values - persons with disabilities as equal citizens”*

Within this project, work engagement and supported employment was, as one of the key mechanisms for improvement of position of people with disabilities towards equal position with other citizens, the same way as in previous activities, approached on two levels. The first level involved implementation of training in order to strengthen the skills and capacity of partners to support the work engagement and employment. The second level involved application of acquired knowledge by partners who have recognized the needs and opportunities for it in their local communities, forming support services and activities to promote work opportunities for supported employment for people with intellectual and other disabilities.



Training program entitled "Work engagement and supported employment program for persons with disabilities" was realized in Novi Sad. As part of this three-day training, the following topics were covered:

1. Vocational rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities
2. Support to employment of PwD
3. Workplace adaptation and accessibility with the use of assistive technology
4. Demonstration of adapted workplace
5. National experiences in education and professional training of PwD
6. National experiences – Social entrepreneurship in process of supporting PwD
7. The program of work engagement - good practice example
8. Practical experiences of people with disabilities and assistants experiences in providing support within Work center

The aim of the training was to introduce the examples of good practice of

improvement of employment opportunities for people with intellectual disabilities, often deprived of legal capacity and excluded from the open labor market. The program is based on a piloted, tested and approved program of work engagement by project partners from Serbia, accredited by Republic Institute for Social Protection.

*An example of good practice - Association "Half way there", Pancevo, Serbia*

During the project implementation, beneficiaries of "Halfway there" were engaged through public works for provision of Home help service and support to other people with intellectual disabilities. They work six hours a day and receive financial compensation for their work. Engaged beneficiaries successfully went through internal training for service provision. Through this engagement they have the opportunity to gain work habits and responsibility to perform work tasks, encourage their social relationships and develop a sense of belonging and usefulness. This type of work engagement is associated with other areas covered by the project, in particular with peer support, which is another added value of their engagement.



"I feel great because I m able to work. It means a lot to me being able to help my friends."

A.R., Pancevo, Serbia

"Work engagement allows me to work and earn money, I feel better when I make a living."

A.V., Pancevo, Serbia

## Social entrepreneurship

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## *Basics of Social entrepreneurship*

Social entrepreneurship (SE) is an important component of economic and social model of the EU. One of the main goals of social entrepreneurship is to achieve a significant impact on society, the environment and the local community. Social enterprises are the very essence of inclusive growth due to the fact that they put an emphasis on people and social cohesion. In other words, the main goal of social enterprise is to influence the social and economic changes, to contribute to the objectives of the European strategy 2020. Social entrepreneurship is an important aspect of the overall empowerment of persons with disabilities to take an active role in creating an inclusive democratic society, which is the goal of this project. **Social entrepreneurship** is an innovative way for people to solve various economic, educational, health and environmental problems in their community through their work – by joining and using of sustainable business models.

Social enterprise is a business functioning with the idea that a clear social mission can be fulfilled through profit earned by products sale or service provision. This means that earned profit does not serve to increase the individual assets – but to be invested in purposes such as employment of people struggling to find work, social and medical services, education, environmental protection or cultural activities within community. In other words, social enterprise is an enterprise which operates in the market and at the same time achieves a socially useful mission.

**Social goals - business mission** are equally important as the market oriented-business activities.

The main difference between SE and traditional enterprises is how profits is being used and distributed.

**SE** performs economic activity in order to achieve a positive impact on the local community where it operates. This is achieved in different ways:

- Employment of persons who are otherwise left out of the labor market, people from vulnerable groups
- investing / reinvesting profits or part of the profit in the community
- investing in environmental projects and activities
- service provision to vulnerable individuals

**Social enterprise** is a business that operates with a clear objective -to fulfill its social mission, while selling their services or products.

Social enterprises now make almost 10% of all enterprises (about 2 million enterprises). EU has recognized the importance and launched Social Business Initiative. Social enterprises employ 6% of all employees in EU, or around 14 million people in EU.

**Key problems** when starting a social enterprise are the sources of funding, lack of knowledge and entrepreneurial skills, lack of resources, cooperation and market access, lack of consumer awareness.

What are **the differences** between social enterprises?

- The social aim
- Product / Service
- Legal form
- Method of initial funding

What do different forms of social enterprises have **in common**?

- Doing business in order to solve a problem in society
- They have a different understanding of the concept of ownership and profit sharing
- Profit is invested in solving certain problems in society, reinvested in the company or shared to all employees

### **Wrong interpretation**

- Social enterprise is a non-profit enterprise
- Employees of the SE are volunteers and do not receive salaries
- Social enterprise = Work rehabilitation
- Social enterprises need to be subsidized
- Social enterprises = socialist social enterprises
- Social enterprise = socially responsible company

Employment of people with disabilities through social entrepreneurship is one way of affirming their capabilities and abilities to work, as well as involvement in the open labor market. Vocational training and work engagement in inclusive, adapted environment which is the case with social enterprise, provides people with disabilities the opportunity to develop and work and thus raise self-esteem, a sense of value, raising the quality of life, without neglecting productivity, which is together with social mission one of the goals. Some of the most important benefits of social entrepreneurship for persons with disabilities are employment, prevention of social exclusion, raise of awareness of unemployed persons with disabilities about the need for vocational training at the specific workplace, raise of community awareness about the rights and abilities of persons with disabilities, increase of the number of people with disabilities who are capable of work and employment.

Social entrepreneurship in Serbia is still not sufficiently developed and

systematically resolved, but it is very important for the employment of people who are excluded from society, where people with disabilities belong. It is necessary to find a systemic solution to the problem of social entrepreneurship in the form of the Law on social entrepreneurship, in order to these kind of enterprises can achieve profitability capacity as everywhere in Europe, which is not the case in Serbia. The category of unemployed with disabilities would, this way, be adequately involved in these processes. Social entrepreneurship is currently available only in the form of individual initiatives, tackling unemployment and social exclusion, although it may have a much more significant role in creating new jobs.

*An example of good practice. Association of parents of children with disabilities Ray of hope, Montenegro*

Association of parents of children with disabilities Ray of hope, Montenegro, started a printing office in 2013., in which there are 15 youth volunteers working supported by an occupational therapist and two assistants, within "Printing office- support service for employment of young people with disabilities", which was implemented with the support of USAID.



Printing office work successfully, providing services such as copying, printing, binding. This year, the association is implementing a new project called "Digital printing office – make dream come true, employ yourself" supported by ZZZCG (Call for proposals for professional rehabilitation, active employment policy and employment of persons with disabilities). JU Day care center Pljevlja is project partner. As part of this project a two

month vocational training was held for employment in the Printing office. Seven persons with disabilities had support of mentors and assistants in the work during the training. During this training a week-long training for work within Printing office was held. Persons with disabilities have met the basic characteristics of machines and raw materials, work on the machine, basic printing programs, preparations for printing, photocopying, paper cutting and binding.

The activities planned within the project are:

- Selection of the unemployed
- 2 month training in specific workplace, Printing office, for employment
- 7-day training for work within the Printing office
- Work engagement of 7 persons with disabilities in the Printing office for 7 months
- Psychosocial support and development of intellectual and motor skills of people with disabilities
- Presentation of the project results – The exhibition of Printing office products
- Media campaign on the rights and opportunities of people with disabilities as socially excluded groups (round table, TV show, brochures)

The main objectives of the project are: Improving the employment of unemployed persons with disabilities registered with the Employment Agency of Montenegro - Office of Pljevlja; prevention of social exclusion of persons with disabilities; raising awareness of unemployed persons with disabilities on the need for training for work in a particular workplace; raising the level of awareness on the rights and opportunities of people with disabilities and increase the number of persons with disabilities who are qualified to work and employed in the printing office.

*Social entrepreneurship within project “Towards European values - persons with disabilities as equal citizens.*

During this project, a training called "The debate on social entrepreneurship" was implemented from 27 - 29 May 2016 in Ohrid, Macedonia. The three-day training in the field of social entrepreneurship development included the following topics:

- Introduction to social entrepreneurship
- Social Entrepreneurship in Serbia and EU, the state, legal frameworks and examples

- The example from practice - group work, ideas for starting social enterprises, presenting ideas, analysis, group discussion, conclusions
- Social Entrepreneurship - experiences from Macedonia
- Development Of Social Enterprise
- Experiences from a study visit to Japan
- Presentation of social enterprise IK studio, example of good practice

Training was attended by representatives of all partner organizations, as well as representatives of the Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veteran and Social policy of Serbia.

The work is organized through presentations and picturesque schemes and steps in planning and realization of production of products in order to profit, but also having in mind the social mission of these enterprises. Training encouraged discussion related to legislation in this area and opened a lot of ideas for the development of social entrepreneurship.

The debate on social entrepreneurship was carried out through an active debate between existing and potential social entrepreneurs from partner countries from the perspective of their potential as instruments of social policy and employment of marginalized groups of citizens, which is an important component of economic and social model of EU and the subject of debate.

The aim of the activity was to guide partners from all participating countries through the process of forming social enterprise, exchanging experiences on social entrepreneurship in different countries, to discuss the future of social policy reform and sustainability of social services through social entrepreneurship, as well as to develop specific guidance for the development of national policy in the field of social entrepreneurship and EU policy regarding legal framework for social entrepreneurship. The aim was also to familiarize and empower participants to develop social entrepreneurship (joining and use of sustainable business models) as well as the possibilities of work engagement and employment of persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups.

There has been a high level of interaction, exchange of ideas and dissemination of partner contacts with the aim of better implementation of project ideas in this field.

### *An example of good practice – ZGNL, Ljubljana, Slovenia*

During project implementation, in June 2016, the Institute for the deaf (ZGNL), Ljubljana, Slovenia, project partner, enriched its program by starting a social enterprise, "Book Store", based on a series of activities in 2015/2016., among other experiences, knowledge and cooperation arising from this project, especially from those project-activities related to work engagement and social entrepreneurship, but using financial resources provided by another program. Products manufactured by people with disabilities within occupational therapy, nursery garden in elementary school, also as during professional orientation within the secondary school, will be offered within "Book Store". "Book Store" will also offer engagement for young unemployed people from the field of computer graphics, printing, textile, wood processing and mechanical engineering. The store will offer professional literature prepared by the Association of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Slovenia: books, magazines and newspapers.

It is envisaged that "Book Store" becomes a social space where people can connect, where various activities will be organized, such as presentations of successful people with disabilities, socializing, discussions, cultural events, lectures, courses of Slovenian sign language, and similar. It will be a place where you can find all information about educational opportunities for hearing/language impaired, people with autism, the possibilities of rehabilitation, integration and inclusion of vulnerable groups. Young people will be trained for independent work within this store, the store will include students, and the idea is to engage parents, also as retired colleagues. The purpose of the store is not financial profit, but commitment to ethical and moral values, as well as raising awareness of diversity. By opening this bookstore ZGNL will expand its program of life and work and thus its important role in the environment.



I spent a lot more time in the store than I anticipated. My purpose was: to buy one thing. I bought three.

A. B., Ljubljana, Slovenia

Persons with disabilities  
as equal citizens

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integrative model

The aim of project Towards european values-Persons with disabilities as equal citizens was to develop a model of the empowerment of persons with disabilities, with special focus on people with intellectual disabilities, so that they can take an active role in creating an inclusive society and to influence policy making processes at national and European level.

The European dimension of the project is reflected in the structure of partners involved and their areas of work, as well as selected topic and methods of intervention that are in line with the framework of the EU Strategy 2014-2020. Partners and participants from 7 different countries (EU and non-EU), provide inter-civic support and exchange of experience in addressing the questions of engagement of vulnerable groups in shaping public policies and their implementation and monitoring.

Democratic participation and civic engagement of all citizens is one of the core values of the European Union, regardless of their capacity or personal identity. However, some people, such as people with intellectual disabilities, have traditionally been excluded from the mechanisms of democratic participation due to various factors related to the deep-rooted stereotypes, as well as non-recognition of their capacity for decision-making. The EU has recognized the paradigm shift from mere care provision to persons with disabilities, to the strengthening and use of their capacity and contribution to society, in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Regardless of the existing barriers to social inclusion, human rights activists continue to develop new methods for people with disabilities, which proves the need for the abolition of substitutional decision-making and its replacement with supported decision-making.

In this sense, self-advocacy is important tool for articulating the interests and attitudes, and key prerequisite for democratic participation of people with intellectual disabilities to speak for themselves. It goes beyond basic daily needs and successfully extend to self-advocacy related to complex processes, such as adoption of public policies. Self-advocacy also represents organization of persons with disabilities themselves at the local, national, regional and European level. In order to people with intellectual disabilities become equal party in the political dialogue, both service providers and beneficiaries - people with intellectual disabilities -need training and education.

Transnational cooperation within this project enabled participants to develop innovative approaches to self-advocacy and supported decision-making (including peer support and deliberation at the national level),

especially in the processes of design and implementation of EU policy and interaction with EU institutions. One of the aims of European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 is to enable all European citizens, including people with intellectual disabilities to enjoy all the benefits of EU citizenship, highlighting the fact that smart, inclusive and sustainable growth of the EU will not be accomplished if 80 million European citizens with the disabilities are left outside the system of support to realization of equal opportunities and respect of fundamental human rights. EU membership negotiations processes with countries in the process of accession advance with increase of citizen participation. It is therefore crucial for creation of mechanisms for citizen participation to provide people with disabilities the necessary support and enable them to speak for themselves during the process.

Besides empowering individuals to take more active role in their own lives, it is important to stimulate them to enter the role of promoter for other people with disabilities, so that, instead of passive care recipients, they become active participants through creation of transnational network of peer and volunteer support. Complete social integration, participation and personal autonomy can not be achieved without equal economic opportunities in terms of income and work engagement security, therefore it s necessary to devote attention to social entrepreneurship and work integration of people with disabilities, in order to make position of persons with disabilities equal to other citizens of Europe .



About Project

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Partners

## Serbian Association for Promoting Inclusion - SAPI

SAPI is non-governmental, non-profit organization that seeks to promote inclusion of persons with intellectual disabilities in all areas of social life, as well as respect of their civil rights. SAPI team consists of various experts with years of experience in the field of developing social services in the community, most notably the Community based housing service. Also, SAPI is committed to strengthening the capacity of people with intellectual disabilities to represent their citizens' rights.

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## Association "Half way there"

Association "Half way there" is a non-partisan, non-governmental, non-profit association of professionals of different profiles, volunteers, parents, brothers and sisters of people with intellectual disabilities who are dedicated to improving the quality of life and inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities into the society of the local community in the city of Pancevo.

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## Center for society orientation – COD

The mandate of COD is to work on building the capacity of local actors in Serbia and other countries of South Eastern Europe, in order to allow all marginalized groups, with a focus on persons with disabilities, to enjoy their basic human rights and equal opportunities. Organization governs the International Regional Centre for Europe for the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as part of global cooperation. The program aims to monitor the rights of persons with disabilities and the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of persons with disabilities around the world. COD is a member of EASPD, the largest European network of social service providers.

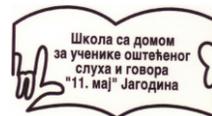
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## School with dormitory for students with hearing and speech impairments “11th

School with dormitory for students with hearing and speech impairments "11th may" Jagodina was founded in 1928 and has since been engaged in education and rehabilitation of children with impaired hearing and speech. Today, the school performs the activity of a preparatory preschool program and early rehabilitation of children with disabilities within the development group. School performs the activity of primary education of students with disabilities, vocational training activities and education of students with disabilities in various areas of work engagement.

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## Inclusive center

Inclusive center was established at the initiative of members of the collective of School for elementary, secondary and higher education Milan Petrovic due to the need to establish a non-governmental organization for the promotion of programs that have direct impact on improvement of work and life of children and persons with disabilities. Activities of the Center are prevention and early intervention services, care and assistance, support for children and students within the primary, secondary and higher education; support to individuals, agencies and organizations in all areas of implementation of programs for persons with disabilities; expert support in creation and implementation of programs for persons with disabilities in all spheres of life, support to families of persons with disabilities, professional orientation, work engagement and employment of PWDs; Educational programs for PwDs and general public, information on PwDs and public; sensitization programs for the empowerment of PWDs and the public.

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## Association of parents of children with disabilities "Ray of hope"

Association of parents of children with disabilities "Ray of Hope", registered in February 2002, is fighting for social model of disability. The association has 94 members - parents. They are the parents of children with cerebral palsy, RPM, autism, epilepsy, muscular dystrophy and other types of disabilities. Association is a member of the National Association of Parents of Children and Youth with Disabilities of Montenegro "Nardos-CG". The Association has the following services: Half-day care, assistants, personal assistants for home help, adapted transport, volunteering, creative workshops for young people with disabilities.

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## Social educational center

The institution for adult education "Social-educative Centre" (SEC) is a newly established institution, specialized for vocational education of adults in the field of social vocations. SEC is the only institution of a kind in Bosnia and Herzegovina. SEC is a dynamic education institution where the education process is conducted under the andragogy standards (adult education standards). Teaching contents and working methods are fully adjusted to the needs and previous knowledge of students. In its work, the SEC applies the principles of equality, respecting the dignity and holiness of a person, professionalism and no discrimination.

SEC is implementing official, valid programs of education to enable performing activities in the field of social vocations, but also offers a number of informal training in this field.

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## Josip Matoš Primary School

The school was founded in 1970, and continued to work on 1.1. 2003. The school educates 61 student aged 7 to 21 years with intellectual disabilities, autism, cerebral palsy, chronic diseases. According to the Statute, School area of work is pre-school education, primary education and primary education of adults with disabilities. The school participated in numerous projects at the local, regional and international level and cooperates with

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## **Rittmeyer Regional Institute for the blind of Trieste**

The Rittmeyer Institute is a regional public body that provides services for people with visual impairment, also as for people with multiple disabilities. Institute offers services for people of all age, from few months old till the last days of their life. So, the support is different as well as the ages are different: from school support till the university; from the vocational path for specific professions that our government reserves to them till the occupational working places; from the support in the daily life when they stay at home till the support - inside the Istituto Rittmeyer - when they can not live alone anymore.

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Website: [www.istitutorittmeyer.it](http://www.istitutorittmeyer.it)



## **The Republic Center for Support of Persons with intellectual disability – PORAKA**

The Republic Center for Support of Persons with intellectual disability – PORAKA has a status of a National Disability Organization and is in the Register of Associations of Citizens in the area of social protection, which is kept in the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. PORAKA was established in 1963 and today unites 20 local branches all over Macedonia. PORAKA developed a network of alternative community-based services: Resource center (counseling and information service), Social clubs and counseling services in all local organizations, Day centers for adolescents and adults with intellectual disability, Initiatives for creation of services for independent living for persons with intellectual disability. PORAKA is member of: NSIOM – National Council of Disability Organisations in Macedonia, Inclusion Europe, Inclusion International, EASPD.

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## Association with mental disabilities Nis

Association with mental disabilities Nis provides assistance to people with intellectual disabilities and their families in achieving legal and other rights. The Association initiates and participates in all actions and supports activities for people with intellectual disabilities; It seeks to inform the public about people with intellectual disabilities, to initiate and provide assistance for institutional and non-institutional forms of care for its members in accordance with their abilities; provides rehabilitation in accordance with preserved abilities, as well as work on informing members about all the changes and positive legislation; Educates parents for successful and early treatment of people with intellectual disabilities in family environment; It brings together people with intellectual disabilities in everyday educational work, rehabilitation, occupational therapy and implements programs - "Day care center" and "Break from parenting".

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Website: [www.mnro-nis.org](http://www.mnro-nis.org)



## Institute for the deaf Ljubljana

Ljubljana School for the Deaf is the central Slovenian state institution for the education of deaf, hard of hearing and speech impaired children and adolescents. Founded in 1900 in Ljubljana, initially as a private institution, it has operated as a state institution since 1905. It educates children from the time of diagnosis until they have completed their studies at secondary school. School's primary goal is the optimal development of the child's abilities in all areas, with special emphasis on the development of language, communication, hearing and speech. All children and students in school are children with special needs. Units in school are: kindergarten, primary school, vocational secondary school and health unit. School is experienced partner in many European projects for children, students and professionals.

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