

# Independent Living in Europe

## Join ENIL!

The European Network on Independent Living (ENIL) is a european network of disabled people and forum for independent living organisations and our non-disabled allies. ENIL is a cross-disability organisation, all disabled people are welcome to join in our fight for human rights.

### ENIL gives you

- ◆ Independent Living News, ENIL's twice-monthly email newsletter
- ◆ Strasborg Freedom Drive – every other year we march to the EU Parliament with our demands
- ◆ contact with role models who are willing to share their experiences
- ◆ advise and support with organisation of conferences, round tables or workshops
- ◆ exchange of knowledge, for example about international policies or how to start a user cooperative
- ◆ empowerment to organize your personal assistance, and access to inspiring example like the JAG model for those of us with intellectual disabilities

### ENIL fights against

- ◆ institutionalization
- ◆ discrimination
- ◆ the "medical model"

### ENIL knows that you

- ◆ are the expert on your own life

### ENIL Membership

You will find all necessary information and a membership application form at our home page [www.enil.eu](http://www.enil.eu)

If you have further questions, please contact the secretariat or the contact person in your region:

#### ENIL secretariat

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### EUROPEAN NETWORK ON INDEPENDENT LIVING

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Join ENIL – European Network on Independent Living





*We represent around 10% of the world's population, or 650 million people. Often our societies are unaware of the challenges we face.*

**ENIL – EUROPEAN NETWORK ON INDEPENDENT LIVING** is a cross - disability rights civil society organization working in all EU countries for the spreading of independent living and the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). No matter the disability all are welcome to join us in challenging the discrimination, isolation and exclusion that we face.

ENIL works through networks at local, regional, national and international levels. We support the setting up of Centers for Independent Living. Together we lobby for the mainstreaming of human rights by putting pressure on our governments for change and inclusion. ENIL works with the European Commission, universities and other NGOs. We seek partnership with academia, government agencies, law associations, and human rights organizations.

We promote all Independent Living issues at hand and emphasize article

19 of the CRPD giving people with disabilities the opportunity to choose where and with whom they want to live. This implies the closure of institutions, the accessibility of society and the provision of community based services and personal assistance. All people with disabilities are to be included. Through personal assistance and with the right support also persons with intellectual disabilities can live in the community. No persons, whether children or adults, should be locked in at institutions – as unfortunately still often is the case all around Europe.

Empowerment of local groups is a main focus so they themselves can expose rights violations and take action. Access to services, personal assistance, education and employment are vital issues to enable us to be active and contributing members of our society.

Our goals are two fold. They are to promote independent living but also the empowerment of disabled people through peer counseling.



In promoting independent living and human rights we:

- ◆ Promote self-determination and control over your own life through personal assistance and community based services
- ◆ Promote de-institutionalization
- ◆ Challenge discrimination
- ◆ Promote equal opportunities
- ◆ Promote universal design and accessibility
- ◆ Promote democracy and self-representation

In promoting empowerment through peer support we:

- ◆ Increase sharing of information, experiences and insights among people with disabilities
- ◆ Raise awareness of discrimination
- ◆ Increase empowerment and emancipation of people with disabilities



#### DEFINITIONS

**INDEPENDENT LIVING** is the daily demonstration of human rights based disability policies. It is possible through a combination of environmental and individual factors that allow the disabled person to have control over his/her own life, which includes the choice of: whom to live with, how to organize daily activities, where to get the support needed. Independent living requires accessibility of the built environment, accessible transport, availability of technical aids and access to personal assistance for everyone in need.

**PERSONAL ASSISTANCE** is earmarked cash allocations to disabled people, who need assistance in their daily lives, for the purpose to pay for the assistance they need provided on the basis of individual needs assessment depending on the life situation and in consistency with the domestic labour market. Disabled people should have the right to recruit and manage their assistants as well as the choice of the employment model. Personal assistance allocations should cover the salaries of personal assistants and other performance costs, all contributions due by the employer, administration costs and peer support for the user.

**DEINSTITUTIONALISATION** is a political process, which provides for the shift from institutional care to independent living. Effective deinstitutionalisation happens when people placed in institutions are given the choice to take different paths in organizing their daily activities with the provision of:

- ◆ affordable and accessible housing in the community;
- ◆ access to public services;
- ◆ personal assistance services and peer support.

**COMMUNITYBASED SERVICES** is both a political approach and policy measures of making all public services available and accessible to disabled people in mainstream settings. This is achieved through the provision of appropriate accommodations within the regular systems instead of building parallel ones for housing (institutions), education (special schools), health care (long term care hospitals), transport (para transit facilities), employment (sheltered jobs), etc.

**CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING** Any organization controlled by persons with disabilities and who commits to the principles of IL can be a CIL. Their activities can be for example peer support and advice about personal assistance or technical aids and equipment.