

2024

FREEDOM DRIVE REPORT



TABLE OF CONTENTS

03	Introduction
05	Freedom Drive Programme
15	ENIL's 35th Anniversary
16	Martin Naughton Prize
18	Freedom Drive Demands
19	Media coverage
21	Participants
22	Photo competition
23	Visual identity
24	Feedback
25	Financial report
26	Acknowledgments

INTRODUCTION

The 11th edition of the Freedom Drive took place in Brussels, from 23 until 25 September 2024. This was the fifth Freedom Drive that was organised in Brussels, following the previous editions in Strasbourg, and it coincided with the 35th Anniversary of the European Network on Independent Living – ENIL.

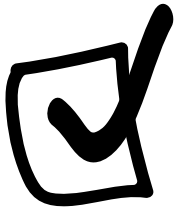
The planning for the 2024 Freedom Drive began in 2022, when the date was decided by the ENIL Board. The Freedom Drive took place not long after the European Elections, with the Freedom Drive demands aimed at new Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and the current and new European Commission.

The overall theme of the event was: **Reclaiming our Rights NOW**.

The theme was chosen because of the persisting barriers to independent living across Europe, the rise of the far right that has led to regression of rights and the restrictions on civil society in some Member States, the continued segregation of disabled people in institutions, special schools, day care centres and sheltered workshops, as well as the misappropriation of the independent living terminology to justify exclusion and segregation.

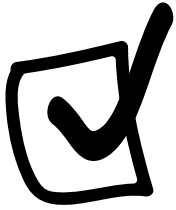
In line with the theme, ENIL identified the following objectives for the 2024 Freedom Drive:





No. 01 – Deliver demands

To deliver the Freedom Drive demands to the new European Parliament and the Commission, focusing on what is needed to improve implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.



No. 02 – Raise awareness

To help give your audience an overview, this section can include a brief description of the goal, its relevance to your sector or industry, and the specific sub-targets your organization is addressing.



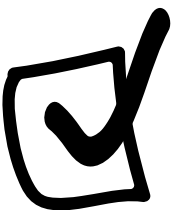
No. 03 – Make our voices heard

To provide disabled people with an opportunity to meet with their members of the European Parliament (MEPs), in order to make their voices heard.



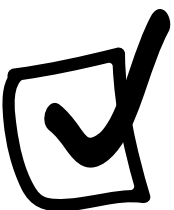
No. 04 – Connect

To exchange ideas, good practices and strategies among each other, to network and forge new connections, partnerships and friendships.



No. 05 – Celebrate

To mark ENIL's 35th anniversary and to celebrate the key moments and leaders of the Independent Living movement.



No. 06 – Continue the fight

To stand in solidarity with one another, to re-energise our movement and gather a new momentum to continue the fight for Independent Living.

FREEDOM DRIVE PROGRAMME



The Freedom Drive is a gathering of disabled people, independent living activists and allies from across Europe. It provides the Independent Living movement an opportunity to learn from each other, to advocate, to protest and raise awareness, to network and strategise for the future.

As in the previous editions, the 2024 Freedom Drive consisted of a number of events organised over three days, in four venues – the Residence Palace, the EU Thon Hotel, Mundo Trone and the European Parliament. All the events took place in the EU quarter, within walking distance, to ensure easy access for the speakers and participants. With Brussels being very inaccessible for disabled people, having accessible venues in close proximity is crucial.

***“I cannot
imagine better
content, it was
rich and
interesting”***

Day 0: Sunday, 22 September

Board meetings: On Sunday, 22 September, the ENIL Board and the ENIL Youth Board had their face to face meetings. In the morning, both Boards met separately to discuss their regular business, while in the afternoon they came together. The main discussion points were the ENIL Strategic plan post 2025, and the mobilisation and active involvement of young people in ENIL. A number of action points were adopted for the Boards to follow up on. The next Board elections are foreseen in the Spring of 2025, during the General Assemblies of ENIL and ENIL Youth.

Day 1: Monday, 23 September

Workshops: Seven workshops took place at Residence Palace, each lasting two hours. The workshops were moderated by ENIL staff and brought together experts in the respective fields.

All the workshops were very well attended and allowed for analysing case studies, questions and discussion. There was exceptionally high interest in the workshops on international cooperation, the role of the European Union and on the Centres for Independent Living, which is why they were moved into bigger capacity rooms, for over 100 participants.



Supported decision making – how does it work in practice

Moderator: Adela Santos Lavigne, LITI-GATE Project Coordinator, ENIL

Facilitators: Kristin Torske, ULOBA Independent Living Norway & Theresia Degener, Human Rights Lawyer and former Chair of the CRPD Committee

International cooperation – What role can disabled people play?

Moderator: Nadia Hadad, Co-chair, ENIL

Facilitators: Kimber Bialik, Director of Programmes and Network Development, Inclusion International; Sarah Hull, EU Advocacy Coordinator, Light for the World; Marion Steff & Erika Hudson, International Cooperation Team, European Disability Forum

Ableism – What is it and how to fight it?

Moderator: Antonella Candiago, Policy Officer, ENIL

Facilitators: Ingrid Thunem, ENIL Board Member, Norway & Josefien Cornette, Author and Speaker, Belgium

What can the European Union do to improve Independent Living in my country?

Moderator: Florian Sanden, Policy Coordinator, ENIL

Facilitators: Markus Schefer, Member of the CRPD Committee and Rapporteur for the EU, Switzerland; Lucie Davoine, Head of Unit, Disability and Inclusion, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, European Commission; Laszlo Bercse, Self-advocate and Vice-President of Inclusion Europe

Building Centres for Independent Living – Supporting disabled people's empowerment

Moderator: Kamil Goungor, Policy and Movement Support Officer, ENIL

Facilitators: Rebecca Tayler Edwards, Disability Rights UK & Diogo Martins, CIL Portugal

Ensuring respect for Independent Living as part of the EU accession

Moderator: Rita Crespo Fernandez, Human Rights Coordinator, ENIL

Facilitators: Matthew Muehleck, DG European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations & Suvad Zahirović, Lotos, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Nothing is Impossible – Making a reality of the Guidelines on deinstitutionalisation (a facilitated discussion)

Facilitators: Nic Crosby (ENIL-ECCL), Teodor Mladenov (Independent Living Research Network) and Ines Bulic Cojocariu (ENIL)

Meetings with Members of the Parliament: Many participants arranged meetings with their MEPs during the Freedom Drive – among other, the delegations from Malta, Ireland, Sweden, Lithuania and Germany. Participants from outside the EU also managed to meet their political representatives in Brussels. After the Freedom Drive, a number of people shared recommendations with ENIL on which MEPs could be potential allies on independent living.

Art workshop: A banner making workshop took place throughout the day on Monday, 23 September in the basement of Mundo Trone, led by our volunteer artist Ramon Moreno Casas and ENIL Youth Board member Clementine Doevedans. Paints and other materials were provided to those who took part. They used their hands, fingers, wheelchairs and brushes to create art and messages for the banners, which were distributed to protesters the next day. A large banner was also created to be wrapped around the truck which accompanied the protest.

Youth Café: A Youth Café, sponsored by the Bente Foundation at Uloba – Independent Living Norway, was organised by the ENIL Youth Network and took place in the evening of 23 September. In advance of the Café, a topic was shared with the Freedom Drive participants: Independent Living and the Rise of the Far Right. The Café targeted young Freedom Drivers in particular, but was open to all. Members of the ENIL Youth Board moderated the discussion. A total of 18 people joined for a relaxed and engaging evening of discussion and peer support.



Day 2: Tuesday, 24 September



March: The protesters started gathering at the entrance to Parc du Cinquantaire at 9:30. Luckily, the sky was clear, with some sunshine and no rain. A stage was set up, with ENIL Co-Chairs Jamie Bolling and Nadia Hadad addressing the crowd and inviting people to come up and share why the Freedom Drive protest was important to them. A brass band joined us to get everyone in the mood. At around 11:00, we started gathering behind the banners and slowly moving in the direction of the European Commission. There were several chant leaders in the crowd, demanding rights, an end to institutionalisation, full participation for disabled people, independent living.

The police did not allow us to stop in front of the Berlaymont building, though some European Commission officials came out to meet us, to accept the Freedom Drive demands.

The next stop was the Hungarian representation to the EU, which was significant because of the Hungarian Presidency of the European Council and the many barriers to independent living faced by disabled people in Hungary. The protest stopped for several minutes, so we could shout out our demands. Although no one came out to meet us, we received an invitation for a meeting later in the day.

The protest ended in front of the European Parliament, with a number of MEPs coming to meet us, make statements and accept demands. With the help of Katrijn Ruts, from our Belgian member GRIP, we collected quotes from some of the MEPs.



Ciaran Mullooly MEP, Ireland (Independent):

“All my support for this campaign. we must work harder to fight the barriers.”

Katrin Langensiepen MEP, Germany (Greens):

“Stop funding institutions. It’s our responsibility where the money goes. My body my choice – stop forced sterilization.”



Catrina Martins, Portugal (Left): “This is a question of human rights and the mobilization of today is important to move the agenda forward.”

Tilly Metz, Luxembourg (Greens): “We must fund personal assistance and not the exclusion of people. We have to talk not about the people but with the people. Not other people should decide about your rights.”



Kathleen Funchion, Ireland (Left): “We have to work together as MEPS to realize the rights.”

Marina Kaljurand, Estonia (Social Democrats): “It is important that you came after elections so you remind the MEPs after they are elected what they should do.”



Jagna Marczulajtis-Walczak, Poland (EPP): “Support the families.”

Benedetta Scouderi, Italy (Greens): “Politics should be for everyone. People with disabilities are part of the population but they are not seen and not listened to. That should change.”



Hearing in the European Parliament



With the support of MEP Katrin Langensiepen and her team, we held a large hearing in the European Parliament, with over 200 Freedom Drivers present. The topic of the hearing was: **What do we want to see on the European Disability Rights Agenda in the next 5 years?**

The hearing was opened by MEP Katrin Langensiepen and our Co-Chair Jamie Bolling, and was divided into two sessions – Actions Needed to protect Independent Living in the EU, and Promoting Independent Living through global action. Before this, we heard from our Policy Coordinator Florian Sanden a summary of the Freedom Drive demands.

Moderated by ENIL Board member Elena Kochoska, from North Macedonia, the hearing consisted of a number of useful interventions that should be taken into consideration when planning new initiatives under the EU disability rights strategy.

The speakers included:

- **Markus Schefer, a member of the CRPD Committee** – on the upcoming review of the European Union in March 2025 and how organisations of disabled people can best contribute to this process
- **Dr. Teodor Mladenov, University of Dundee and Independent Living Research Network** – on the challenges to independent living in Europe that must be addressed
- **Edwina Gouder, Ministry for Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector, Malta** – on Malta's experience with introducing personal assistance and other community services, with the intention of closing all institutions

Following these presentations, we listened to interventions from Marc Angel MEP and Gabriele Bischoff MEP.

In the second panel, the focus was on the rest of Europe, where the EU as the biggest done and important political player, can also advance independent living and disability rights in general. We were joined by a number of speakers, demonstrating their willingness to engage with ENIL on advancing the right to independent living globally.

- **Elena Kountouri Tapiero, Regional representative for the UN OHCHR Regional office for Europe** spoke about the importance of international human rights law for driving the EU agenda, in particular the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- **Joanna Darmanin, the Head of Unit for Humanitarian Aid at DG ECHO, European Commission**, explained what actions the EU was undertaking at international level when it comes to humanitarian aid, and the importance of a disability inclusive response
- **Yulia Sachuk, Head of the Fight for Right, Ukraine**, highlighted the precarious situation of disabled people in Ukraine and the high number of people in institutions; she called for the recovery efforts that respect the rights of disabled people and do not perpetuate the system of institutionalisation
- **Gordon Rattray, Programme Coordinator in the International Cooperation Team, European Disability Forum**, focused on EDF recommendations for international cooperation, such as increased funding for deinstitutionalisation and the prohibition of funding for institutional settings
- **Ellis Matthews, Head of the Human Rights Division at the European External Action Services**, spoke about the role of the EU internationally when promoting the rights of disabled people; including as a State Party to the UN CRPD

Following the presentations, MEPs Ciaran Mullooly and Villy Sovndal delivered brief reactions, after which the hearing was closed by Katrin Langensiepen MEP and ENIL's Co-chair Jamie Bolling. The hearing was recorded by the European Parliament and is available [here](#).



Day 3: Wednesday, 25 September

Conference: The topic of the Freedom Drive conference was: **‘Rebuilding the Independent Living Pillars’**. The aim was to raise awareness about the Pillars, focusing on two specific areas – deinstitutionalisation and Personal Assistance – through an intersectional lens, and to discuss what is missing. The conference was moderated by Jamie Bolling, ENIL Co-Chair, and Charlie Willis, a member of the Youth Network Board.

The introductory session consisted of speeches by the Belgian Minister for Mobility, Public Works and Road Safety, Elke Van den Brandt, and the outgoing Commissioner for Equality at the European Commission, Helena Dalli. The Minister acknowledged there is much to be done to make Brussels an accessible city and that such changes were long overdue. The Commissioner was asked by several participants why the EU continues funding institutions for disabled people.

To set the scene, Theresia Degener, the former Vice-Chair of the CRPD Committee and a human rights lawyer, explained the content of the right to Independent Living under the UN CRPD and the General Comment 5. While most Freedom Drivers are aware of Article 19, it is useful to remind ourselves about the commitments undertaken by our Governments and the European Union.

The first session was titled **‘Deinstitutionalisation: Fighting against golden cages’**. The four speakers shared various strategies to ensure that all disabled people can live in the community, outside institutional settings of any kind. Antonia Trikalioti, from i-Living in Greece, spoke about the process of Greece drafting and adopting a deinstitutionalisation strategy and how that resulted in group homes being planned as an alternative to large institutions.



Simone Aspis, from Free Our People Now Campaign in the UK, shared their experience of getting people out of institutions in England. **Steven Allen**, from the Validity Foundation in Hungary, explained what legal work his organisation is undertaking, while **Nic Crosby**, from the National Development Team for Inclusion in the UK, highlighted the work that goes on within his organisation to create unique supports for each and every individual, regardless of how long they've spent in institutions or the level of their support needs.

The second session, named '**Personal assistance: new strategies to ensure access for all**', looked into how personal assistance can support independent living and what it should look like. We started with an online presentation by **Stefan Tromel**, from the International Labour Organisation, who explained why ILO was now also focusing on personal assistance. **Martine Eliasson**, from Uloba – Independent Living Norway, explained why they founded the Nordic Centre of Excellence on Personal Assistance and what it does. **Klaudija Poropat**, from YHD in Slovenia, **Sanni Purhonen**, from the Threshold in Finland, and **Patrick Vandelanotte**, from GRIP in Belgium, shared experience with personal assistance from their countries. Klaudija focused on lessons learnt from having Personal Assistance legislation in place after 20 years of advocacy. Sanni spoke about the links with employment and inclusive education, and Patrick focused on successful litigation that his organisation brought forward to ensure everyone in Flanders can get a personal budget that allows them to live independently.

The last session looked at intersectionality and was titled '**All In: Strengthening Europe's Independent Living Movement**'. We heard from three very engaging speakers, who addressed independent living from very different perspectives. **Melike Bal**, representing the ENIL Youth Network from Turkey, shared the perspective of a young disabled Muslim woman. **Viera Hincova**, from the European Council of Autistic People in the Czech Republic, focused on including autistic and neurodivergent people, and the barriers they face to independent living. **Nic Morgan**, from Euro Youth Mental Health, covered the intersection between mental health, youth and independent living.

The conference added with a very useful overview of the Independent Living Pillars by **Dr. Teodor Mladenov**, the Coordinator of ENIL's Independent Living Research Network from the University of Dundee in Scotland. He explained the origin of the Pillars, why we should use them and how ENIL updated the Pillars to address the challenges of the times we live in. These were first presented at an Independent Living conference in Washington DC in July 2024 and now at the Freedom Drive. Teodor also highlighted the horizontal elements of the Pillars, which are important to make sure they are relevant to all disabled people.

ENIL'S 35TH ANNIVERSARY



On the evening of 25 September, ENIL organised a celebration of its 35th Anniversary, which was held in the Residence Palace. In addition to the Freedom Drivers, we invited several MEPs, European Commission officials and representatives of our partner organisations in Brussels.

The programme started with a memorial for Adolf Ratzka, who passed away tragically in July. Adolf was one of the founders of ENIL and a pioneer of the Independent Living Movement in Sweden and Europe, as well as an inspiration and a role model to many of the Freedom Drivers. Tributes to Adolf were made by Jamie Bolling, from ENIL and the Independent living Institute in Sweden, Theresia Degener, a former Chair of the CRPD Committee, Raffaello Belli, one of the co-founders of ENIL, Stig Morten from Uloba – Independent Living Norway and Jonas Franksson from STIL in Sweden. We then showed a short movie in Adolf's memory, which can be viewed [here](#).

The second part of the programme included several speakers, who were asked to reflect on the 35 years of ENIL. We started with John Evans OBE, who called in from the United Kingdom, and who was also one of the founders of ENIL in 1989. After John's powerful remarks, we heard from our Board member Rados Keravica and from Clementine Doevedans, from the ENIL Youth Network Board. Katrin Langensiepen MEP, who was of great support to ENIL in organising the Freedom Drive, also reflected on the importance of the organisation and fighting for independent living. Finally, Charlie Willis, from the Youth Network Board and Ines Bulic Cojocariu, Director of the ENIL Secretariat, reflected on the future of the organisation.

On behalf of Uloba, a key supporter and funder of ENIL, Stig Morten presented us with a beautiful painting for the ENIL office.

After the speeches, we shared a [new video](#) with the Freedom Drivers, taking us through the first 35 years of ENIL. Thanks to an anonymous donor, we were able to round off the celebration with the cutting of a big birthday cake, followed by drinks and music.

MARTIN NAUGHTON PRIZE

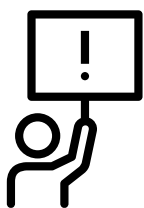
We used the opportunity presented by ENIL's 35th Anniversary to announce the Martin Naughton Prize. Martin Naughton was the founder of the Freedom Drive and a pioneer of Independent Living in Ireland. In his will, Martin left a sizeable donation to ENIL, which we will use to preserve his legacy.

The Martin Naughton Prize will provide an opportunity to young Independent Living activists without financial means to take part in the Freedom Drive. The Freedom Drive was what started the journey of many young people into independent living and activism, so the Prize will support future leaders of the Independent Living Movement. The applications will open at the end of 2025, in time for the Freedom Drive in 2026.

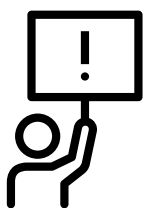


FREEDOM DRIVE DEMANDS

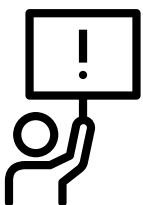
Every Freedom Drive we put together specific demands, aimed at the European Union, its Member States and other European countries. This year, the Freedom Drive demands were as follows:



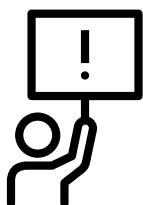
Stop public funding for institutions of any size and segregating services. Reform all legislation on EU funds and on state aid to ensure financial resources go into community-based services.



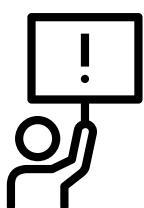
Guarantee the right to Independent Living by setting standards for access to community-based and person-centred services, in compliance with the CRPD. Require adoption of strategies for the expansion of community based and person-centred services in the community and for deinstitutionalisation in all the Member States and through global action.



Recognise supported decision making in cross-border situations. Do so by subjecting the proposed regulation on the protection of vulnerable adults to a complete overhaul, replacing all paragraphs on the deprivation of legal capacity.



Create social equality between disabled and non-disabled people and in society in general and combat social exclusion. To that end, ensure equal access to employment, healthcare, social protection, education, all goods and services and housing in the community.



Ensure that the implementation of the UN CRPD is coordinated across all policy areas. The EU requires the implementation of focal points across policy areas, the establishment of a proper interinstitutional coordination mechanism and a civil society mechanism.

The demands were given to Members of the European Parliament before and during the Freedom Drive, after the protest. They were also delivered to MEPs after the Freedom Drive. In addition, we shared them with the European Commission and the EU Council Presidencies – Hungary and Poland. Our members were encouraged to translate the demands and to share them with their own Governments before the Freedom Drive. (The full version of Freedom Drive demands can be found [here](#).)

MEDIA COVERAGE

The Freedom Drive was covered in mainstream European and Brussels media, as well as by the European Parliament and some organisations of disabled people. Here is a selection of links we collected:

[Euronews](#)

[Agence Europe](#)

[Politico](#)

[RTL Belgium](#)

[BRUZZ](#)

[HLN](#)

[De Specialist](#)

[Greens in the European Parliament](#)

[MEP Catarina Martins](#)

[Kobinet \(Germany\) Article 2 / Article 3](#)

[Austrian Disability Council \(Austria\)](#)

[Attiva Mente \(San Marino\)](#)

[Gaeta \(Italy\)](#)

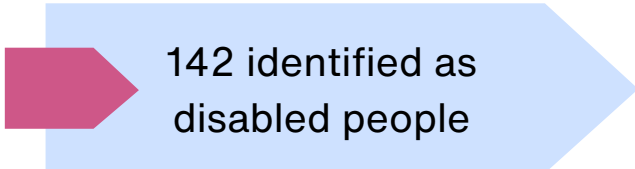




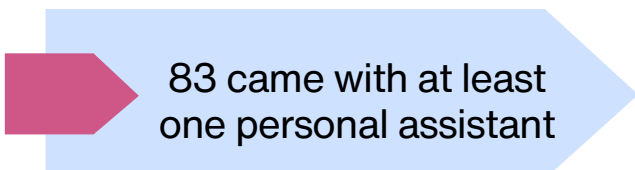
PARTICIPANTS



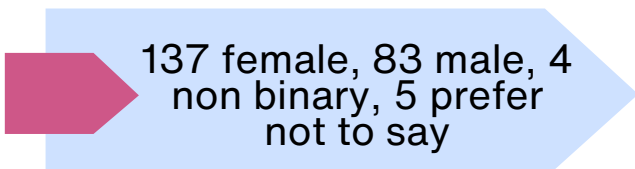
229
participants



142 identified as
disabled people



83 came with at least
one personal assistant



137 female, 83 male, 4
non binary, 5 prefer
not to say



69 wheelchair users



33 countries - 23 EU, 8
rest of Europe, 2 outside
Europe



59 came from Belgium

TOP 10 countries

Belgium
Norway
France
United Kingdom
Switzerland
Bosnia and
Herzegovina
Germany
Sweden
Malta
Bulgaria

PHOTO COMPETITION

On 5th May – the Independent Living Day – and to mark ENIL’s 35th Anniversary, we launched a photo competition on the theme of Independent Living. The first prize was participation in the Freedom Drive, with all costs covered, for the winner and their personal assistant(s). The second and third prize was exemption from paying participation fees for the Freedom Drive.

We received 18 entries from all over Europe, each made up of one or more photos. The jury, consisting of Michael Goossens, Ingrid Thunem (ENIL Board), the Melike Bal (ENIL Youth Board) and Cesar Gimenez (ENIL member) decided the winners.

The first prize went to **Petra Stokar**, originally from Holland and now living in Swizerland. Petra is an artist and sent photos of her painting.

The second prize was awarded to **Elif Gamze Bozo** from Turkey. Elif is also an artist and sent photos of her and her artwork.

The third prize was given to **Nicole Fitzsimons** from Ireland, who submitted a photo of her holding her baby, captured on the first day home from the hospital.

Petra and Elif, accompanied by their personal assistants, joined us at the Freedom Drive. After the Freedom Drive, Elif sent us a video she made about the event. ENIL congratulates all the winners and thanks everyone who sent in their photos for the competition.



VISUAL IDENTITY

Thanks to our volunteer graphic artist Nello and our Communications Officer and Digital Organiser Michael Goossens, the Freedom Drive got a new identity. We also decided to build a dedicated website, created by the Machinery Agency from Croatia. The new identity and the website will be used for the future Freedom Drives as well, with some changes.

The Freedom Drive website was launched one month before, in August, and allowed for better presentation of the agenda, speakers, venues, history, sponsors, merchandise and all the practical information. After the Freedom Drive, a gallery of photos and the recordings were uploaded as well. The new website replaced the printed participant pack, making the Freedom Drive more environmentally friendly.

Thanks to the new designs, we also decided to produce more Freedom Drive merchandise, which we sold during the three days. We printed Freedom Drive T-shirts and tote bags, T-shirts with messages, pens, badges, stickers, water bottles, mugs, posters (in different sizes), a roll-up, a banner and two types of notebooks.

The Freedom Drive merchandise is available to order online, from the [Freedom Drive website](#).



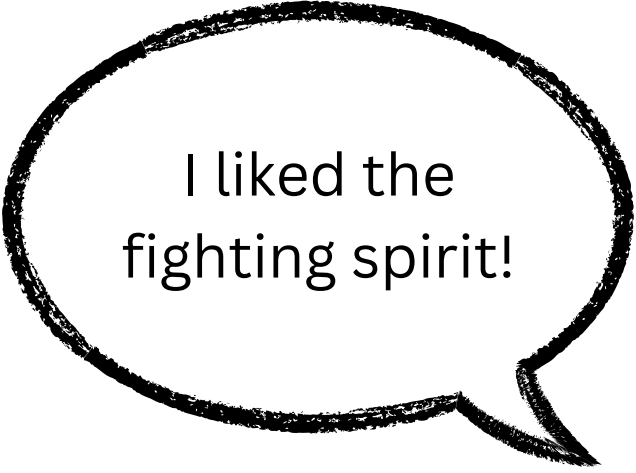
FEEDBACK

A feedback form was shared after the Freedom Drive with all the speakers and the participants, and was available from the Freedom Drive website. We received 60 responses. A separate internal evaluation was carried out by the organising team.


Most of the feedback was very positive, with **40% participants scoring the Freedom Drive four stars and 21,7% the highest score of five stars**. Over a half of respondents (56,7%) attended the Freedom Drive for the first time, while the rest have attended in the previous years. The majority, 85%, would like to take part in the next edition as well.

Most respondents (74%) said that the Freedom Drive will be useful for promoting Independent Living in their country.

We also received many suggestions for improvement – mainly connected with accessibility of the event. Many people also commented on the overall inaccessibility of Brussels as a location. Other feedback related to the programme, with a suggestion to have more breaks and more time for networking. Some respondents also requested more support with finding funding for the Freedom Drive, especially from their representatives in the European Parliament.

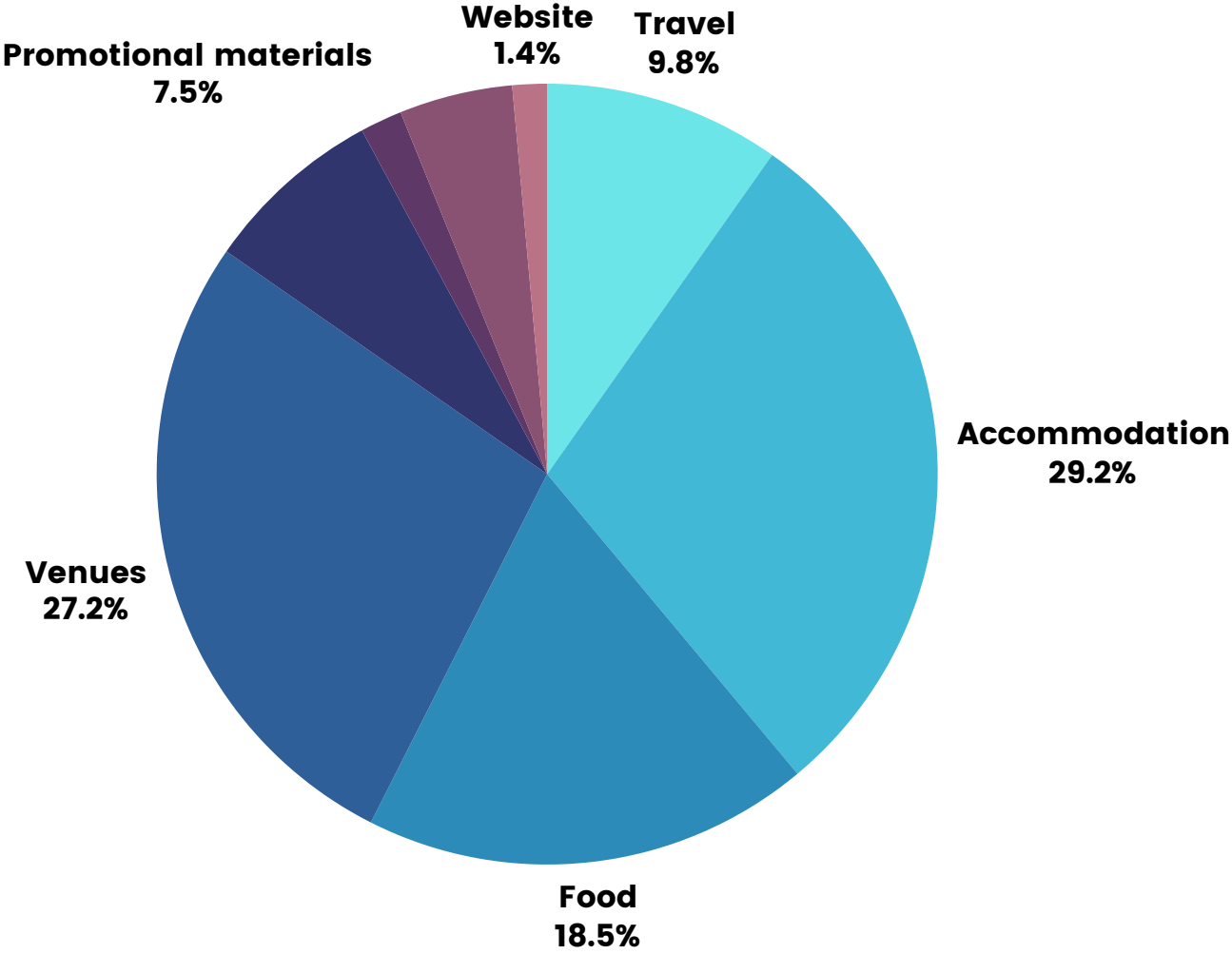


I liked the
fighting spirit!



The Freedom Drive gave
me the opportunity to
meet independent living
activists from across
Europe!

FINANCIAL REPORT



Income	EUR
European Union	63,390
Participation fees	14,550
ENIL Foundation	66,811

Expenditure	EUR
Total cost	144,751

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ENIL would most of all like to thank all the Freedom Drivers for joining us in Brussels for another great Freedom Drive.

We wish to thank all the speakers, Board members and the Youth Board, for their contribution. Special thanks go to our Co-Chair Nadia Hadad for dealing with many aspects of the planning and organisation.

We thank GRIP, our member in Brussels, especially Katrijn Ruts, for supporting the media work and also volunteering during the Freedom Drive.

Thanks to our member the Validity Foundation, which provided a stipend in the value of 1,000 EUR covering travel and accommodation to a Youth Network member.

We thank all the staff and volunteers – Vy Nguyen, Francesca Spanghero, Max Thurston, Ramon Moreno Casas (artist), Nello (graphic artist), the staff of the European Disability Forum, our anonymous birthday cake donor, and many others who helped with setting up the venues, registration, running the merchandise stand and with clearing up (among other).

The Freedom Drive 2024 would not have been possible without the financial support of the European Union, our members, ULOBA - Independent Living Norway and STIL, as well as the Brussels City. We thank them for their support.

Visit the Freedom Drive website for more info:
www.enil-freedom-drive.com



Photo descriptions

Cover page: Two activists during the protest, with their fists in the air, and a child activist on the platform.

P. 3: People sitting and listening to a presentation. The photo shows them listening attentively.

P.5: Three panelists sitting next to each other during the workshop on ableism, with one of them speaking.

P.6: The view of the international cooperation workshop from the back of the room. We can see the participants and the panelists in front of the room, facing the audience.

P. 8: A close up of a canvas during the art workshop. We can see someone's hand holding a brush and writing a protest sign. The second photo shows a young man with headphones during the youth café, sitting at a table and looking at the computer.

P.9: A group of Freedom Drivers during the protest, carrying a Bulgarian flag and the Freedom Drive poster.

P.10: A series of small photos showing different politicians speaking into a megaphone in front of the Parliament, as well as a large group of people listening attentively. The large photo is showing a woman in a wheelchair and two men standing next to her during the Freedom Drive protest. They are on the platform, surrounded by Freedom Drive posters.

P. 11: Speaking sitting at a panel during the European Parliament hearing.

P. 12: Musicians in the front, playing a trumpet, saxophone and drums, with protesters holding signs behind them.

P.13: Participants listening attentively during the Freedom Drive conference. Some are in wheelchairs.

P.15: Speakers on the podium during the 35th anniversary event, facing the audience. Behind them is written '35 years of ENIL'.

P.17: The top photo shows Freedom Drive protest signs, saying: Ableism bites but so do I, End Infantilization!!!, Yes! We Fuck!

The second photo shows people listening and taking photos during a workshop.

P.20: A child activists during the art workshop working on a banner.

A group of people sitting in a circle and speaking during the youth café, with one person sitting on the floor in the middle.

P. 22: Photos show contest entries – two women smiling and painting, and a woman holding her baby.

P.23: Two Freedom Drive posters, consisting of a megaphone and the words Freedom Drive 2024 and Reclaiming Our Rights Now.

P. 24: Two speech bubbles, showing the words: I liked the fighting spirit! and The Freedom Drive game me the opportunity to meet independent living activists from across Europe!

P 25: A pie chart showing: Promotional materials 7.5%, Website 1.4%, Travel 9.8%, Accommodation 29.2%, Food 18.5% and Venues 27.2%

P. 26: Three logos of Uloba – Independent Living Norway, STIL, Brussels City

P.27: Freedom Drive and ENIL logos

ABOUT ENIL

The European Network on Independent Living (ENIL) is a Europe-wide network of disabled people, with members throughout Europe. ENIL is a forum for all disabled people, Independent Living organizations and their non-disabled allies on the issues of Independent Living. ENIL represents the disability movement for human rights and social inclusion based on solidarity, peer support, deinstitutionalization, democracy, self-representation, cross disability and self-determination.

ENIL's vision is of Europe where all disabled people are able to exercise choice and control over their lives, on an equal level with others; where they are valued members of the community and can enjoy all of their human rights, as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

ENIL's mission is to advocate and lobby for Independent Living values, principles and practices, namely for a barrier-free environment, provision of personal assistance support and adequate technical aids, together making full citizenship of disabled people possible. ENIL's activities target European, national and local administrations, politicians, media, and the general society. ENIL works to strengthen the empowerment of disabled people, mainly through providing resources for peer support and peer-to-peer training. ENIL enhances the European disability sector by providing an arena for the sharing of disabled people's experience of services and by providing economical, logistics and technical expertise on independent living. ENIL prides itself on providing a strong platform for grassroots activists and organizations.



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