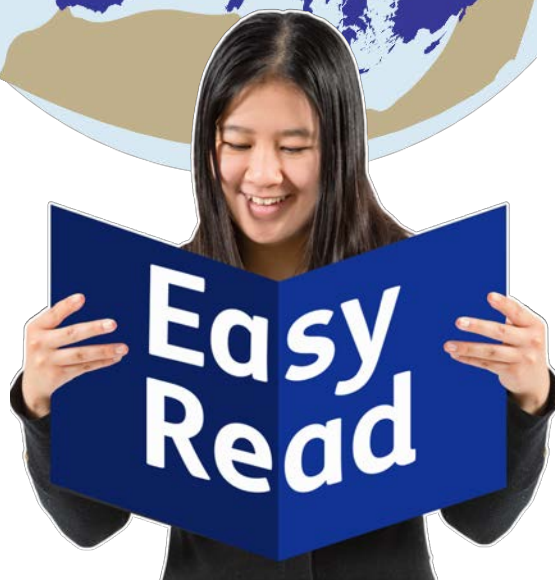


People's right to live independently



Case study
report: **Ireland**



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Introduction



The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights has been looking at the situation of people with disabilities in Ireland.



They have been studying:

- People who live in **institutions**



An **institution** is where people with disabilities live together in a large place away from other people.



- What it is like to live in an **institution**



- What it is like to live in the **community**



The **community** is where all different people live close to each other. They live close to their families and friends.



- What helps more people with disabilities live in the community



- What is stopping people with disabilities from living in the community



- What should be done about it



This is the report of the study.

The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights



This report has been written by the **European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights**.



We help to make sure everyone in the **European Union** can use their rights.



The **European Union** are a group of 28 countries in Europe who work together.



Fundamental Rights are things that everyone has.



For example, the right to vote and the right to get married.

How we did it



A group of people from the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights went to Ireland.



They spoke with many different people including:

- People with disabilities



- Their families



- Social workers



- Politicians



We asked people what it is like to live in an institution and the community.

Ireland



Ireland has not yet agreed to part of the world's laws about rights for people with disabilities.



These laws are in a document called the '**United Nations** Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities'.



The **United Nations** is where all the countries in the world come together to agree laws and rules that cover the whole world.



Ireland is the only country in the **European Union** that has not agreed to these laws.



The **European Union** is a group of 28 countries that have agreed to work together and make laws together.



In Ireland some people with disabilities live in the community.



In Ireland, over 2,500 people with disabilities live in institutions.



Almost all the people living in institutions are people with intellectual disabilities.



Most people with intellectual disabilities have been living in the institution for 15 years or more.



Most people with disabilities living in institutions are quite old.



Politicians in Ireland say they want to help more people with disabilities to live in the community.



Lots of people are helping people with disabilities to live independently. They are:

- People working in national government
- People working in community health organisations
- People working in services for people with disabilities



There are rules in Ireland saying people with disabilities should not live in institutions anymore. They should live in the community instead.



The government wants to close all institutions for people with disabilities by the year 2020.

Living in a institution



People said that living in an institution is very different from living in the community.



In institutions:

- Every day is the same



- People cannot decide what to do each day



- It is difficult to make friends outside the institution



- It is difficult to have privacy

Living in the community



In the community people can decide what to do each day.



It is easier to:

- Make friends



- Decide what you need and what you like.



- Get the help you need. You don't have to share your support with other people.



People with disabilities living in the community live by themselves or with a few other people.



It is better for people with disabilities to live in the community because:

- They have less **stress**



Stress is when you feel anxious, and worried all the time. You might become aggressive. You might not be able to think straight.



- They need less medicine



- They can meet their family and other people



- They get on better with people who provide services for them



- They can make choices about their lives



People with disabilities who live in the community are happier. They have a better life.



The government wanted to help 233 people to move from institutions to live in the community in 2017.



Moving to live in the community is a big change.



It continues after people with disabilities leave the institution and start to live in the community.

What helps more people with disabilities to go and live in the community?

People said:



- People with disabilities who have already moved from institutions can help other people with disabilities to move as well



- People in the community need to be nicer to people with disabilities.

People in the community are more friendly to people with disabilities when they meet each other often



- The government should have a plan to help people with disabilities live in the community



- Staff should get information about how to help people with disabilities live in the community

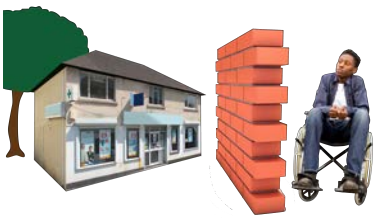


- Families of people with disabilities should say what they think about living in the community



- People with disabilities should learn how to live independently before moving to live in the community

What stops more people with disabilities living in the community?



We asked what stops people with disabilities leaving institutions to live in the community.



People said:

- Sometimes there is not enough money
- There is not enough help for people with disabilities to move from an institution to live in the community
- There are not enough houses in the community that are good for people with disabilities.





The community

Some people in the community do not know how to talk to with people with disabilities.



Sometimes they can be rude or unkind.



Some people think that living in the community is not safe for people with disabilities.



Sometimes the rules around moving people with disabilities to live in the community are too complicated.



Some people do not understand what the right to live independently means.



Some people think that moving from an institution to live in the community is not good for people with disabilities.



Some people think not all people with disabilities can live in the community. They think it is very difficult for:

- Older people
- People with severe disabilities.



Getting a job

It is difficult for people with disabilities to get a job.



Having a job is important for meeting other people and having enough money.



Sometimes people do not trust workers with disabilities.

What to do next?



People had lots of ideas about how to help people with disabilities to live in the community.

The Government

- The government needs to do more to help people with disabilities to live independently
- We need more money from the government for:
 - Houses for people with disabilities
 - Support for people with disabilities
- The government needs to make a national plan for how to help people with disabilities.

More information

- We need more information
- People need to understand that they have the right to live independently and be part of the community where they live



Support

We need to give people with disabilities the help that they need.



People who help people with disabilities need to:

- Know each person with disabilities
- Think about the different help that different people need
- Think about what each person wants

People need to work together more. This includes people who work in:



- Government
- Institutions
- Organisations for people with disabilities

For more information

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