

People's right to live independently



Case study
report: **Slovakia**



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Introduction



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

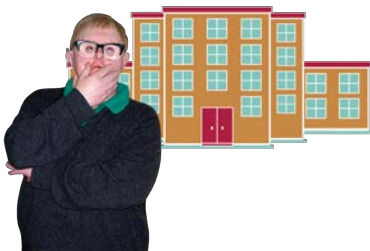


They have been studying:

- People who live in **institutions**



An **institution** is where people with disabilities live together 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** is 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 working for the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights did a study in Slovakia.



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.

Slovakia



In Slovakia many people with disabilities live in institutions.



Some people with disabilities live in the community.



Only a few people with disabilities have moved from institutions to live in the community.



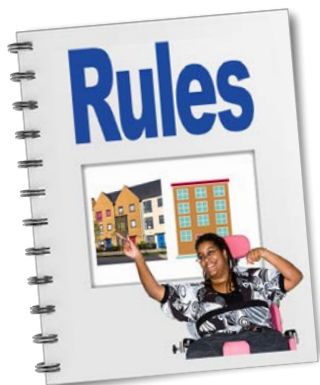
Politicians in Slovakia say they want to help more people with disabilities to live in the community.



There are rules in Slovakia saying people with disabilities should not live in institutions anymore.



They should live in the community instead.



There are rules that say people with disabilities have the right to decide for themselves.



It is difficult to make these rules work.

It is still hard for people with disabilities to live independently in Slovakia.

Living in an 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.



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

- They can take part in many activities



- They can feel equal to other people



- They can have more space and privacy



- They are free to move



- They can meet other people



- They can make decisions about themselves



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

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



People told us lots of things that help:

- Good examples from other countries



- People and organisations working together



- Information about the right to independent living for people with disabilities.



- People who provide services need help to do their job better.



- People living in the community understanding that people with disabilities:



- Are not different



- Have the same rights as anyone else.



- People in the community and people with disabilities meeting each other and talking more often

What stops more people with disabilities from living in the community?



Different types of people

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



- People with severe disabilities



- People with behaviour problems



- People who have lived in an institution for a long time



- Older people with disabilities

Some people don't like change

Moving from an institution to live in the community is a big change.



Some people with disabilities are afraid to move from an institution to live in the community.

The Cost

Moving from an institution to live in the community is sometimes expensive.



Sometimes there is not enough money.



Sometimes the money is not used well.



Some people are not honest and try to keep the money for themselves.



Politicians

Politicians are the people who make laws and run the government and local government services.



Sometimes politicians make it difficult for people to move into the community because:

- The rules in the government and local government services are very complicated



- Politicians, social workers and families do not talk to each other enough



- Politicians from national government do not talk enough to politicians from local governments



Attitudes

Some people have a bad **attitude** about people with disabilities.



An **attitude** is the way that people think about something.

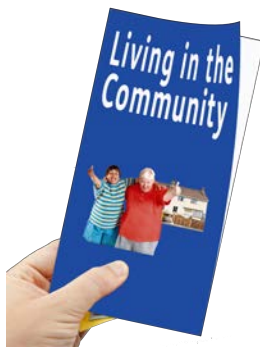


They don't let people with disabilities:

- Make their own decisions



- Choose where to live



- Have the information they need to choose what to do



Not enough information

People don't have enough information about helping people with disabilities to live in the community.



Many people do not know what moving from an institution to live in the community means.



Some people who work for the government think helping people with disabilities to live in the community is not important.

What to do next?



To help people with disabilities to move from institutions to live in the community we need:

- Better laws
- More help from the government
- More money



More help from the people who work with people with disabilities



We need the government and local governments to work together with:

- Social workers
- Organisations that help people with disabilities



We also need:

- Politicians to speak about the right of people with disabilities to live independently
- People who work with people with disabilities to speak to each other more
- Better services for people with disabilities



Better services

The government needs to make sure there are enough services for people with disabilities.

The government needs to make sure everyone can use the services they need.



Different people with disabilities need different kinds of help.

People with disabilities need to get the right help for them.





More information

We need more information.

People need to get more information so they can help people with disabilities to live in the community.



Speak up more

Organisations that work with people with disabilities need to speak up more.

We need:



- People who live in the community to speak more to people with disabilities



- People who live in the community to get to know people with disabilities more.



- To help people with disabilities to speak up for themselves.

For more information

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