

Title: Between dependence on institutions and independent living: the views, desires and criticisms of self-advocates/people with intellectual disabilities in Spain

Article 19 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) (UN, 2006) establishes the right of all people with disabilities to decide where they want to live and with whom, and to access supports that allow them equal access to community resources. In Spain, which ratified the CRPD in December 2007, a new law was enacted in 2013 (General Law on the rights of persons with disabilities and their social inclusion) to articulate support for people with disabilities in accordance with that set out in the Convention. Thus, the law calls for progress in transforming the traditional model of service provision based on the institutions, which has had a very significant influence in Spain, towards a model of distributing support focused on the needs and demands of the individual.

In order to examine the extent to which this progress has taken place, a study was carried out which focused on the opinions, views and experiences of people with intellectual disabilities. A total of 12 focus groups were conducted in Catalonia (Spain), with the participation of 94 self advocates. The following topics were discussed: current options with regard to IL in Spain; the role of professionals and organizations; the role of the family; the central role of the persons with disabilities themselves; perceived barriers to fulfilling that set out in art. 19 of the Convention; and the support model they would like to see in place to help them construct their own personal life plan.

The results obtained allow us, in addition to looking at participants' views in greater depth, to compare their experiences with the theoretical discourse employed in the political sphere and by organizations. In addition, we are also able to highlight the major challenges facing organizations, professionals and people with disabilities in making progress with the construction of plans for IL aligned with that set out in the Convention.

Authors: Fullana, J.; Pallisera, M.; Vilà, M.; Puyalto, C.; Diaz-Garolera, G.; Valls, M.J.