

## Summary of findings from the opening survey during Event 2 (In Torino/Turin, IT)

### 1. Introduction

On June 10<sup>th</sup> 2026 during the first day of the 2<sup>nd</sup> event for the Project “GET-IN” held in Torino, Italy, the hosting partner APS Si Puo Fare initiated an interactive online survey via Mentimeter. The purpose of the survey was twofold: 1) To encourage discussion and interactions among the participants from the 5 participating countries about how they address issues impacting persons with disabilities; 2) To gather citizens’ opinions and views on how to improve the access of people with disabilities to their fundamental rights in the community.

The survey had 5 questions. 30 persons participating in the opening session were able to access the survey and provide their inputs on the issues covered in each question.

The following sections detail the answers to the specific questions and provide insight on how the results could be interpreted for future projects and actions focusing on improving access to rights for persons with disabilities.

### 2. Main questions

#### **Question 1: What is the first word that comes to mind when you hear the word 'inclusion'?**

In APS Si Puo Fare’s work, it has been found that the concept of “inclusion” is often misinterpreted; therefore, it was considered important to have all of the participants understand what exactly is meant when we use “inclusion” in projects, policies, and planning documents. The participants were instructed to simply write one word that they associate with “inclusion”. The findings are as follows:

#### **What is the first word that comes to mind when you hear the word 'inclusion'?**



As seen in the pictograph, the majority of the participants had a positive perception towards the word. The associated “inclusion” with “community” and the word “together.” During the discussions, it was emphasized that inclusion means giving all citizens the same chance (equal opportunity) and making sure



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no one is left marginalized. All of the participants mentioned that EU values have been promoted and included in the main policies impacting persons with disabilities; however, concrete actions on the ground ensuring that persons with disabilities participate in the democratic life of the community have been lacking. Participants mentioned that more awareness building actions should be initiated such that “inclusion” is embedded as a core community value.

**Question 2: What word best describes a truly accessible society?**

As a means to gain deeper understanding of EU values, the second question was asked in order to encourage discussion on what “accessibility” actually means to citizens. The findings are as follows:

## What word best describes a truly accessible society?



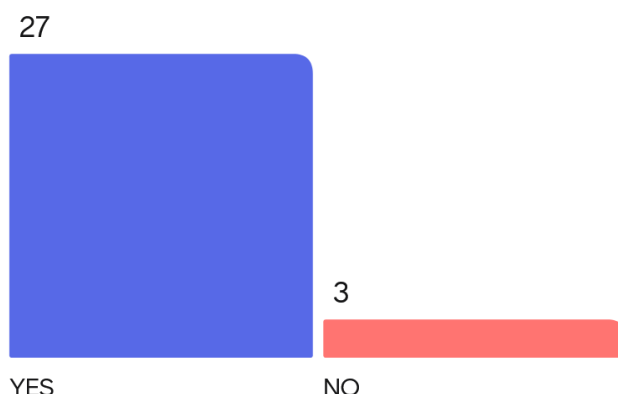
The main words that came to mind for the participants are “inclusive”, “equality”, and “open.” The actual definition according to the EU is “to maximise the match of people’s interactions with the world around them,” which means that all citizens gain access to the same services and infrastructure (and can gain the same experiences) under their fundamental rights within the same timeframes. After these answers were provided, participants discussed whether or not this concept exists in their country for persons with disabilities. It was noted that although there have been considerable positive steps in enhancing accessibility, gaps remain. Notably, physical infrastructure (such as ramps for wheelchair access, railings, etc.) aren’t universal; often missing even at public service facilities. Digital technologies are also lacking; notably, applications/apps that consider the needs of the blind & visually impaired, deaf & hearing impaired, and with intellectual disabilities lack a universal design approach.

**Question 3: Does your county have a law requiring companies to employ people with disabilities?**

Gaining access to labour markets and meaningful employment are fundamental in ensuring that persons with disabilities gain a sense of belonging in the community and participate in the democratic life in the community. This particular question has been designed to have participants reflect on the labour market situation facing these people in the community:



"Does your country have a law requiring companies to employ people with disabilities?"

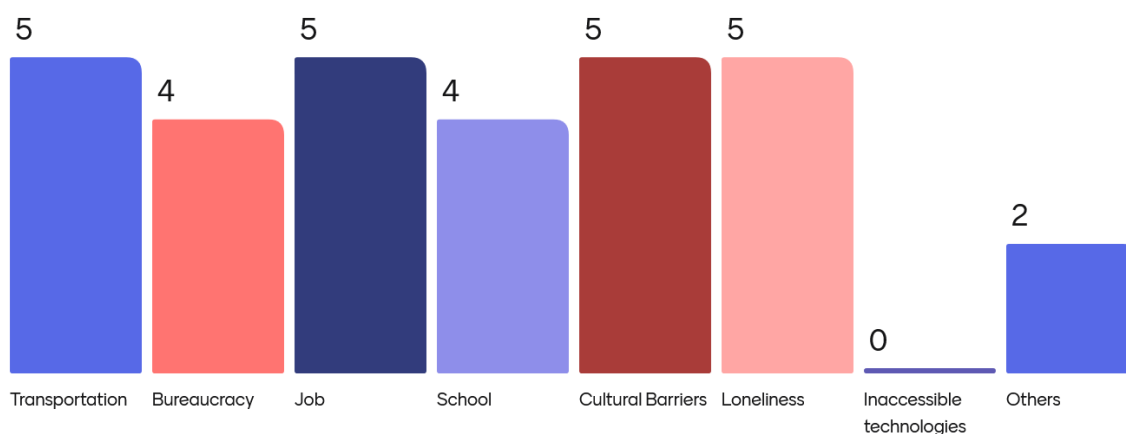


The participants stated that in their countries there are laws in place that require companies to employ/hire people with disabilities; however, the laws are considered to be ineffective. The participants from Croatia, Serbia and Italy noted that most companies refuse to follow these laws. They went on to say that for most companies it is actually more cost-effective for them to break the law. The problem is that the level of support/funding for companies hiring is often inadequate for them to adapt their workplace for persons with disabilities. It is actually cheaper for them to incur the fines/penalties or pay higher taxes. The participants emphasized that national laws per EU country need to be reinforced with stronger funding mechanisms for employers. It was also mentioned that employers need to be made more aware of the capacities of persons with disabilities so that they are more open to hiring them.

**Question 4: What is the most common obstacle that people with disabilities face in everyday life?**

The question had the purpose of having participants critically think about the core barriers preventing persons with disabilities from participating in community life. The findings are as follows:

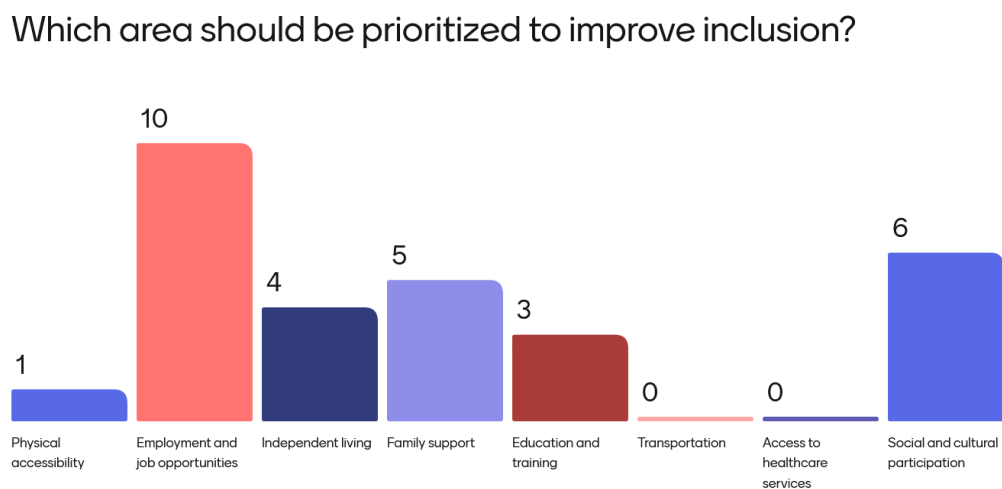
What is the most common obstacle that people with disabilities face in everyday life?



The answers show that the participants have different perspectives on this question. Participants mentioned why they had chosen their answers, and during discussion it found that some of the obstacles could actually result in another obstacle. For instance, if someone doesn't have a job, they lack funds, and that may result in loneliness. Representatives from Si Puo Fare mentioned that in their experience they have found that employment is crucial to making the other barriers disappear. Through employment, persons with disabilities gain a drive to go further, find ways to overcome barriers, and participate in community life.

### **Question 5: Which area should be prioritized to improve inclusion?**

This question was asked in order to determine what priorities for persons with disabilities should be focused on. The participants answered as follows:



Most of the participants considered that the priority should be on “employment and job opportunities”, followed by “social and cultural participation.” Employment was considered an important pillar in encouraging inclusion as it gives people purpose and the ability to live independently. Social and cultural participation is also an important area as projects/actions with this in mind contribute to changing perceptions and erasing stereotypes impacting persons with disabilities from participating in the democratic life of the community. This aspect can also contribute to enhancing employment opportunities in the community. Si Puo Fare and the partners mentioned that they were open to preparing projects/actions with the CERV programme (and other EU and international programme frameworks) addressing the identified priorities.

### **3. Conclusions**

The findings from the survey indicate that although there has been progress on enhancing the social inclusion of persons with disabilities in the democratic life in the community, considerable action still needs to be initiated in order to ensure there is improved accessibility to services, employment and that EU communities build empathy and awareness towards the needs and capacities of persons with disabilities. It was interesting to see that although there are 5 European countries in this project, the issues and perspectives concerning persons with disabilities are similar. This indicates that there is groundwork for future cooperation and projects where different (yet similar) needs, perspectives and priorities are addressed.



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