



# Advocacy center

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# European documents

- The principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are:
  - Respect for innate dignity, personal autonomy, which includes the freedom of choice and the independence of the individual
  - Non-discrimination
  - full and effective cooperation and social inclusion
  - respect for diversity and the acceptance of disabled people as part of human diversity and humanity
  - equality of opportunity

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# Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities

- Article 8 (accessibility) Raising awareness of the whole society (including at the family level), promoting respect for their rights and dignity
- Combating stereotypes, prejudice, harmful behavior in relation to people with disabilities in all areas of life Article 14 Personal freedom and security - enjoy the right to personal freedom and security
- that they are not unlawfully deprived of their liberty, that any deprivation is in accordance with the law, and that invalidity is in no way a reason for deprivation of liberty
- the same protection of rights as others Article 19 Independent Living and Inclusion
- live in a community, as they decide and accept effective and appropriate measures that enable them to live full lives, fully engage in and participate in society
- They do not have to live in a special environment There are 162 institutions in Slovenia

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- Nevertheless, in Slovenia, people are still under special conditions. In a closed unit, psychiatric hospitals can be accepted by people, If they endanger their lives or the lives of others, Your health or the health of others causes serious property damage If the threat is a consequence of a mental disorder that causes a person to be seriously disturbed by the assessment of reality and the ability to cope with their behavior if the causes of the threat can not be discouraged by other forms of assistance (outpatient treatment, controlled treatment)

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## Conditions for admission to the secured department are defined with the Mental Health Act

- If treatment in a psychiatric hospital is completed or not necessary
- If a person needs constant care and care that can not be provided in the home environment or in any other way, if he endangers his life or the lives of others, he causes serious material damage if the threat is a result of a serious disruption of the judgment of reality and the ability to control his conduct if the causes of threat can not be reversed in a different way, with other forms of assistance. Closing is a harmful, ineffective, unethical solution that violates human rights.

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# Law Mental health act

- On the proposal of the director of a psychiatric hospital or social welfare institution, a court decided about limitation the rights. Before in a non-litigious procedure within 2 days of receipt of the proposasl limitations of the rights. Before issuing the decision. The person will have to be heard, except if health condition og the person doesn' allow it. A person may appeal against the court's decision within 3 days, but the appeal doesn't delay the execution of the decision. The person has a right to choose a representative as soon as he comes to the closed ward. On the court the lawyer belongs to him.

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- Another issue to talk about is the use of coercive means, such as belt tie. The law allows fixing max 4 hours. When I was asked to inform me about the use of coercive means, I received a bunch of leaflets. If I wanted to see a friend, I could not visit him because he was tethered. Despite the law, he was hindered for several days. He said that he was thirsty and they were given too little to drink.

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# My experiences

- Years ago, when I was tethered, the event was hardly mentioned in the medical documentation, I experienced a real shock that can not be remembered. I was the first time in a psychiatric hospital. The son took all the family back to the hospital from the weekend. I did not think that such an unpleasant surprise awaited me. I immediately knew that the husband was involved in this conspiracy, so I called for the help of a daughter who could not help me. At the next hospitalization I was not fixed. I immediately called the agent because they were put in a closed section. I knew how to fight for my rights, but I still survived in a closed section of 1 month. D then I'm fighting for the rights of sotrpins, so I also joined the Advocacy Center, although the project for the students and myself could not receive a fee like the others. I worked for free. I have been able to practice because I'm educating myself as an agent.

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# Advocacy center

- The purpose of the project was to advocate and support people in procedures where their basic human rights are often deprived because of their stigma, specific circumstances or inadequate system regulation.
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- ☐ Procedures for placing people in closed units without consent
  - ☐ Deprivation of legal capacity
  - ☐ Return of legal capacity
  - ☐ Housing problem (major problem due to the real estate market and low income)

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- The goal of the project was to strengthen the power of users and their influence on decisions that affect their lives.
- In order to ensure the continuation of advocacy even after the end of the project, we started the creation of a association of users of psychiatric services during the project. This will allow users to help each other, influence political decisions and take socially-valued roles.

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- Due to the length of court proceedings, it was difficult for many advocacy campaigns to talk about the complete (non) achievement of the goal, since many procedures have not yet been completed.
- Participants in the project of advocacy campaigns that have not yet been completed, despite the end of the project, are still being implemented to the end. What we can count as success, despite the still untwisted trials, is the significantly longer duration of procedures than is usual.
- Due to our participation, the proceedings before the court, which usually last up to one hour, have been extended to more hours and more daily procedures. During the procedures on the court, there were also other important actors in the lives of these people (witnesses).
- Irrespective of the final result, we managed to balance the power of those users and ensure that they were treated appropriately and equally; although we also went through a lot of obstacles.

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- Implementation of the projects:
  - ☐ Weekly meetings (work coordination, report on progress, consultations on dilemmas and problems)
  - ☐ Exchange of knowledge – workshops (financial planing, promotion of social networks, writing appeal)
  - ☐ Lectures on advocacy
  - ☐ Excursion in Maribor (social care institution Hrastovec, Zavod Franko) – exercise „hanging“
  - ☐ Exploring the life of the user
  - ☐ Risk analysis
  - ☐ Court proceedings
  - ☐ Cooperation with lawyers
  - ☐ Inviting users and meetings
  - ☐ Review of legislation for the functioning of association
  - ☐ Round table – closed units in institutions and human right violations

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- I'm fightned for the rights of fellow sufferers, so I joined the Advocacy Center, although the project for the students and myself could not receive a fee like the others. I worked for free. I have been able to practice because I'm educating myself as an agentIn order to make it easier for a person to go to a closed section, he can also be deprived of his aptitude. The person can no longer decide what to do with it. He needs an advocate. A person with reduced ability to work also has reduced contractual power. He can no longer enter into contractual relations, needs a counsel who will hear and represent the person for those matters for which he has authorized it. It is right that we encourage the person to fight for his own rights, and I decided to defend the gentleman who is 32 years old,

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- He lives in a special institution Hrastovec. Nevertheless, Mom started a procedure for abolishing work ability. The procedure took place at the same time as the procedure for placing the gentleman on a closed section. The Lord has completely different plans, but he is not heard and ignored. I met the gentlemen years ago in Ljubljana when he lived in a residential group. As a volunteer I went to a residential group and met him. Then Mom took him home, that he would live at home. She was sorry that we did not get enough for the gentlemen. Because he often fumes, he also left the group and his dermatitis deteriorated. Wounds were not supplied. In addition, he interrupted the therapy. I got an example in my hand, when the expert examined him and wrote a bad expert opinion. We wrote the complaint and soon afterwards the case was heard in court. At that time, I became a close person to the gentleman and received all the mail that related to this matter. At the court, we reached a new expert on this case. Another expert opinion was no better. I am of the opinion that nothing ignores.

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- the plans of the gentleman, his needs and desires, but above all he stands on his mother's side. He left all the positive opinions about the gentleman from the documentation. He corrected his opinion twice, but always represented the same position, suggesting that his gentleman's ability to work be taken. He changed his mind about his mental disorder, which was not tested at all. At first he thought that he was less mentally less developed, then he thought he was moderately mentally less developed. He later added that in certain cases it can also be violent. He stated that he could not add two-digit numbers, that he did not know much about the politicians and that he also had to take the right to vote. We also complained to this opinion. A little later, I added a risk analysis which was the answer to what kind of measures should be made in the community so that they could live in a community irrespective of black forecasts and the damage would be as small as possible. Now she has also started to work with him as a coordinator of the treatment in the community, which also plans life in the future according to his own wishes, wishes, needs. Then, mother is the 2nd and 3rd preparatory role in which she refers to the expert's opinion and repeals the opinion of psychiatrists in the institution who see and work with the gentleman.

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- We also complained about this role and defended the gentlemen and his plans. After the first reading, the gentleman also received a lawyer who was not at first reading. Now I was surprised that the court sent it to appoint a new expert and within eight days it is also necessary to advertise and tell if we feel it necessary for the psychiatrists to testify, even though they have already made statements about its functioning. It seems to me that a difficult battle that lasts for a long time is not easy. Mom insists on her own and is struggling against her son. I have the feeling that the Lord has little chance of winning. Another procedure stopped. In the meantime, the gentlemen were already locked up to the unit of the guarded section for the month, as they climbed to a chair in distress, because two residents chanted it. The staff thought it would harm and carry out security measures. He says he did not intend to harm.

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## SVIZCI - Marmot

- In the framework of the Advocacy Center, a society of users of psychiatric services will be established, which is a voluntary, independent, non-profit and humanitarian association of individuals who have or have experience with mental health services in their lives.
- The purpose of the project was to provide people with disabilities equal participation in community and everyday life. It is necessary for people with disabilities to reimburse contractual power and the influence over their lives, which are the foundation of citizenship. It's crucial to enable people to make decisions about their life again.

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# SVIZCI - Marmot

- „Accidental“ simultaneous timing of service users initiative and project
- Organisational part:
  - Organisational structure
  - Statute
  - Financial structure and sorces
- Program
  - Individual wishes (direct action approach)
  - Activities / program
  - Concepts
- First ideas:
  - Advocacy
  - Resarching needs
  - Advocacy in a sindicat way
  - Voicing service users opinions

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# Challenges:

- Interest / recruiting new members
- Service users „(un)presence“
- Personal expectations
- Selfconfidence / internalised role of mental patient

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<http://www.svizec-sport.com/>



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