



**RESULTS of  
EUROPEAN YOUTH SURVEY  
on  
YOUNG WOMEN with DISABILITIES:  
Focus on  
Human Rights Protection,  
Social Inclusion and Participation**



## RESEARCH

## PARTNERS:

### I. Volyn Regional Public Organization “Down Syndrome”, UKRAINE



Since the year 2006 our organization is a member of All-Ukrainian Public Organization “Coalition Of Defence of Invalids and persons with intellectual disability” and of the Coalition “Council from the Volyn Region”. We took part in the consultation of the Heard of Volyn Regional Administration concerning the rehabilitation of children with disabilities and gave our proposals. We initiated creation of early rehabilitation center in Lutsk. Together with Volyn State University we organized international conference “ actual questions of accompaniment of children with special needs: medical, psychological and pedagogical aspects” and special trainings, conducted by leading specialists from the USA. (September 2006, Lutsk). Our organization was the partner of Volyn NGO “ Special child” in realization of project co-funded by EC “Effective Socialization of Young People with Special Necessities in Volyn Region” ( June 2006- May 2007).

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### II. Hungarian Association for Persons with Intellectual Disability ÉFOÉSZ



Established 25 years ago as an umbrella body for organizations concerned with the care and rehabilitation of people with intellectual disability in Hungary. At the present time our organization represents 50 member associations, 25 local branches and 22.000 individual members all over the country and we run 9 community based settings. Our vision is to improve the lives and well being of people with intellectual disability in Hungary.

One of the main goals of ÉFOÉSZ is to represent the interests of the people living with intellectual disability and their families in national level and also in international organizations such as EDF, Inclusion Europe and Inclusion International. On the other hand, ÉFOÉSZ` s objective is to support persons with intellectual disability in the field of having equal rights, equal opportunities and leading a life without having to rely on others, while actively participating in social life as visible citizens. We take an active part in the work of National Disability Affairs Council, which is one of the consultancy organizations of the Government.

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### III. Association for Students and Youth with Disability



Registered in Skopje in 2002 and it is the National representative of the Youth Disability Network for South East Europe. Together with disability youth organizations from Serbia, Montenegro and Moldova, our association participates in various advocacy and lobbying programs, working to influence the decision making process and the status of young people with disabilities in the SEE Region. Nowadays in SEE countries legal framework provides social protection of people with disabilities, but in practice assistance is reduced mostly to insignificant financial support for individuals. Therefore, we have organized and implemented more than 10 projects, working on overcoming social and economic exclusion, as well as cultural stereotypes.

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### IV. Association ADA, Belgium



Registered in Antwerp, Belgium in 1976, ADA is working already more than 30 years on various disability issues, related to disability rights, inclusion of people with disabilities and advocacy and self-advocacy of people with disabilities.

Our members are both disabled and non-disabled people, young people and women activists, who strive to achieve equal access for all and build an inclusive Europe.

Our activities are broadly covering social assistance, human rights protection and disability rights advocacy.

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### V. Rhodopes Center for Community Development, Bulgaria



Registered in 2005 in the Regional Court of Smolian, Bulgaria, Rhodopes Center for Community Development is a youth-led community organization, working for inclusion of disadvantaged young people, including young people with disabilities.

Since 2007 our Association has realized more than 10 projects focusing in human rights protection of young people with disabilities, gender perspective of disability and multiple discrimination within the disability communities in Europe.

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# **EUROPEAN YOUTH SURVEY on YOUNG WOMEN with DISABILITIES: Focus on Human Rights Protection, Social Inclusion and Participation**

## **Research background**

Although both young men and women with disabilities in Europe are subject to discrimination, young women with disabilities are at a further disadvantage because of the combined discrimination based on age, gender and disability. Recent European statistics point out that while disabled people are much more likely to live in poverty, women are likely to be poorer than men; young disabled women achieve lower educational outcomes than men; they are less likely to be in the paid workforce than either men with disabilities, have lower incomes from employment; less likely to have access to rehabilitation; more likely to experience public spaces as intimidating and dangerous. In the private and familial arena disabled women are more likely to be living on their own, or in their parental family than men; disabled women are more likely to be divorced and less likely to marry than men with disabilities; to face medical interventions to control their fertility; to experience sexual violence in relationships and in institutions. There is a serious lack of research to analyze in dept problems of access to education, employment, public life or human rights dimension of the problems of young women and disability in Europe.

## **Introduction**

The European Youth Survey on Young Women with Disabilities, focused on Human Rights Protection, Social Inclusion and Participation, was held as a face to face research poll among 500 young people with a without disabilities from Bulgaria, Ukraine, Hungary, Belgium and Macedonia as well as among online respondents via the web-platform of the project leader, Rhodopes Center for Community development. The questionnaire was sent to the internal mailing lists of the project and also published on the project web-platform at [www.rhodope-center.org/YWDS](http://www.rhodope-center.org/YWDS). Another 87 young people took part in the online survey, answering the questions and submitting them by the web or sending them by email.

This report summarizes the findings from both face-to-face and virtual European Youth Surveys that was conducted during the summer-fall of 2008. The survey was designed to assess the disability rights awareness of European young people, with the focus of a special group among the disability communities, young women with disabilities who suffer triple discrimination based on gender, age and disability. The questionnaire collects information about awareness of human rights, access to human rights information, access to civic participation and decision-making process of young women with disabilities in Europe.

## **Profile of the interviewees in our Survey**

### **Age**

The European Youth Poll `2008 questionnaire sought opinions from people aged between 14 and 35.

The biggest share of respondents, who took part in our survey are in the age group 25-31. The smallest percentage are the respondents age 14-18.

### **Gender**

Males and females are equally represented in the survey.

250 females and 250 males were questioned in the face-to face interviews in all countries (respectfully 50 males and 50 females per country).

There is a slight prevalence of female respondents in the online survey results. During the virtual survey 50 young women and 34 young men answered and returned the online questionnaire.

### **Residence**

Respondents in the face-to-face survey come from 5 European states: Bulgaria, Hungary, Belgium, Macedonia and Ukraine.

Respondents in the online survey come from Belgium, Holland, The UK, Austria, France, Italy, Portugal, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Serbia, Croatia, Romania, Russia and Poland.

Respondents state that they live in urban, small town, rural and remote areas in different European countries. The biggest share belong to the young people, coming from urban and town areas, and the smallest share belongs to the respondents who state that they currently live in a rural or remote area. The last data is particularly visible in the results of the online research where young people with disabilities need to have a regular Internet access in order to be able to access the Online Poll.

### **Family Status**

Most respondents state that they currently live with family, but others live with friends, alone, are homeless, or have alternative living arrangements.

The biggest is the share of the respondent who state that they a parent taking care of them.

### **Relationship status**

65 % of the young women with disabilities responding have stated that they do not have a partner currently. With the young men with disabilities, this number is 36 %.

### **Disability**

Overall of 63 % of the questioned young people declared to have disabilities, 78 % percent of the young women answering the questionnaire had disabilities. The types of disabilities are illustrated n percentage in a more detailed manner in the qualitative analyses of the research data published below. Overall results points

out that the main share of respondents who were young women with disabilities belong to the young women with physical disabilities and the smallest share belongs to the young women with mental disabilities.

## **RESULTS**

Results of the European Youth Survey have been subject to both qualitative and quantitative survey which was conducted by the project research team in collaboration with a social research expert from Marketing Research Institute in Bulgaria. A separated report illustrates the qualitative analyses of the received and structured quantitative data and then analysed in an inter-country comparative analyses, conducted by the project research team and consulted by a Sociologist from the Department of Sociology in the University of Sofia, Bulgaria.

## **BENEFITS**

The information collected from this survey help us to better understand the problems of access to human rights information, the issues related to the Human Rights Protection, Social Inclusion and Participation of young women with disabilities in Europe. Your responses will also provide us with information on how to improve the youth strategies for inclusion of young women with disabilities in Europe.

The survey results are an important source of needs-assessment data for both non-political and political (when gender prospective of disability youth political participation is concerned) youth organizations, youth councils school districts, community-based organizations, local human service agencies, and state agencies. The results were disseminated among 84 organizations and institutions and will be used to monitor and track progress on state and non-state activities for human rights protection of young women with disabilities in Europe education and health-related goals.

The information from this European Youth Survey may be used to identify trends in patterns of social construction of the relation between gender and disability over time. State-level results may also be used to compare national and other state-level results with our research and analyze eventual gaps and disparances. State agencies, local health jurisdictions, community mobilization coalitions, community public health and social networks, and others can benefit from this information to guide policies and programs that serve youth and more specifically youth with disabilities.

## RESULTS

### FOCUS ON HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION

#### 1. Proportion of total answers:

Woman with a disability – TOTAL of 67 %

Age	8 %
14-18	38 %
18-25	51 %
25-31	2%
31-39	1 %
40 and more	

Parent or guardian of a young woman with a disability	1 %
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Young person, without a disability

Age	8 %
14-18	38 %
18-25	51 %
25-31	2%
	1 %

Please state your age and sex:

Male	42 %
Female	58 %

**Human Rights: The following questions are about your human rights.**

#### 2. Are you aware of your human rights?

Yes	30 %
No	70 %

#### 3. Do you think your human rights have been violated?

No, never.	7 %
Very few times.	11 %
Sometimes.	41 %
All the time.	39 %

#### 4. Do you feel you were discriminated based on your:

Disability	89 %
Gender	67 %
Age	23 %
Other	5 %
The total sum of answers might exceed 100 % because the respondents have given more than one answer.	

**4. Young people with disabilities experience many obstacles to access public places of their interest. Please check any of the following barriers you may have encountered.**

I have not experienced any barriers at the public places I visit.	3 %
There is no accessible parking.	72 %
The main entrances are not accessible.	85 %
The accessible entrances are not clearly marked.	30 %
The path to the entrance area have obstacles (such as narrow aisles, furniture in the way, etc.).	58 %
I have experienced situations in which I had not been allowed to have anyone help me enter.	43 %
I have been challenged about my ability to participate.	39 %
When I had requested a place to sit while participating, nothing was provided.	7 %
Other	33 %
The total sum of answers might exceed 100 % because the respondents have given more than one answer.	

**5. How much do you know about your specific rights under the measures of affirmative action for young women with disabilities in your country?**

Not much	38 %
A little bit	27 %
Somewhat knowledgeable about it	29 %
Very knowledgeable about it	6 %



**CURRENT EVENTS:** *The following questions are about how you get your news and disability-related human rights information.*

**6. In the past 12 months, how often have you used the Internet or the World Wide Web?**

Frequently	80 %
Sometimes	9 %
Never	11 %

**7. How frequently do you use the Internet, including email and websites?**

Every day	45 %
Once or twice a week	19 %
Every few weeks	8 %
Rarely	13 %
Never, I do not use the Internet.	11 %

**8. Where do you use the Internet or the World Wide Web?**

Home	93 %
Work	4 %
Public library	4 %
School	10 %
Community center	5 %
Other [please specify]	12 %

The total sum of answers might exceed 100 % because the respondents have given more than one answer.

**9. What are the **TOP FIVE** ways that you get your news and disability-related human rights information?**

Television	9 %
Radio	11 %
The Internet (websites)	43 %
Newsletters from organizations	39 %
Newspapers	12 %

Youth Magazines	19 %
Emails from disability organizations	23 %
Emails from youth organizations other than disability organizations	21 %
My friends and family	40 %
My school, employer or union representative	45 %
My service providers or direct support staff person	39 %
Telephone	15 %

The total sum of answers might exceed 100 % because the respondents have given more than one answer.

**10. How much do you know about the opportunities for young women with disabilities, provided by Youth Organizations and Youth Support Groups in your residential area?**

Not at all	12 %
A little bit	28 %
Somewhat knowledgeable about them	48 %
Very knowledgeable about them	12 %

**11. Are you aware of the opportunities for young women with disabilities, provided by Women/ Girl Support Groups or a Feminist Organizations in your residential area?**

No	18 %
A little bit	40 %
Some knowledge about them	32 %
I know a lot about them	10 %

**12. Are you a member of any youth-led or women-led group/ organization**

Yes	12 %
No	88 %

**CIVIC PARTICIPATION: The following questions are about being involved in public policy and political activities.**

**13. Check any public policy and political activities you participated in during the past 12 months.**

I signed a petition.	22 %
I wrote a letter to a government official or a letter to the editor.	27 %
I attended a political meeting.	14 %
I went to a town meeting or a school board meeting.	18 %
I spoke or gave testimony at a public meeting.	2 %
I participated in a rally, a demonstration, a protest, a boycott, or a march.	28 %
I worked on a candidate's election campaign.	3 %
I was a poll worker.	0 %
I donated money for a cause of a non-political organization or to a political party.	11 %
I was a member of a public interest group, a youth political action group, women action group, a political club, or one of my party's committees.	19 %
I ran for office.	0 %
I did not participate in any.	43 %
Other	11 %
The total sum of answers might exceed 100 % because the respondents have given more than one answer.	

**14. How likely would you volunteer in a youth organization if you only had to work part of the day?**

Rate from 1 to 7, with 1 = "not likely at all" to 7 = "very likely"

1 - 3 %
2 - 12 %
3 - 23 %
4 - 21 %
5 - 21 %
6 - 9 %
7 - 11 %

**15. Have you experienced any of the following barriers that make it difficult for you to be as involved in political activities as you would like?**

My work schedule	13 %
Not enough child care	32 %
No transportation	44 %
Not feeling welcome	23 %
Physical barriers	65 %
Concerns for my safety	57 %
Not knowing how to begin	87 %
Feeling that I can't make a difference	89 %
Other	11 %
The total sum of answers might exceed 100 % because the respondents have given more than one answer.	

**How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Strongly Agree <-----> Strongly Disagree)**

**16. Elected officials (like a mayor, prefect or member of European Parliament) care about issues that affect me and other women with my disability.**

15 %	Strongly Agree
12 %	Agree
44 %	Disagree
29 %	Strongly Disagree

**17. Elected officials (like a mayor, prefect or member of European Parliament) are making positive changes in my community.**

20 %	Strongly Agree
14 %	Agree
40 %	Disagree
26 %	Strongly Disagree

**18. It is important for young women with my disability to get involved in the political process.**

85 %	Strongly Agree
12 %	Agree

3 %	Disagree
0 %	Strongly Disagree

**19. Young women with disabilities can have a positive impact on making my community a better place to live**

76 %	Strongly Agree
23 %	Agree
1 %	Disagree
0 %	Strongly Disagree

**20. I trust the NATIONAL government to do what is right for the young people with disabilities.**

15 %	Strongly Agree
12 %	Agree
44 %	Disagree
29 %	Strongly Disagree

**21. I trust my LOCAL government to do what is right for young people with disabilities.**

21 %	Strongly Agree
23 %	Agree
34 %	Disagree
22 %	Strongly Disagree

**22. I trust disability organizations to lobby for the rights of the young women with disabilities.**

78 %	Strongly Agree
22 %	Agree
8 %	Disagree
2 %	Strongly Disagree

**23. I trust youth organizations to lobby for the rights of the young women with disabilities.**

58 %	Strongly Agree
27 %	Agree
8 %	Disagree
7 %	Strongly Disagree

**24. I trust women organizations to lobby for the rights of the young women with**

**disabilities.**

63 %	Strongly Agree
29 %	Agree
30 %	Disagree
7 %	Strongly Disagree

**25. I trust other NGOs and non-formal groups to lobby for the rights of the young women with disabilities.**

43 %	Strongly Agree
19 %	Agree
18 %	Disagree
7 %	Strongly Disagree

## Now, just a little information about you...

### 26. What would you say is your **PRIMARY** disability?

None (I do not have a disability)	5 %
Vision	10 %
Hearing	10 %
Physical	37 %
Intellectual	3 %
Emotional or psychological	7 %
Chronic health condition	23 %
Other	5 %

### 27. When did your disability occur?

Before the age of 16	57 %
After the age of 16	38 %
I do not have a disability	5 %

### 28. Which country do you live in?

Bulgaria	19 %
Belgium	18 %
Hungary	16 %
Macedonia	19 %
Ukraine	18 %
Other	10 %

### 29. What is your ethnicity?

Bulgarian	12 %
Roma	4 %
Turkish	3 %
Belgian Flemish	11 %
Belgian French	9 %
Hungarian	16 %

Croatian	1 %
Macedonian	12 %
Albanian	5 %
Ukrainian	16 %
Russian	2 %
Other	9 %

**30. Are you involved in a relationship?**

Yes	41 %
No	59 %

**31. Do you have any children?**

Yes	11 %
No	89 %

**32. In what type of place do you live?**

Rural area or on a farm	9 %
Small Town (less than 3,000 people)	11 %
Town or Small City (3,000 to 50,000 people)	37 %
Large City (more than 50,000 people)	43 %

**33. What was your total 2007 household income BEFORE TAXES FROM ALL SOURCES?**

1,000 EUR or less	18 %
1,001 to 5,000 EUR	29 %
5,001 to 10,000 EUR	32 %
10,001 to 15,000 EUR	9 %
15,001 to 25,000 EUR	8 %
25,001 to 50,000 EUR	4 %
50,000 or over	0 %