

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001954/25
to the Commission
Victor Negrescu (S&D)
(15 May 2025)

Subject: Measures to support people with Down syndrome and initiatives for the self-representation of people with disabilities

In the European Union, including Romania, people with Down syndrome continue to face structural barriers to accessing education, social services and employment and to participating in civic life. In the absence of clear European standards and a framework on the recognition of self-representation, these members of the public are often excluded from decision-making processes that directly affect their lives. In Romania, parents and organisations working to support young people with Down syndrome — such as those recently involved in the Erasmus+ project ‘European Self Advocates’ — are calling for a coordinated European approach that respects their dignity, opinions and fundamental rights.

Questions:

1. What concrete measures does the Commission have in mind for developing common EU standards for social, educational and support services for people with Down syndrome, with a view to ensuring their equal treatment and genuine inclusion in all Member States?
2. How does the Commission intend to support initiatives promoting the self-representation of people with intellectual disabilities, including those with Down syndrome, so that their voice is heard and respected in decision-making processes at local, national and European level?

Submitted: 15.5.2025

Answer given by Ms Lahbib on behalf of the European Commission
(24 June 2025)

1. The initiatives planned under the strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030 ⁽¹⁾ address the rights and needs of persons with disabilities in all their diversity, including people with Down syndrome. Promoting independent living and inclusion in the community are among the key objectives of the strategy, as well as inclusive and accessible education of all children with disabilities, including Down syndrome. While specific standards for social, educational or support services for persons with Down syndrome have not been issued, the Commission has provided guidance in various areas of life concerning them, such as independent living or employment, highlighting the importance of considering the diversity of disabilities ⁽²⁾.
2. The Commission supports the participation in decision-making processes of persons with disabilities, including people with intellectual disabilities such as people with Down syndrome. For instance, the Guide of good electoral practices for citizens with disabilities ⁽³⁾, adopted as part of the Commission’s EU Citizenship Package, presents an overview of practices aiming to further improve participation of citizens with disabilities in the electoral process. The Commission involves organisations representing persons with intellectual disabilities such as people with Down syndrome through the Disability Platform ⁽⁴⁾, as well as on the occasion of the European Day of Persons with Disabilities ⁽⁵⁾. In addition, to enhance the involvement of people with intellectual disabilities such as people with Down syndrome, the Commission is upscaling the use of easy-to-read formats across its information and consultation documents.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A52021DC0101>.

⁽²⁾ Commission Notice — Guidance on independent living and inclusion in the community of persons with disabilities in the context of EU funding, C/2024/7897 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/C/2024/7188/oj/eng>.

⁽³⁾ Guide of good electoral practices in Member States addressing the participation of citizens with disabilities in the electoral process https://commission.europa.eu/publications/guide-good-electoral-practices-member-states-addressing-participation-citizens-disabilities_en.

⁽⁴⁾ Register of Commission expert groups and other similar entities <https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/expert-groups-register/screen/expert-groups/consult?lang=en&groupId=3820&newsTypeId=2>.

⁽⁵⁾ European Day of Persons with Disabilities 2024 — https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/european-day-persons-disabilities-2024-2024-11-28_en.