

# Supporting people with disabilities to live like everyone else

Questions to help you think about a  
better way of living



**easy  
read**

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In this easy read document, there are some difficult words. We explain what these words mean in the sentence after they have been used.



## Introduction

The Tyrolean Monitoring Committee promotes putting the rights of people with disabilities into practice.

The Tyrolean Monitoring Committee monitors the realization of the rights of people with disabilities.

We have written 36 questions to



- help people with disabilities to think about their own living situation, and how it could be better.
- help people who support people with disabilities to think about the rights of people with disabilities.
- help managers think about what is the right sort of place for people with disabilities to live.



These questions are based on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is an agreement by all countries to give people with disabilities their rights.



Instead of living in a care home or a residential institution, we want people with disabilities to live in their own home, independently or with friends, like

everyone else.

An institution is a place where people with disabilities live together, with staff who look after them.

In an institution, there are usually:

- a lot of people living there
- lots of rules.



People in an institution don't do much for themselves.

Often there is violence in an institution. This violence is often caused by people who are not able to do what they want.

## Using these questions

### People with disabilities



People can use these questions to think about how they are living.

They can use the questions to think about ways to improve their living conditions.

### Groups



We want groups of people with disabilities to use these questions to think about better ways of living.

These questions will help people to talk about how they live and what could be better.

They will also help people to talk about how to get better living conditions.

### Managers



These questions will help managers to give people with disabilities the rights that they should have.

Austria signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. These questions should help the Austrian Government to understand if it is doing the necessary things, which it agreed to do with signing the Convention.

## Questions about your institution

Question 1: How many people live in your institution?



More than 30 people.

10 to 30 people.

4 to 10 people.

Less than 4 people.

It is a flat or house



that you chose by yourself.

You live by yourself or with people you choose to live with.

Question 2: Are there separate areas for living and working?



- The place where you live and the place where you work are the same.
- You work with the same people that you live with.
- The place where you live is separate from the place where you work.
- You live with different people than you work with.

Question 3: Who lives in your institution?

- People of all ages, from small children to older people.
- Men and women are living in separate areas.
- There are different places to live for people of different ages: children, young people, adults and older people.
- Men and women are living in the same area. Gay and straight people can live in the same area too.



Gay means: you are attracted to people who have the same sex as you.

Straight means: you are attracted to the opposite sex.

You can choose what sort of place you want to live in.

You can choose who you want to share your living area with.

Question 4: Do you have a say in who can come and live with you?

The institution decides who you live with.

The institution lets you meet people, asks you what you think about them and then decides who can move in with you.

You and the managers decide together who will live with you.

You can decide for yourself who will live with you.



Question 5: Is your institution split into smaller groups of people?

Yes - split into groups of over 10 people.

Yes - split into groups of 5 to 10 people.

Yes - split into groups of up to 5 people.



Question 6: How many people live in the same room?



- Over 5 people.
- 3 or more people.
- 2 people.
- People have their own room.

Question 7: Do any of these things apply to your institution?



- The toilets and washrooms are outside your room, for example in the corridor.
- You can lock the door to the room where you sleep. You have a key.
- The furniture is provided for you. It can't be changed.
- Your room has its own washroom, toilet and shower. You can lock the door.
- The area where you live has a door that locks. You have the key.
- You have your own front door key to the building where you live.
- The way to get into your own living space uses information that is

given by sound or touch as well as information you can see.

- You can arrange the furniture in the way you want.
- The doorbell has your name on it, not the name of the institution.

## Doing the housework

Question 8: How is the housework organized?



- All the housework is done by staff in the institution.
- Cleaners come in to do the cleaning and tidying.
- The people who live in the institution do some of the housework.
- The people who live in the institution decide how the housework is done. You have meetings with the staff who do the housework.
- The people who live in the institution do the housework with some help.

Question 9: How is cooking organized?



There is nowhere to cook in the area where people live. All the meals are provided. Meals are always at the same time.

People can sometimes make their own food.

Main meals are cooked in the living area.

Only certain people can go to the kitchen and open the fridge.

People can go to the kitchen and open the fridge at any time.

People who live in the institution have meetings to talk about, when main meals should be cooked and eaten.

Question 10: Who makes the meals?



- People who live in the institution never help to make the meals.
- People who live in the institution are around when food is being cooked.
- People are involved in cooking the meals.
- People do certain parts of the cooking.
- People can cook by themselves or with others.
- People can cook with support.

Question 11: Who decides what the meals are?

The staff.

People who live in the institution have a say in what food is cooked.

Staff and residents decide together what food should be cooked.

There are pictures of meals to help people choose what meals they want.

People decide what meals they want independently.

People can choose to have unhealthy food.

People can choose what food they want with support from the staff.



Question 12: Who does the food shopping?



There is regular delivery of food.

Some food is delivered every day.

People who live in the institution sometimes go shopping with support staff.

People often go shopping with support staff.



People go shopping by themselves.

People can choose what they want to buy independently.

## Keeping healthy

Question 13: Who chooses which doctor you see?  
How often do people look after their own health?



- One doctor is responsible for all people living in the institution.
- Medication is given to people without any information.
- People who live in the institution can visit a doctor on their own.
- People get support to visit a doctor. Their illness and the treatment are explained to them.
- People decide if they want to have the treatment after getting information.
- Health advice is given. People can choose which doctor they want.
- Medicines are only given to people to make them feel better. Medicines are not given to calm people down.
- People help with preparing the medicines - filling the boxes.
- People know what each medicine is for. They know about the side effects.

A side effect is something that may happen, that you don't want, when you take some medicine.



People take their medicines independently - with support.

Medicines are kept by the people who decide when to take them.

People are given information about the different treatments they can have. They choose what they want.

People are supported to work out what is the best medical treatment for them.

Question 14: Who chooses which therapist you can see?



- The therapist works for the institution. People have no choice.
- The therapist comes to the institution from outside.
- People who live in the institution can choose their own therapist.
- People are given support and information to choose the therapist they want.
- Therapists can visit people where they live, if people can't get to the therapist's place of work.

## Phones and the internet

Question 15: Can people access the internet?



- People who live in the institution can't use the internet.
- People can use the internet.
- People can use the internet with support.
- People have support to get computers and other equipment to use the internet.
- People are given information about the dangers of the internet. They know how to keep themselves safe on the internet.

Question 16: Can people use the phone?



- The institution does not have the equipment to let people make their own phone calls.
- There isn't any support to help people use the phone.
- People don't have mobile phones.
- People can make phone calls privately using phones that are provided by the institution.
- Mobile phones are given to the people.
- People are supported to get and use their own phones.
- People are supported to make private phone calls.
- Deaf people are supported to make video calls.
- People are supported to use other ways to make a phone call, like: WhatsApp, Signal, Skype or Zoom.



## Going out

Question 17: Can people leave the institution?



People have to ask permission if they want to leave the institution.

People are usually only allowed to go out in groups.

People have to tell the staff if they want to go out and give a reason.

People have to tell the staff, if they want to go out, but they don't have to give a reason.

People are told what time they have to be back.

If people need support to go out, they have to go in a group.

People can get the support they need to go out on their own.

People can organize their own support workers to help them go out.



- People can stay out overnight if they want.
- People decide for themselves when they want to go out.

## Having visitors

Question 18: Can people have visitors in the institution?



- People can't have visitors.
- People can have visitors but a member of staff has to be there.
- Staff have to be told about visitors beforehand.
- There are set times for visitors.
- There are rules about visitors.



- People can have visitors outside their room.
- People can have visitors in their room.



- People can invite visitors to stay for a meal.
- People have the right to have a girlfriend or boyfriend in their room

without being disturbed.

- People can have their partners to stay with them overnight if they wish.
- People can have their partner in their room.
- People in the institution can visit other people in their rooms.

## Relationships

Question 19: Can people have a relationship, for example a boyfriend or girlfriend?



- Staff make it hard for people to have a relationship.
- Staff don't make it hard for people to have a relationship.
- Staff will give people advice and support with relationships.
- Staff will support people to go and see their partner outside of where they live.
- People can live together with their partner in a shared flat.
- People can get help and advice about sex.

- People can get help to look after a child.

## House rules

Question 20: Are there rules, in the place where you live?



- There are house rules, but not everyone knows them.
- People can't change the rules.
- People who live in the institution can change the rules if they want.
- Staff walks into your room without knocking.
- Staff uses pictures to help explain the rules to people who can't read.
- People can visit each other's rooms.
- People have privacy in their room. People have to knock before they go in. There is a tool helping deaf people to know that someone wants to come in.

## Keeping your personal information safe

Question 21: Is your personal information safe?

- Staff often talk about people's personal information. There is nothing you can do to stop it.
- Personal information is shared safely and privately.
- Information about people is used to advertise the service without permission from the people.
- People are told to which organizations their personal information has been given.
- People are told which bits of their personal information have been shared.
- Information is only shared if the person gives permission.
- Information is only used to advertise the service if the person gives permission.



Question 22: How do staff in the institution deal with your personal records?

Personal records are information about you and the service that you are getting, kept by the organization.



- People can't see their personal records.
- People know about the records and can see them sometimes.
- People know about their records and can see them anytime.
- People have a say in what goes into the record and can change it if they want.
- People can have a copy of their record if they want.
- People get a copy of their record in Easy Read.
- People are helped to look at and understand files about themselves.



## Communicating

Question 23: Does the institution provide information in a way you can understand, like Easy Read?



- The institution does not use Easy Read.
- The institution does use some Easy Read.
- Easy Read is used for everything.

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) are different ways to communicate with people who have difficulty using speech and writing.

Question 24: Does the institution use AAC?

- AAC is not used.
- You have to ask for pictures to help you communicate.
- There are some sheets with pictures to help people communicate.
- Electronic communication devices are used. People can have access to them.
- AAC is used for people who understand spoken words - to help them communicate.
- AAC is used to help people learn how to communicate better.
- AAC is used by people who cannot speak.
- People use sign language, easy sign language and AAC.
- There are always good ways available to help people communicate.



Question 25: Do people communicate without speaking, using body language, gestures or facial expressions?

Body language is using your body to show what you think or feel.  
Gestures are using your arms and hands to show what you think.  
Facial expressions are when you use your face to show what you think or feel.



- Staff do not take much notice of people's body language, gestures or facial expressions.
- Staff is always looking at people's body language, gestures and facial expressions.

## Validation

Validation is a way of communicating with people who have dementia in a way that shows respect and care.

Dementia is a disease in the brain. It affects your memory and behavior.

Question 26: Does the institution use Validation?



- They don't use Validation.
- People know a bit about Validation but they don't use it.
- People know a bit about Validation and it is sometimes used.
- Validation is used a lot in the institution.

Question 27: How are people supported, who do not communicate?



- People are given help to live. But no-one helps them to communicate.
- Care and support are given to help people communicate.
- People are helped to take part in everyday life.
- Staff speak to the person, to help them understand what they are doing and what is happening.
- People's care and support plans involve their relatives and friends if they want.

## Aids and resources

Aids and resources are the gadgets, computers, phones and equipment that help people to take part. This includes wheelchairs.

Question 28: What aids and resources are available in your institution?



- There are very few aids or resources.
- Good quality aids and resources are available to deal with different situations.
- Good quality aids and resources are available to help people in their

daily life.

- There are aids for certain conditions - like a device to help you breathe.
- There is good advice about aids. You can go and see new aids.

## Holidays and travel

Question 29: How does the institution organize holidays and travel?



- You have your holiday at the institution.
- Holidays are spent as group excursions.
- People go on holiday in a large group to a certain place.
- Holidays are made possible as personally desired trips.
- Individual or small group holiday trips are facilitated and accompanied.
- People have holidays arranged by a different organization (travel agency).

## Making decisions

Question 30: How are people helped to make decisions in the institution?



- People's guardians make decisions for them.
- Staff helps you to make decisions.
- People can choose who they want to help them make decisions.
- People get regular support to make decisions.

## Looking after money

Question 31: Can people in the institution choose how to spend their own money?



- The institution decides how people can spend their money.
- The institution asks people what they plan to do with their money.
- The institution checks what people are spending their money on.
- Staff helps people to think about how to spend their money.
- People can decide for themselves

how to spend their money.

## Meetings

Question 32: Are there meetings to talk about what support and care is right for each individual person?



- There are no meetings with people about their care and support.
- There are a few meetings with people about their care and support.
- People have a group of staff and friends who meet with them to talk about care and support.
- Friends come to meetings to help making plans for the future.

## Moving or changing your support

Question 33: Is it possible to move from the institution or change your support?



- The type of accommodation, location and support staff are predetermined. Changes are not possible.
- A desired change in living arrangements and place of residence is hindered or even prevented.
- You can change the group you live

with.

- People can change where they live without any difficulty.
- People can choose their own support workers.
- People can move to another place to live and get different support.
- People can move to a different place and chose whom they want as support.

## Having a say

Question 34: Do people with disabilities have a say about how the institution is run?

- People with disabilities have very few chances to have a say.
- People with disabilities can have a say.
- There are regular meetings where people with disabilities can have their say.
- People with disabilities have the chance to say how the institution should change.
- Managers want to change the institution so that people with



disabilities live in new, better places with more independence.

Everyone is able to help choose who should get a job in the institution.

People with disabilities have a say in how the institution is managed.

## Restriction of Freedom

Question 35: Are people free to do what they want in the institution?

People are tied down if they don't behave in the way the staff wants.

People are given drugs to calm them down if they behave in a way the staff doesn't like.

Staff uses force to make people behave, but nobody talks about it.

Staff doesn't know the rules about using force.

Staff does know the rules about using force.

Staff knows what things are against the rules.





- Everyone at the institution has been trained to understand the rules about restricting freedom.
- Restricting freedom is discussed with the people who live here.
- People have to agree to the staff when their freedom is being restricted.
- Other, kinder ways of helping people behave are used.
- A record is kept about anytime that staff restricts freedom.
- Staff tells people's families and advocates when they restrict a person's freedom.

An advocate is someone who helps you to speak up, or speaks up for you.



- If freedom is restricted, people will talk about what happened and what other ways could be used instead.
- The staff talks about other ways to deal with people's behavior.
- After freedom is restricted, staff will get some training in other ways to deal with people's behavior.
- Managers will talk with the staff, if they restrict freedom.

- The institution will look at changing how it works, if anyone restricts freedom.
- If any staff restricts freedom, they will have to change their job.
- No one forces anyone to do anything.

## Complaints

Question 36: Can people in the institution make a complaint?



- People have no way of making a complaint.
- Complaints are not taken seriously.
- Complaints can be made to your care or support staff. They will be dealt with by them.
- Complaints are discussed by the support team without the person being there.
- The support team discusses complaints with the person being there.
- People can contact an outside organization and make a complaint to them.



- People are told about outside organizations that they can make a complaint to.
- People are given the chance to contact outside organizations.
- People can make a complaint without giving their name.
- The institution has a group that speaks up for people. You can make a complaint to them.
- There are people who can help you make a complaint.
- Everyone is told about how to make a complaint and what happens if you make a complaint.