



Inclusion Ireland

The National Association for People
with an Intellectual Disability.

Annual Report 2024



[InclusionIreland.ie](https://www.inclusionireland.ie)



Our purpose

We work towards the full inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities by supporting people to have their voices heard and advocating for rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

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About Inclusion Ireland

Inclusion Ireland works towards the full inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities by supporting people to have their voices heard, and by advocating for rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

Since it was founded over 60 years ago, Inclusion Ireland has brought people with intellectual disabilities and their families into supportive networks, provided clear and helpful information, and stood beside them in the fight for equal rights and full inclusion in society.



Our vision and our values

Our vision is an inclusive Ireland where people with intellectual disabilities are supported to live and participate as an equal member within the community.

Respect

Respect is about valuing the life of every person with an intellectual disability. It is also about respecting different people's opinions and ways of living.

Inclusion

Inclusion is about people with intellectual disabilities taking part in all parts of Irish life. We believe that it's a better world when we are all in it together. We don't think that people with intellectual disabilities should be separate.

Equality

Equality is about a fairer society where disabled people have equal rights. We work towards a time when every person with an intellectual disability is treated fairly and has the same rights as every other citizen.

Voice

Voice is about people with an intellectual disability having their say and being heard in Irish society. This includes people who communicate in different ways.

Choice

Choice is about supporting and respecting people with an intellectual disability to live lives that they want to live, with the support they need.

A message from our CEO



Derval McDonagh
CEO, Inclusion Ireland

A warm welcome to the 2024 Inclusion Ireland Annual Report.

It is my great pleasure as CEO of Inclusion Ireland to highlight the work of our team and board as we work together to achieve our vision as an organisation; an inclusive Ireland where people with intellectual disabilities are supported to live and participate as an equal member of the community.

In 2024, our membership grew, and we would like to extend a particular thanks to people who have joined our movement for change. We welcome hearing from our members, and we enjoy working with you to influence change. Last year our members took part in policy consultations, attended joint Oireachtas committee meetings and focus groups. Their voices are what drive us forward and help us to stay on course with our mission.

I would like to take a moment to thank our board for their dedication and commitment to the organisation. We are proud of the improvements in governance we made in 2024 and most importantly we are proud of our inclusive board. 1/3 of our board have lived experience of intellectual disability and 1/3 have a family member with an intellectual disability. This helps every decision we make to be truly focused on the rights of disabled people to live full, connected lives as rights holders. I would also like to thank our team for their work throughout 2024. I count myself incredibly lucky that I get to work alongside a team of hard-working, skilled, and compassionate people. Their work is highlighted throughout this report, and it gives me immense pride to be able to showcase it.

In 2024, our policy work went from strength to strength. We were pleased to see our impact, particularly in the changes to the Work and Access Scheme and the Wage Subsidy Scheme with the real potential to support people into paid employment. In recognition of our policy work, we were invited to sit on national strategic advisory groups. We were also pleased to have been invited to join the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth's advisory group on the Disability Action Plan.

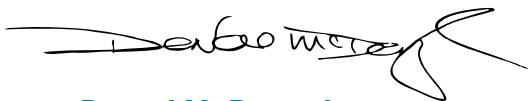
This means that we play a monitoring role in the delivery of this plan - which details goals across health and social care supports, housing, family-based support, home support and respite. We rely on our members to keep us informed about their real-world experiences so that we can shape the conversation at that table.

As a trusted source of evidence based, high quality resources, we were also pleased to publish two guides last year focused on self-advocacy and the Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act. These guides will support people working in advocacy to ensure that people's rights are upheld.

As a small organisation, we pick one campaign a year to focus on. It is how we can be sure to have the most impact. In 2022 we focused on housing, in 2023 on employment and in 2024 we focused on inclusive education. We were pleased to see several changes in policy and legislation happen in 2024 because of our efforts. We know, however, that there is still a long road to travel before we achieve our vision of a fully inclusive model of education where all children are valued and respected and have the opportunity to go to their local school with their siblings and peers. Many of the issues we see for people with intellectual disabilities and their families later in life stem directly from their experiences in the early years. We were saddened last year to hear from many parents who struggle to get even basic information in the early years of their child's life. This lack of support has a lifetime of consequences for the child and for their family.

Our campaign work pushes against the stereotype that people with intellectual disabilities are not equal, valued citizens who deserve rights. We are wholeheartedly focused on counteracting that narrative. We simply do not accept that people with intellectual disabilities should be excluded from any aspect of Irish society, and we work hard every day to highlight the barriers people experience and the responsibility of the state to remove those barriers. We share stories of people living at home with elderly families with no support, children hospitalised due to a lack of coordinated family support, people excluded from schools and workplaces. We also share stories of hope and of change. Inclusion is not difficult; it is simply about recognising our shared humanity and recognising also that the world has been designed in a way which has excluded our members and community for far too long.

We look forward to continuing our work into 2025. We remain deeply committed to our mission. With a new Government in place, we are focusing our efforts on influencing and shaping the new National Disability Strategy which is due to be published in mid-2025. We will continue to support your voices to be heard as we help to shape a fairer and more inclusive Ireland for us all.



Derval McDonagh
CEO Inclusion Ireland

A message from our Chairperson



Ashley Sands
Chairperson, Inclusion Ireland

Welcome to Inclusion Ireland's 2024 Annual Report! We are proud to present the fantastic work the organisation has done throughout the year.

In 2024, our board strengthened its governance through several key initiatives:

We conducted an internal board evaluation, examining both the board's overall performance and that of all sub-committees. This assessment assured us that our work makes an impact and leads to improvements in how we all work together.

We evaluated how we support all board members in their roles. This led us to enhance our knowledge-sharing practices and mutual support systems.

Our proudest achievement this year was approving the transformation of the Chair position into a Co-Chair model, ensuring that a person with an intellectual disability will always serve as Co-Chair. Our commitment to strong governance was demonstrated through the rigorous recruitment process that selected our new Co-Chair, Tomás Murphy. Tomás has been on our board since 2021.

In 2025, Tomás and I will focus on making this new leadership structure successful, creating a model that other organisations can follow.

I want to sincerely thank all board and sub-committee members for their dedicated service to our organisation over the past year. Your hard work is truly appreciated. To the staff I would like to acknowledge your outstanding work during the year. Finally, I would also like to thank you, our members, for your continued support.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ashley Sands". The script is fluid and cursive.

Ashley Sands
Chairperson, Inclusion Ireland

Our board

Inclusion Ireland has a CEO and Board of Directors who make sure that we work in accordance with our values and our Strategic Plan.

All of our directors bring a lot of different experiences to their roles. There are self-advocates on our board because we believe that inclusive governance is key to our work. Their lived experience is a critical skill which is very valuable.

The board has four sub-committees: Audit, Risk, Quality; People and Pay; Include; and the Annual Strategic Review.



Ashley Sands, Chairperson

Board Meeting Attendance: 6

Sub Committees: Annual Strategic Review; Audit, Risk, Quality; People and Pay



Tomás Murphy

Board Meeting Attendance: 5

Sub Committees: Include; People and Pay



John Moore, Company Secretary

Board Meeting Attendance: 6



Sarah Jane Lavin

Board Meeting Attendance: 5

Sub Committees: Include



Rona Bowe

Board Meeting Attendance: 5
Sub Committees: Audit, Risk, Quality



Siobhán Byrne

Board Meeting Attendance: 6
Sub Committees: Include



Glenn Shanley

Board Meeting Attendance: 4
Sub Committees: Audit, Risk, Quality



Briana Fitzsimons

Board Meeting Attendance: 5
Sub Committees: Annual Strategic Review



David Fraughan

Board Meeting Attendance: 5
Sub Committees: Annual Strategic Review; Include



Martin Rowan

Board Meeting Attendance: 4
Sub Committees: Include

Triple lock certification

Inclusion Ireland was thrilled to become a Triple Lock member of Charities Institute Ireland in 2024. This certification shows we are fully committed to being open, honest, and trustworthy in everything we do.

The Triple Lock status means we meet high standards in three important areas:

- 1. Good Governance** - We follow strong rules to make sure our organisation is run properly.
- 2. Financial Reporting** - We use clear and accurate methods to report how we manage money.
- 3. Fundraising Guidelines** - We follow ethical rules to ensure all donations are handled with care and respect.

Being a Triple Lock member helps people trust us. It shows we work to the best standards, giving confidence to the public, our donors, and everyone we work with. This helps us continue our important work of supporting and advocating for people with intellectual disabilities.



To find out more on the Triple Lock Standard click on the logo above

Our members

Our members are a mix of people with intellectual disabilities, their family members and supporters, professionals and groups.

We want to thank our members and subscribers for supporting our work this year. We will continue to advocate for people with intellectual disabilities and their families until we achieve our shared vision of a more inclusive Ireland.

We hope to continue growing and reaching new membership milestones in 2025.



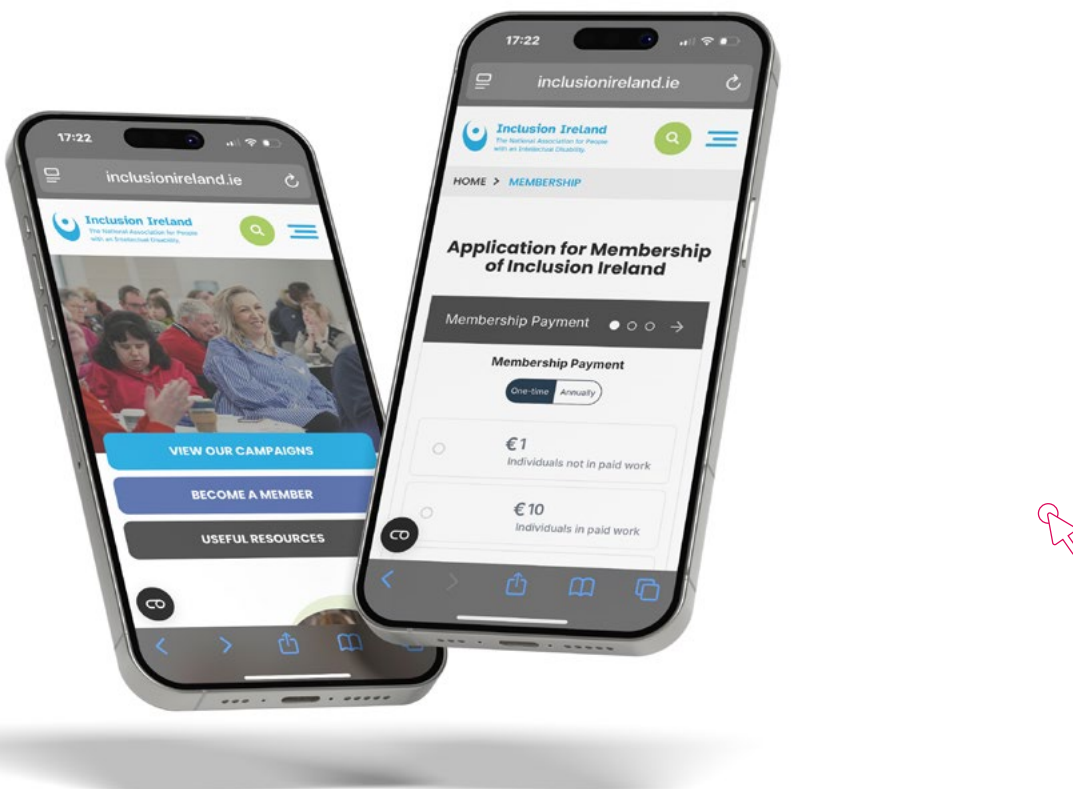
Become a member

Our Voices, Our Rights - Join Inclusion Ireland today!

As members of Inclusion Ireland, you can:

- Make the voice of people with intellectual disabilities and their families stronger.
- Bring your lived experience to the table to shape policies and decisions.
- Gain confidence in speaking up and speaking out about your rights.
- Vote at Inclusion Ireland's Annual General Meeting and have your say.
- Become a visible community together that can't be ignored.
- Make equal rights a reality for people with intellectual disabilities.
- Shape Inclusion Ireland's message to policymakers and government.

We want to see more people with intellectual disabilities become members of Inclusion Ireland. We welcome family members, supporters, and allies to become members too. Our members share our values and support our Strategic Plan.



Our Impact in 2024 at a glance

58,000



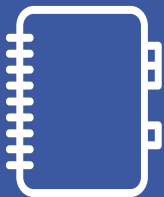
Website
Visitors

Supported
1567
people with
advocacy inquiries



25

Policy
submissions



Over
2200

people registered
for our webinars



55,000



Followers on
social media

Connected and engaged with

146



family support groups

Worked with over

150



self advocates

Our impact in 2024

Special Education Teaching Hours Campaign

Increased social media following of

1550

In March it was announced that the funding allocation which schools receive will no longer be based on the number of children with identified complex needs enrolled in a school. We were invited to appear before a Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education to share the concerns of parents of children. We received a letter from the Secretary General of the Department requesting our support on inclusive education. We received an increased social media following of 1,550 during the weeks of this campaign. We received national media coverage in the Irish Times, Newstalk, RTÉ and 69 local radio and print features.

Budget 2025

859

responses to our Budget 2025 Survey

250

more than the previous year

Significant response and discussion at committees, with senior officials, Ministers, TDs, Senators, and at party and Department pre-budget sessions.

Election 2024 and Programme for Government

Our manifesto featured in many party election manifestos, meetings and engagements, and across our social media. We created a one page Programme for Government highlighting the priorities for our community, this was sent to every newly elected TD.

Summer Programme

In June 493 families told us that

over 1 in 4

of their children cannot access summer provision. This helped us to secure a meeting with Minister Hildegard Naughton. We saw increased investment in the next summer programme in Budget 2025.

Seclusion and restraint

Over 400 families told us through our survey that 35% of disabled children endure seclusion and 27% suffer restraint at school. The results were deeply upsetting and opened minds across Ireland to the reality of exclusion and the experience of abuse for many children.

The story was covered in the media 85 times in two days. This included national media coverage on RTE news, RTE Radio 1, Virgin Media One, Irish Examiner, the Journal, RTÉ 2FM, Newstalk, the Irish Times (twice), the Irish Independent and over 30 local radio and print.



A snapshot of Inclusion Ireland in the media

In 2024 Inclusion Ireland was mentioned 735 times across print, online, radio and television. This is a snapshot of some of our national coverage:



Strategic Plan 2023-2026

In 2023, Inclusion Ireland published a new strategic plan to guide the organisation. It sets clear goals, helps everyone work together, and makes sure time and resources are used wisely.

Inclusion Ireland's Strategic Plan 2023-2026 shaped everything we did this year. Our strategic plan has three key strategic goals.

1. Campaigning

We campaign for real change in people's lives.

2. Self-advocacy and participation

We support people with intellectual disabilities to be valued and effectively participate in society.

3. Accessible communications and information

We are leaders in accessible information and communication.



Our work in 2024: Campaigning

Campaigning is a core part of Inclusion Ireland's work. We promote change in society so that people with intellectual disabilities are treated as equal and valued citizens.

Through our campaigns, we raise awareness and help people understand why these changes are essential for improving the lives of those with intellectual disabilities.

In 2024, we worked with self-advocates to build campaigns on Inclusive education and Budget 2025. We also made a number of successful consultations and policy submissions. Additionally, we were delighted to have self-advocate, Lydia Fisher, chosen to represent us and Inclusion International on a global stage, speaking about her right to have a choice. [Read more about Lydia's experience on page 25.](#)



Budget 2025

In 2024, 859 people responded to a survey we sent out as we prepared our Budget 2025 submission. This was 250 more people than the previous year.

We heard from people with intellectual disabilities and their family members about the issues facing them and the solutions available to Government to make a fairer and more equal society.

This year at Inclusion Ireland, we have focused most of our efforts on building a better education system for all children, for this reason we gave this Pre-Budget Submission the title “Make Children with Intellectual Disabilities Matter”.



Inclusive education campaign

This year, we focused on making schools more inclusive. Our vision is for a time when all children get to go to school together with the support they need to flourish.

This vision should not leave out any child; from those who require a small amount of support to access their rights to children who require intensive support and who have traditionally been left out of the “mainstream” conversation.

We will not rest until every child has the opportunity to thrive at school.

Special education teaching

We conducted a survey that found 45% of children with support needs feel the education system is failing them.

We teamed up with AsIAM and Down Syndrome Ireland to highlight parents’ concerns about the new Special Education Teacher (SET) model- 96% of parents were worried about its impact, and 74% didn’t fully understand it.

We shared our message - “The Most Important Voice in Education is Children” - through media and an accessible video. Our campaign led to a meeting with Minister Hildegard Naughton, recognition of poor consultation, and involvement from senior government officials. We were later invited to advise on inclusive education, showing our efforts are making a real impact.

Seclusion and restraint

Throughout the year, we applied political and media pressure to protect children from seclusion and restraint in schools.

Our survey of over 400 families revealed stark findings - 35% of disabled children experience seclusion, and 27% face restraint. These results gained national coverage, with 85 media reports in two days, including coverage on the radio, television and major newspapers.

Summer Programme provision

In summer 2024, a poll of 493 families told us that over 1 in 4 children entitled to the Summer Programme cannot access it.

We brought this to the attention of the Minister for Special Education and Inclusion, Hildegard Naughton, and we were pleased to meet with her to discuss our members’ concerns.

We saw increased investment in the summer programme in 2024 and we hope to see that reflected again in the future.

Key consultations and engagements

Self-advocates at Leinster House

A group of 10 self-advocates gave a policy briefing to Oireachtas members at Leinster House and stood up for children with intellectual disabilities in schools.

They told TDs and Senators what needs to change so that all children feel included, accepted, and have the highest quality education experience.

With more than 74% of survey respondents calling for change in our education system, we must listen to their voices and commit to meaningful action.



Pre-budget Forum

Inclusion Ireland attended the annual Pre-Budget Forum organised by the Department of Social Protection. During this event, we had the opportunity to advocate on behalf of our members to ensure that the next Budget can make a difference in their lives.

We highlighted the need for the creation of a weekly and permanent €50 Cost of Disability payment, for the weekly Disability Allowance payment to be increased to €318 per week (poverty threshold level), as well as the need for more employment supports and flexible schemes such as the Wage Subsidy Scheme.



Work and Access Scheme

The Work and Access Scheme, launched in July 2024, replaced the outdated Reasonable Accommodation Funds with a more suitable and inclusive model.

Designed to better meet the needs of people with intellectual disabilities, the new scheme includes supports like job coaching, interview assistance, and help with communication.

Its introduction follows strong advocacy by Inclusion Ireland and other organisations during the 2022 review of the Reasonable Accommodation Funds.



Oireachtas disability group Leinster House day

Inclusion Ireland, along with five other organisations in the coalition known as the Oireachtas Disability Group (ODG), visited Leinster House for their annual lobby day.

The group met with TDs and Senators to advocate for their budget requests on poverty and exclusion and housing, supported living, support for people as they age, access to services and supports. The ODG is comprised of Disabled Persons Organisations (DPOs) representing service providers and advocacy organisations.



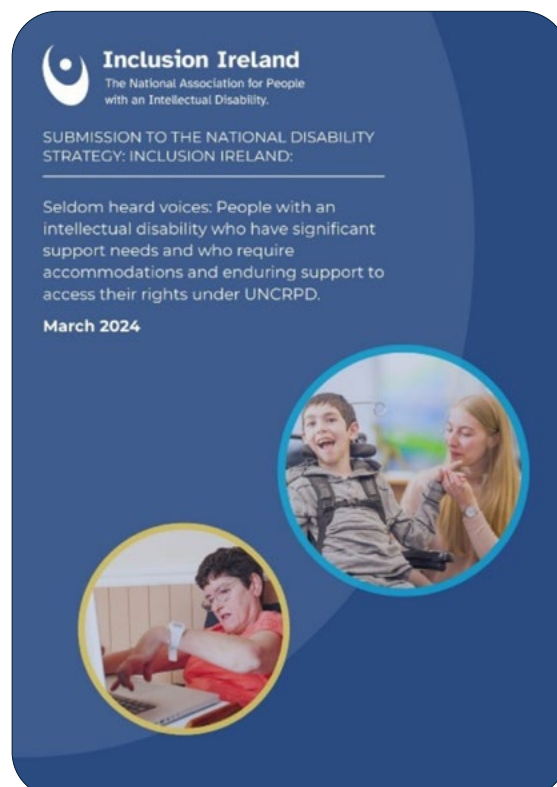
Consultation on the new National Disability Strategy

From late 2023 to the end of 2024, a series of online and in-person consultations took place to help shape Ireland's new National Disability Strategy. Inclusion Ireland played an active role throughout, working to ensure the voices of people with intellectual disabilities were heard and included.

We participated in online consultations alongside self-advocates, hosted a focus group in our office in partnership with the National Disability Authority, and conducted interviews with individuals with higher support needs.

We consulted with non-speaking individuals and people with significant support needs who require accommodations and enduring support to access their rights under the UNCRPD.

This submission was groundbreaking. It gave a voice to people who are often underrepresented in consultation and participatory processes.



Programme for Government 2025

After the general election took place in November 2024, we sent our key asks to every newly elected TD, in the hopes that disability rights would be featured heavily in the Programme for Government.

This marked the beginning of our efforts to ensure this new government prioritises the rights of our community. We are committed to making and maintaining good relationships with new ministers in the coming year.

Our priorities include actions which can support long term strategic thinking to improve the lives of disabled people and their families. Here are the things we called for:



Legislation - Review and amend all the existing disability related legislation to ensure its compliance with the UNCRPD. Introduce new legislation on seclusion and restraint.



Education - Reform the education system and develop a strategic plan to move towards a fully inclusive model of education.



Health - Deliver a full independent review of Children's Disability Network Teams, implement its recommendations and fully roll out and resource CAMHS-ID teams across the country.



Employment - Invest in supports and improve employment prospects for people with an intellectual disability.



Cost of disability - Create a permanent cost of disability payment and progressively increase the disability allowance.



Participation - Ensure disabled people shape policy through sustained funding of DPOs, expanded advocacy services, and a dedicated national advocacy service for children.



Housing rights - Ensure personalised budgets, expand home support, integrate housing and care systems, end institutional settings, and shift to proactive long-term funding and planning especially for those living at home with elderly family members.

Sharing experiences: Lydia Fisher

In October 2024, I was invited to Geneva, Switzerland to address the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). CEDAW is a group of 23 experts from around the world who check on the work countries are doing to end discrimination against women.

There were delegates from different backgrounds and from different countries. I enjoyed meeting them all and learning about how disabled people are treated throughout the world.

In my presentation, I spoke about legal capacity, and relationships and sexuality rights for women with intellectual disabilities. I should be able to be in relationships and to have a family, but a lot of people want to stop me from making important decisions. I deserve to have choices.

As women with intellectual disabilities, we face many of the same challenges and stereotypes that all women face. But because of the added discrimination we face, the barriers are even harder for us to overcome. With the right support we can do whatever we choose, just like other women.

I was proud to be able to speak on such a global platform. I want to open peoples' eyes and help them to understand that people with intellectual disabilities deserve to have a choice about how they want to live. People with disabilities are powerful and we have a lot of experience to offer.

I am hopeful that things will change for women with intellectual disabilities in the future. I hope that our rights will be stronger and that we will have more respect. We have already made a lot of progress in the past but there is still a lot of work we have to do.



Policy submissions and advocacy efforts

In 2024, Inclusion Ireland made 25 policy submissions on key issues including inclusive education, employment, housing, and social protection.

We supported stronger representation of disabled voices in government consultations and achieved increased awareness in government bodies about disability rights.

Key highlights include:

UN Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights: We advocated for inclusive education, employment, and dignified living for disabled people.

National Disability Strategy: We called for multi-annual funding and stronger governmental responsibility and planning with people as they age and avoiding emergency/crisis responses.

National Payment Strategy: We called for digital accessibility for people with intellectual disabilities.

Oireachtas Committee on Education: We raised concerns about changes in resource allocation for students with complex needs.

Autism Innovation Strategy: We recommended aligning with the UNCRPD and broader disability strategy.

Disability Matters Committee: We pushed for inclusive communities and improved consultation processes.

Green Paper on Disability: We successfully opposed problematic classifications and helped in its removal.

Budget 2025 Advocacy: We sought increased social welfare payments, employment supports, job coaches, and more flexible wage subsidies.



Our work on: Self-advocacy and Participation

People with intellectual disabilities are often marginalised and excluded from fully participating in society. Goal 2 of our Strategic Plan focusses on empowering people to be valuable participants in society.

In 2024, self-advocates were at the heart of Inclusion Ireland's work. By sharing their lived experience at numerous events and forums, our self-advocates helped to inform and educate.

Throughout the year, Inclusion Ireland worked alongside various partners and provided support to families, ensuring individuals with intellectual disabilities and their loved ones could fully engage in all aspects of society.



Supporting self-advocates

Progressing Financial Inclusion

The Irish Banking Culture Board (IBCB) hosted a Financial Inclusion event attended by its member banks, Inclusion Ireland, people from across Ireland with intellectual disabilities and other key stakeholders.

The event was part of an IBCB initiative to support people with intellectual disabilities towards financial independence.

This was a follow-on event, after Inclusion Ireland supported people with intellectual disabilities to share their thoughts and concerns with the IBCB in 2023.

The insights provided at this event will help the IBCB and their member banks to have an impact on progressing financial inclusion further.



Europe in Action

Representatives from Inclusion Ireland attended the 20th Europe in Action Conference in Glasgow, hosted by Inclusion Europe and Enable Scotland.

Over 300 people from across Europe gathered to discuss de-institutionalisation efforts. Paul Alford, self-advocate, shared his experience living in an institution in Ireland and offered advice for promoting independent living.

Our representatives also took part in a session on housing and supported living to share both the good practices and barriers that exist in Ireland.



Overcoming barriers to inclusive education

Self-advocate Tamara Byrne presented at the Universal Design for Learning Symposium held by Maynooth University. Tamara spoke about her own education story and how we can work together to create a fully inclusive education model.

“The UNCRPD says that we have the right to the best possible education so that we can achieve our dreams... If children are given the right supports and encouragement, real inclusion is possible. Just because someone thinks or communicates differently to you, they still have feelings, ideas, opinions, stories, memories, and dreams inside. It is up to us all to figure out how to support the person in the way they want to express themselves and achieve their potential.”

Tamara Byrne



Self-advocates at the Disability Matters Committee

Advocates from the Midlands Conversation Group attended the Disability Matters Committee Meeting on 8 April.

The self-advocates gave their personal accounts of independent living within our community. The event aimed to enhance the committee's understanding of the implementation of the UNCRPD in Ireland.



Decision Support Service Feedback Fora

In 2024, the Decision Support Service (DSS) collaborated with a group of nine people with lived experience of disability, Inclusion Ireland and the Mental Health Commission, to gather feedback and improve services.

They met four times throughout the year to review policies and provide input to improve service usage.

Suggestions from the group led to improved accessibility and support. The DSS is also revising their accessibility materials with simpler language, visuals, and videos in progress. A casebook of complaints from 2024 will be published to increase transparency. The feedback fora will continue their advisory work into 2025.



Click on either of the logos above to access the respective organisation's website

Connect Family Network

The Connect Family Network works to bring about greater participation of people with an intellectual disability and their family members in the design and delivery of disability services and supports.

We organised a series of informative and supportive sessions, both online and in person, to help families better understand their rights, access services, and connect with others who share similar experiences.

These sessions covered key issues such as education, personalised budgets, and advocacy, creating a safe and welcoming space for people to ask questions, share their stories, and feel empowered.

If you are interested in joining the Connect Family Network please contact our Project Advocacy Worker Petria at petria@inclusionireland.ie

The Connect Family Network is funded by the Government of Ireland through Pobal.



Click on either of the logos above to access the respective organisation's website

Amplifying voice


Speak Up, Speak Out! Guide

In 2024, we launched our much-anticipated self-advocacy training guide, 'Speak Up, Speak Out!'.

The guide is a personal development and assertiveness training programme for people with intellectual disabilities.

The digital 'Speak Up, Speak Out!' training guide was designed and developed by Inclusion Ireland to build essential skills for effective self-advocacy. The Guide's exercises and games are accessible, enjoyable, and interactive.





Speak up, Speak out!

Self-Advocacy Training Guide



What participants say about the exercises:

“They help me not to be nervous and speak up because sometimes I can be shy.”

“They help me in real life to speak up for myself.”

What Support Workers say about rolling out the programme:

“Members can engage better with Key Workers, before that they had a feeling of being excluded, thought they couldn’t complain about things, but it’s given them a voice now.”

“As we see the difference in people, it motivates us to continue... We’re building our confidence; they’re enjoying it so we’re enjoying too.”

“We’ve noticed over time a lot of confidence is built; they’re taking more initiative and speaking up for themselves.”

Decision Making

Information



Communicate



Think about



Remember

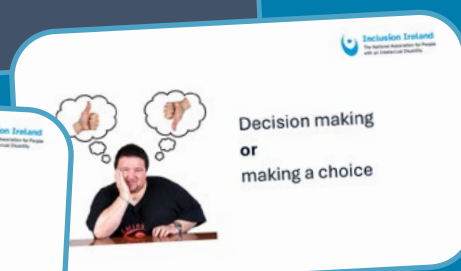


Inclusion Ireland
The National Association for People
with an Intellectual Disability.

Decision Making Worksheet

(A resource or tool for an individual to work through a decision)

Relevant Person	Person supported to make the decision or the person making the decision with someone else or the person who has an appointed decision-making representative.		
Decision to be made	One decision only		
Date	Time specific to the day or to a time period.		
Who is involved	Roles of others involved in a decision.		
Photosymbol	Considerations	Date(s)	Notes
	Information <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In accessible or easy to read format• Discuss at the best time of day• Consider who and how it is delivered• Consider the detail of the information• Consider the relevance to the decision• Prioritise questions to be asked and to be considered		
	Remember <ul style="list-style-type: none">• At the time or in the moment?• Hours or days later?• How it is remembered?• Time given for the process?		
	Think About <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Process the information• Name the pros and cons• Are visual supports helpful• How the detail of information is understood		
	Communicate <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Through speaking, sign, devices, or art• Is there need to practice the story?• Evidence needed? (audio, video, written)• May be with assistance		



Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act 2015 Train the Trainer Guide and Resources

The Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act 2015

Just before the end of 2024, we launched our 'Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act 2015 Train the Trainer Guide and Resources'.

This resource was created with the help of people with intellectual disabilities to make information about their rights easier to understand.

The training will help people learn about the Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act 2015 and the Decision Support Service (DSS), and how they can use these resources to make decisions about their lives.





“Being a member of Inclusion Ireland and working with them is an absolute privilege.

Their commitment to valuing every person offers an equitable seat at the same table, giving a sense of belonging and empowering individuals with intellectual disabilities to live fuller lives.”

Tracy Carroll, parent and member of Inclusion Ireland

Sharing experiences: the Midlands Conversation Group

The Midlands Conversation Group is a social group for people with intellectual disabilities living in the midlands. In 2024, the group discussed decision-making, the Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act 2015 and the Decision Support Service.

Below, three members share their experiences of learning about making decisions.



Stuart O'Mahony

"We learned to use our voices. It's good to know the different sources for help that are out there if we need them."

Anthony Shoer

"I liked working with the assisted decision making training materials. They helped me to understand and remember. It's a relief to know that this support is there for me if I need it."



David King

"It's important for people with disabilities to have voices and to speak up. A lot of other people take that away from us and speak for us. They don't really represent what we want."



Accessible communication and information

Clear and accessible information empowers people to understand their rights, make informed decisions, and take control of their lives.

It fosters inclusion, respect, and community participation by ensuring everyone can access and understand essential information. Prioritising accessibility in our Strategic Plan helps break down barriers and promote equity for all.

Accessible communications efforts in 2024

Throughout 2024, we continued our ongoing commitment to ensuring that people with an intellectual disability have access to important information.

In 2024, we shared the results of our Erasmus+ project, CCUV. CCUV stands for: “Capito! Compris! Understood! Verstanden!” These words mean “understood” in different languages. The project started in 2022 and aimed to develop common standards to translate language into three different levels of difficulty: B1 for plain language, A2 for easy-to-read language and A1 for the easiest level. We have developed training tools for individuals who work with Easy-to-Read and plain language. These resources can be found on our website.

We co-produced our internal publications with easy-to-read users. This included an Easy-to-Read Annual Report, a membership document, and an accessible video on our Budget 2025 key asks. After the Budget was announced, we created ‘What We Asked For vs. What We Got’, comparing our proposals with the final budget decisions.

2024 was a very important year for politics in Ireland. With local, national and European elections on the cards, we wanted to support as many people as we could to be informed and able to vote in these elections. Ahead of the local and European elections in June, we produced a resource that aimed to support voters with intellectual disabilities.

Beyond our own publications, we collaborated with external organisations to produce accessible materials. We worked with self-advocates to develop the Housing Agency’s Easy-to-Read Tenancy Agreement Guide, along with accessible resources on cost rental and local authority home loans. Additionally, we partnered with Mental Health Reform to create ‘Mental Health in the Workplace: A Guide to Your Rights’.



Sharing experiences: Paul Alford and voting

Hi, my name is Paul Alford. I am a Self-Advocacy Worker at Inclusion Ireland. In 2024, we had a lot of elections — local, European, and national. It was an important time for people to have their say. In the past, I didn't know what to do when it was election day. Voting was difficult and confusing.



I worked with my colleague Angela at Inclusion Ireland to create an easy-to-read voting guide to support people with an intellectual disability to participate and have a voice in our country's elections.

Political parties and the government need to make all voting information easier to understand. They should provide simple guides and manifestos with clear words, pictures, and even audio or video options. Everyone should be able to understand who they are voting for.

People with intellectual disabilities have a right to vote, just like everyone else. To make this happen, politicians need to listen. They should meet with self-advocates, ask what support is needed, and make sure voting is truly accessible. If they don't, they are leaving people out. Leaving people out is wrong.

In the future, I hope that politics will be more accessible. Voting should be easy for everyone, and everyone should have a say in how their country works.

Information Sessions

We held 7 webinars in 2024. From webinars for professionals, families and self-advocates, we were delighted that our information sessions had such a far-reaching impact for many different people.

An Inclusion Ireland Erasmus+ Project Webinar

We hosted a webinar to present the findings of our Erasmus+ Project. It was great to be joined by other people who are working on making information easy to understand.



Connect Family Network Roundtable on Self-Directed Living and Personalised Budgets

With support from Pobal and the Connect Family Network, we hosted an event on personalised budgets, answering over 50 questions from families and advocating to make these budgets more widely available.



All videos can be viewed on our youtube channel - www.youtube.com/InclusionIreland or by clicking on the screenshots above

An Inclusive School Culture

In line with our inclusive education campaign, we hosted a webinar about an inclusive school culture. Our key speaker, Claire O'Neill spoke about how to create a more inclusive school, supporting all children to understand difference, and how frameworks can support the development of inclusive culture.



Speak Up, Speak Out! Guide Launch

We were delighted to host the launch of our 'Speak Up, Speak Out!' Guide with the help of some great self-advocates. At the launch we went through the different sections of the guide to show how it can be used as a personal development and assertiveness training programme for people with intellectual disabilities.



All videos can be viewed on our youtube channel - www.youtube.com/InclusionIreland or by clicking on the screenshots above

Sensory Spaces in Schools

We ran a 'Sensory Spaces in Schools' webinar with a representation from the teaching community. Senior Occupational Therapist Elizabeth O'Connor provided some valuable advice and tips around this topic.



An Introduction to the Assisted Decision Making (Capacity Act) 2015 and Decision Support Service

We held an engaging discussion on rights and decision-making with speakers from the Decision Support Service, HSE, Inclusion Ireland, and self-advocates from across the country.



All videos can be viewed on our youtube channel - www.youtube.com/InclusionIreland or by clicking on the screenshots above

Classroom Strategies for Children who Communicate Differently

AslAm and Inclusion Ireland joined forces to offer practical strategies to teachers and SNAs supporting children who communicate in different ways.



All videos can be viewed on our youtube channel - www.youtube.com/InclusionIreland or by clicking on the screenshots above

Finances

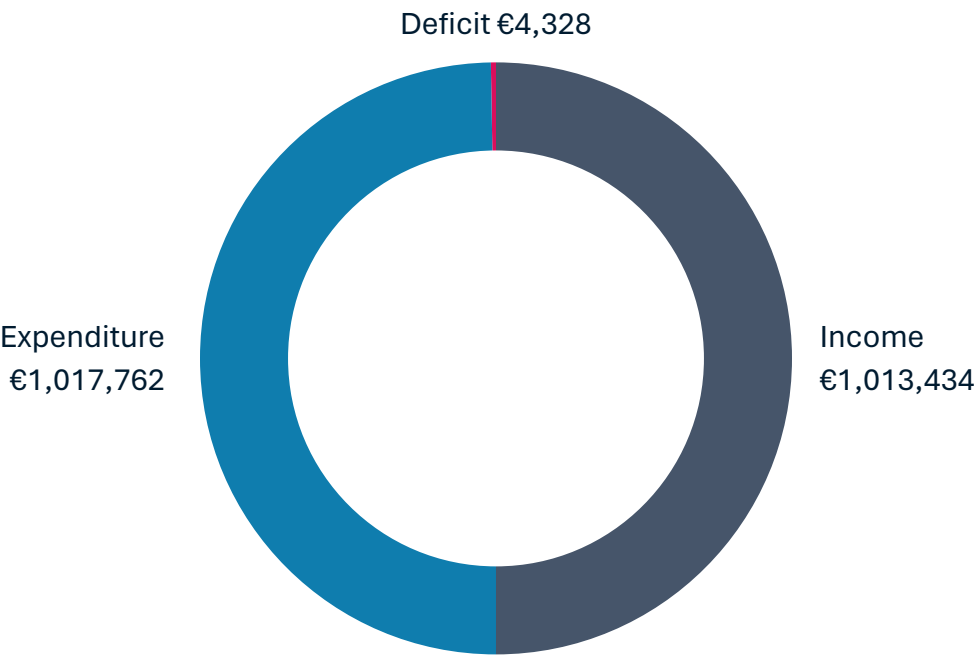
Our auditors have checked our accounts for 2024 and the full Financial Statements for Inclusion Ireland are available on our website. To read our full Financial Statements visit the publications section of our website.

Our accounts were prepared in line with the standards established by the sector legislation, including The Companies Act 2014 and The Charities SORP (FRS 102).

SORP - A Statement of Recommended Practice, issued in the UK and Ireland, provides recommendations on financial reporting that are in addition to official accounting standards.

From: 1st January 2024 to 31st December 2024

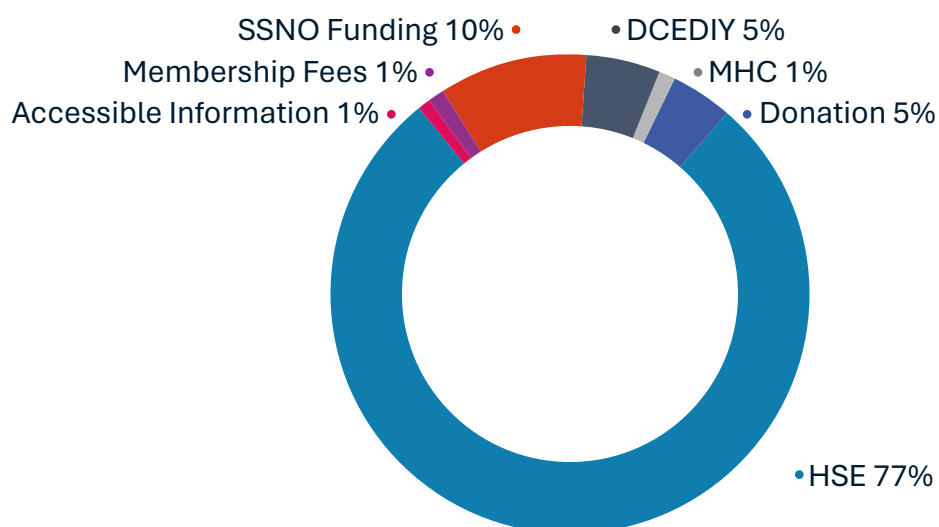
Expenses (Money We Spend)	2024	2023
Total	€1,017,762	€1,020,617



Inclusion Ireland 2024 Accounts explained

The HSE is our main funder. We also receive SSNO (Scheme to Support Voluntary Nationwide Organisations) funding from Pobal and money from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) for organising the Disability Participation and Consultation Network (DPCN). We also get some smaller grants for other projects. Inclusion Ireland is always looking for other sources of income to meet our strategic objectives.

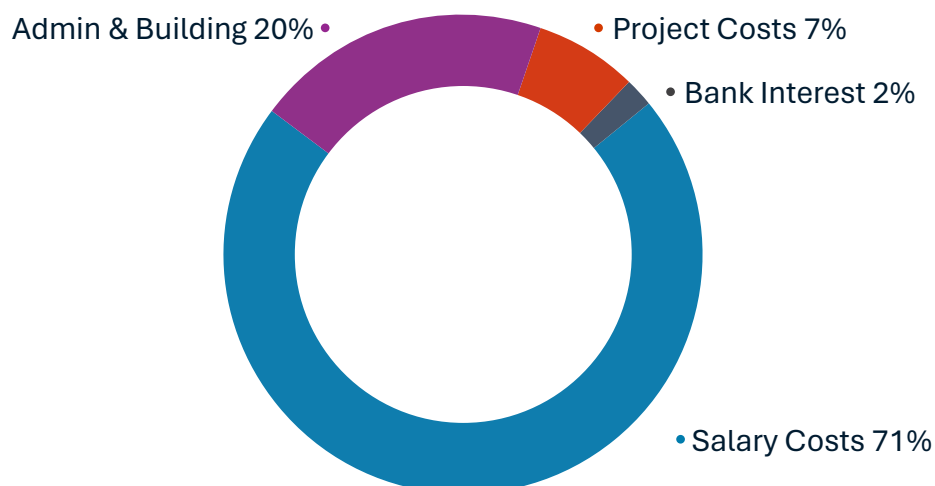
Breakdown of Income of €1,013,434 we received in 2024.



- HSE - Health Service Executive
- SSNO - Scheme to Support Voluntary Nationwide Organisations
- DCEDIY - Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth
- MHC - Mental Health Commission
- Donation - From individuals to support our work (unrestricted fund)
- Accessible Information - Services delivered for accessible information (unrestricted fund)

What we spent our expenditure of €1,017,762 on in 2024.

Inclusion Ireland's main expenditure is on staff salaries. We employed 17 staff in 2024 with a mixture of full time, part time and fixed term contracts.



Most of our costs are on wages and salaries

Our administration and establishment costs are the costs that relate to running the office.

These include telephone, postage, water rates, computer costs, service charges, insurance, electricity, repairs and maintenance, motor and travel expenses, auditor fees, professional and legal fees, bank charges and various subscriptions. They also include redundancy costs and depreciation costs.

They do not include the salary costs and specific costs relating to the various projects that are listed separately.

Our project costs are the costs of the different projects we do throughout the year. These include: SSNO, HSE, MHC, DCEDIY and costs for self advocacy.

Inclusion Ireland Balance sheet summary

As at 31st December 2024

Money we have	
Fixed assets - Building	€423,200
Fixed assets - Computers, desks, etc.	€278
Current Assets - Money in bank	€211,914
Current Assets - Debtors	€88,694
Total	€724,086
Money we owe	
Mortgage account	€314,016
Other bills that are not paid yet	€113,833
Total	€427,849
Overall assets	€296,237

Acknowledgements and thank you

Thank you to all of our members, self-advocacy groups, and parent and family groups that we worked with this year.

A particular thanks to our funders who help make our work possible. Together we will make Ireland more inclusive.



Our Funders



Click on any of the logos above to access the respective organisation's website



Inclusion Ireland receives funding from
Government through the Scheme
to Support National Organisations,
administered by Pobal to do this work.



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland





Inclusion Ireland

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