

And

Network of Independent Experts – NIE

Written submission

From Eva, Bulgarian citizen, a person with disability[[1]](#footnote-1)

to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

The statement is provided to Network of Independent Experts – NIE (NGO based in Bulgaria) as a hand written document. It had been translated by the organization with support from the Validity Foundation. No any editorial changes (except the translation) are made in the statement. The last paragraph is added later on the ground of the verbal request of the author.

My name is Eva, I am 46 years old, I am from and still living in the city of Sofia, Bulgaria. I was 22 years old when my illness was established and I have a lot I want to say. The illness is paranoid schizophrenia. A long time ago, I had to choose whether to buy food or to buy pill for my illness from the pharmacy. I chose the food. The crisis I was in, led me to the homicide of a person I still love to this day, God rest his soul. I think that the medication for such illnesses must be easily accessible and free of charge, so nobody could repeat the sin I have committed those years ago.

People with disabilities were always perceived badly by society. Mothers of healthy children would forbid they children to communicate with people with disabilities, no matter if they are children or adults with disabilities.

Mental diseases are considered the most shameful and utterly unacceptable. The families and relatives of the ill are hiding its illness and feel ashamed if somebody finds out about it.

I think that this preliminary attitude and fear in society needs to be actively, directly and widely changed through providing mass information.

I believe that there should be ramps everywhere – for people with disabilities but for mothers with children too.

I have a disability decision (ТЕЛК) with 80% decreased working ability. My illness has no cure, at least until now. My disability decision should be lifelong.

Due to the homicide, I committed 21 years ago and due to the greed of my close relatives, I am currently being sued in a case for plenary guardianship. I am still waiting for the decision of the Appellate court for 3 months now. This court believes it is very difficult to rule in my defense, even though I haven’t had a crisis in 21 years and I have not missed a day of taking my medications. Apparently, the court also thinks that I am disgraced.

I also think that even if there are closed settings for people with disabilities they should be allowed to work according to their abilities and to be paid for their work. I believe that employers should be actively encouraged to hire people with disabilities. Medical aid should be more accessible and free. I believe that the medical staff should be more stimulated to do their job, especially in Bulgaria.

Additionally, I want to add, that it is crucial, in my opinion, to be ensured work and payment for the work done for people who are placed in psychiatric hospitals. I am saying this on the ground of my own experience. In the psychiatric hospitals and in all kind of institutions there are so called “occupation therapy” which can be seen as training for future work. But people involved in these programs and activities never been paid. This makes people to feel trashy. Even a small payment may change this feeling and people may start feel as they are part of the society, as people who worth some respect.

**NOTE: The views presented in this submission are of Eva and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the organisations that made it possible for Eva to participate in the consultation process.**

1. The author prefers not to reveal her full name, as the statement is very personal. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)