

World Autism Awareness Day 2017

Campaign toolkit

Break barriers together for autism

Let's build an accessible society

An initiative of:



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1. What is World Autism Awareness Day?

As part of a long-running awareness campaign to be launched on World Autism Awareness Day 2017, Autism-Europe will be focusing on the theme "***Break barriers together for autism – Let's build an accessible society***".

Autistic people and their families face many barriers to enjoying their full rights. The aim of this campaign is not only to understand what barriers to inclusion the autistic people are up against, but also to identify how we all, as a society, can work together to overcome and remove them.

This toolkit will bring together recommendations on how you too can be part of our mission to make people more aware of these barriers, and to build momentum in pushing for their removal.

We hope you will join us and that, together, we can foster a better understanding of what accessibility means for people on the autism spectrum.



World Autism Awareness Day

On December 18, 2007, the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution 62/139, which declares that every **April 2** will mark **World Autism Awareness Day** (WAAD). Each year, Autism-Europe works together with its member organisations to conduct campaigns that raise awareness of autism and the rights of people with autism across Europe.



On WAAD 2016, Autism-Europe asked people to pass a relay baton to show support for the "respect, acceptance and inclusion" of people on the autism spectrum.

2. Background and current context

2.a Autism and the European Accessibility Act



On the 2 December 2015, the European Commission published a proposal for a European Accessibility Act. Once this proposal is adopted, it should lead to common accessibility requirements covering certain products and services across the EU, meaning they can be used by people with a range of conditions or disabilities. The proposed Accessibility Act has a lot of potential, especially given that there is currently no specific EU legislation on accessibility for persons with disabilities.

Adopting the Accessibility Act will be a big step for the EU to promote the inclusion of its 80 million persons with disabilities, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) that the EU and all Member States, except Ireland, have ratified.

Why do we need the Accessibility Act?

- It is a key lever for the implementation of the UNCRPD;
- There is a need for a harmonised approach to accessibility across the EU;
- The accessibility of products and services may enable other rights (e.g. education, employment, etc);
- The exclusion of people with disabilities is costly as well as discriminatory to the individuals concerned;
- A “soft approach” to encouraging higher accessibility standards has not delivered, legislation is needed;
- Providing greater access for people with disabilities can increase the EU’s competitiveness on a global level.

Autism-Europe welcomes the publication of the Accessibility Act, and sees the potential this new legislation could have for Europe’s autism community. However, it is conscious that continued work needs to be done to ensure that the specific needs of people on the autism spectrum are not overlooked during the Act’s elaboration by decision-makers.

Top priorities

The top priorities as defined by the European disability Forum in the lead up to the adoption are:

- Widening the scope of the Act to include more products and services;
- not allowing easy exceptions;
- and a clear timeframe for quick implementation in all EU member States.

Autism-Europe’s campaign will be a key tool in raising awareness of the specific accessibility needs of autistic people, in general and in the context of the proposed Accessibility Act. Autism-Europe also intends to pursue its cooperation with interested stakeholders to support further improvement in the text of the European Accessibility Act.

You can read more about Autism-Europe’s position by reading our official [response to the proposal for a European Accessibility Act](#).

2.b 10 years of the UNCRPD: why it is time to act on accessibility



CRPD 10 YEARS

disability rights are human rights

The UNCRPD and its Optional Protocol were opened for signature by all States and by regional integration organisations at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on the 30 March 2007. To commemorate the 10 years since its opening for signature, the European Disability Forum will be running a campaign to celebrate on the 30 March 2017.

The Convention outlines the fundamental rights of persons with disabilities, and yet the ability of individuals to enjoy their rights is too often hampered by inaccessible services, transport, products and environments. It is for this reason that Autism-Europe sees 2017 as a perfect opportunity to remind policy makers throughout Europe of their duty to live up to their commitments, with a special focus on how greater accessibility in these fields can be a crucial and pivotal factor in allowing people with disabilities to enjoy their rights.



2.c Tips for a more accessible and autism-friendly society

Part of the aim of this campaign is to better understand what people on the autism spectrum consider to be barriers, and then to work together to think about accommodating measures to enable us to overcome these barriers together.

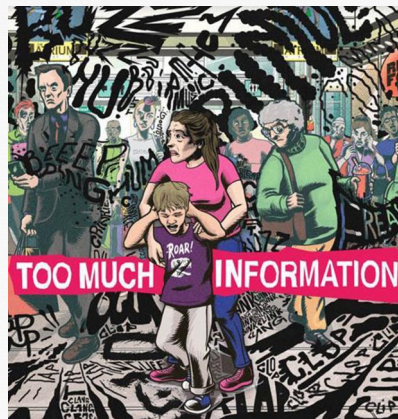
Autism-Europe also has a list of freely available publications outlining advice and good practices for the inclusion of people on the autism spectrum in different areas of life, such as accessibility of people with autism in the work place.

The National Autistic Society (UK) had also published guides on improving accessibility, including in general advice on the sensory needs of autistic people and guidelines for accessible businesses, amenities and public spaces.



How to make the work place more accessible for people with autism

Source: Autism-Europe



Top tips to help you be more understanding towards autistic people and their families

Source: The National Autistic Society



Guidelines for making businesses, amenities and public spaces accessible for people with autism

Source: The National Autistic Society

3. The campaign

3.a The theme

Autistic people face numerous barriers when it comes to enjoying their fundamental rights, and participating fully in the community.

Of course, the barriers faced by each person on the autism spectrum vary according to their own specific needs. Autism-Europe believes that understanding what the barriers are will allow people to better accommodate their needs and foster the inclusion of autistic people in all areas of society.

3.b Key message

Raise awareness of the fact that accessibility goes beyond mere physical accessibility, and that autistic people face different barriers that are not so visible. Make people think about how they can make their community/workplace/school more autism-friendly.

The slogan "Break barriers together for autism, let's build an accessible society" is both a call for action, and equally an invitation to work on improving accessibility together in cooperation with autistic people.

Breaking barriers to inclusion requires the guidance and experience of people with autism and their families, and they must be involved in the development of solutions to accessibility (nothing about us, without us).

3.c Aims of the campaign



Raise awareness of the accessibility issues faced by people with autism (by people with autism themselves);



Let people know what they can do to foster a more accessible and inclusive society for autistic people;



Support the adoption of the European Accessibility Act;



Recall the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities to trigger the conditions for an inclusive society;



Call for action to European decision makers, and civil society (including employers, educators, etc) to work together and to foster more accessibility.

3.d Key actions and dates for your diary

Below are some key dates for your diary showing when you can get involved and help the campaign. Autism-Europe is asking people to get involved in various stages of the campaign.

February/ March

1. To start with, translate the resources from this toolkit, if necessary. (Contact us if you need support to modify the graphic files in your language).
2. Inform your members and partners of the upcoming campaign and give them the information they need to get involved in the launch (April 2).
3. Plan a campaign event or include reference to the campaign in your pre-planned activities and let us know so that we can promote it on the campaign calendar (see page 14 for ideas).
4. Record videos, or take a picture holding a banner or piece of paper on which you write what accessibility barriers you face (as someone on the autism spectrum). The banner should read “A barrier to accessibility for me is...” followed by the biggest barrier(s) they face. This can be written in the person’s mother tongue. If you choose to make a video, you can then explain why this barrier is significant for you. These pictures will be used in March for the teasers of the campaign.
5. AE to launch the campaign’s video teaser including clips and images posted by campaign supporters, outlining their main barriers to inclusion.
6. 18 February- International Asperger’s Day



End of March

1. Support AE by publishing your own video-photo teasers of the campaign (more information in the section: The video teaser). No matter which social media platform you use, your publication should be accompanied by the hashtag **#AutismDay2017**.
2. Support the Thunderclap campaign and encourage your social media friends, members and partners to do so too (see page 8 for explanation of the Thunderclap in social media).
3. You will receive the Press Release by beginning March. You can translate it and adapt it to your national / local context or include reference to the campaign in your own media releases, events and advocacy activities. Send it on March 28 to the press.
4. Identify a wide range of stakeholders and public figures to be "campaign ambassadors" and ask them to participate in our promotional activities in advance of the launch.

April and beyond

1. **Launch of the campaign on April 2 - Release the campaign logo breaking through paper as a second step of the campaign**
2. We ask people to either video of photograph themselves breaking through or ripping up the banner or paper on which they have written their biggest barrier, and then to share this on social media. Alternatively, people can simply show their support for the campaign, no matter what their background or link to autism, by taking a picture of themselves holding a print-out of the campaign banner, or of themselves breaking through a large piece of paper in reference to the campaign's visual.
3. Encourage the general public to get involved in posting pictures and information on your social media channel.
4. Post regularly, monitor and share the social media activity.
5. Photo exhibition and other events in the European Economic and Social Committee and the European Parliament in Brussels
6. Keep in touch – Autism-Europe is happy to support your activities in any way we can so let us know if you need help or advice. Contact communication@autismeurope.org

December

1. Conclusion of the campaign to coincide with the European Days of people with Disabilities (December 3).

3.e Logotype identity



The logo for our World Autism Awareness Day campaign is centered around a simple image of a piece of paper being broken.

This paper (or banner) may contain the following sentence completed by the person who holds it: "A barrier to accessibility for me is..."

The slogan "Break barriers together for autism, let's build an accessible society" is both a call for action, and equally an invitation to work on improving accessibility together in cooperation with autistic people .

Breaking barriers to inclusion requires the guidance and experience of people with autism and their families, and they must be involved in the development of solutions to accessibility.



[Download the Campaign Logo](#)

The gesture of breaking through paper, or ripping up a piece of paper bearing a description of an individual’s biggest barrier, is a striking way of presenting the ideas listed above. It allows people to take part either on their own, or as part of a group.



3.f Logotype standards and corporate type face

Like any brand we want to remain coherent in all our communications. Using the “Break barriers together for autism” logo provides credibility, so to assist you we’ve established a few simple guidelines to be followed in all communications work.

Blue colour (motto):

If using print production in CMYK: C: 95% M: 81% Y: 49% K: 61%

If producing for web in RGB: R: 9 G: 29 B: 52

Light blue colour (logo):

If using print production in CMYK: C: 76% M: 22% Y: 1% K: 0%

If producing for web in RGB: R: 0 G: 157 B: 216

Type face:

Slogan: Formata

Motto: Tahoma

3.g Official use of the campaign visuals

Autism-Europe members and other interested parties are invited to include the “Break barriers together for autism” logo on their websites, newsletters, letterheads, signatures, annual reports, and other informative materials to show their participation in the campaign. Appropriate text should be included when using the logo.

The “Break barriers together for autism” visual can also be used for fundraising activities, events or other activities.

The campaign materials may not be used for activities that would not be in line with Autism-Europe’s aims and objectives.

4. Engaging with the campaign online

4.a The Social Media Strategy

For the campaign we will be asking the autism community (followed by general public, including high profile figures) to do one or more of the following things:

From February

1. Take a video or picture of yourself holding a banner stating what you consider your biggest barrier to be as a person on the autism spectrum (see 3.d (n) above).



From April

2. If you took part in the first activity, as of April in the final build up to World Autism Awareness day on the 2 April, you can share a video or photograph of yourself breaking through or ripping up the paper or banner bearing the message about your barrier.



3. Alternatively, you can take a picture of yourself simply breaking through paper with friends/family or colleagues using the #AutismDay2017 hashtag and/or

4. Download and print our logo for World Autism Awareness day and take a picture of yourself

holding it, again including the #AutismDay2017 hashtag.

 [Download the Campaign Logo](#)

You are invited to promote the campaign alongside your own areas of interest with messages such as:



The hashtag

The hashtag is the same for all platforms:

#AutismDay2017

You can also add **#a11y** which stands for accessibility.

We would encourage you and your national colleagues to have a version of the tag in your own language but please always include the English tag above on any post and ensure your followers do the same. This way we will be able to locate your posts.

4.b The Video-teaser

Before launching the campaign, Autism-Europe is planning to produce a short video. This video will be circulated in March as a campaign teaser to generate interest and make people understand what the main topics are surrounding the promotion of accessibility for people with autism.

Regardless of the approach of the campaign chosen, the teaser will show people on the autism spectrum holding a banner with the message “A barrier to accessibility for me is...” completed with a short message explaining their own thoughts/needs. We will need your help to ask people to contribute to the video.

4.c Twitter Strategy

Start by following the @AutismEurope Twitter account and search for #AutismDay2017 to view campaign activity so far. We have some sample tweets below to get you started but if you need more help please refer to the Twitter User Guide.



[Download the Twitter User Guide](#)

Sample Tweets

Tweet ideas – please copy, paste, edit and use!



4.d Facebook Strategy

The campaign is also available on Autism-Europe’s Facebook page.

Facebook will function as a campaign hub where organisations can share details of upcoming events, images and stories. The page will allow people to post (audiovisual) content, respond to comments and share updates. The public are also invited to post their photos and brief messages of support for the campaign, tagged with the #AutismDay2017 hashtag. We would ask that member organisations add posts to their own Facebook pages as well as sharing them with the campaign page, for maximum exposure.



[Download the Facebook User Guide](#)

4.e Engaging with Thunderclap

Social media can be a powerful instrument if people engage with you, mention you and spread your message. It becomes even more powerful when many people do this at the same time. This is where Thunderclap comes in: Instead of having your campaign mentioned now and then on Facebook or Twitter, the Thunderclap app collects authorised posts and tweets and publishes them all at the very same moment. It is an effective way to get your message out to as many people as possible, breaking through the “noise” of general news and potentially becoming a “trending” (most discussed) item on social media.

Please follow the link below and agree to support the “Break barriers together for autism” Thunderclap campaign on whichever social media networks you use. This means you will authorise Thunderclap to share our pre-composed message on your behalf. You can also add a personal message. Support and share the Thunderclap and help give the campaign the best possible chance of success!



Break barriers for autism!

I'm supporting #accessibility for #autism. Let's break barriers together on #AutismDay2017 for an inclusive society!



Autism-Europe

0%

supported

0

social reach

58

days left

Goal: 250 supporters by Apr 2nd



[Support the campaign on Thunderclap](#)

5. Engaging with the campaign offline

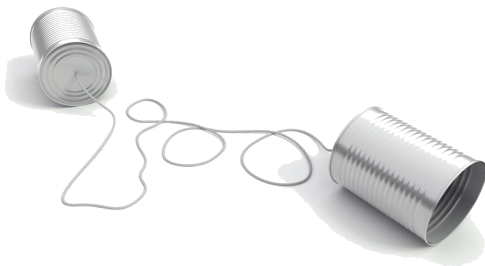
Online activity will need to be supplemented by offline events/initiatives to give the campaign momentum. Some flagship events will be organised by Autism-Europe, but much will depend on the engagement of organisations at the national level.

4.a Sample Press release

We have put together a sample press release that can be adapted for your organisation’s needs and shared with local media at the time of campaign launch or when organising a campaign-related event.

The press release will be made available to you on March 18.

 [Download the sample press release](#)



4.b Autism-Europe’s manifesto

Autism-Europe has created a manifesto outlining the 2017 campaign’s concrete aims. The document outlines what are the key policy aspects and requests of the campaign.

 [Download the campaign manifesto](#)

4.c Activities to promote the campaign

Photo exhibition

To celebrate the campaign with the European institutions, Autism-Europe plans to organise a photo exhibition in the European Economic and Social committee. An opening ceremony will be organised and some key civil society representatives will be invited to join.

Later, the exhibition will also be displayed in the European Parliament in Brussels hosted by one or several Members of the European Parliament. The hosting MEP(s) can organise an opening ceremony where Autism-Europe can invite guests and convey its key messages around the campaign.

The topic of the exhibition will be accessibility for people with autism in society. More information will be shared later on.

Ideas for Promotional Events and Fundraising

- Presentation of accessible products for people with autism, with possible input of industry figures;
- Events on accessibility attended by local authorities, service providers and/or business representatives;
- Art exhibitions on the topic of accessibility;
- Sponsored runs;
- Walks and marches to bring people together and spread the word about autism accessibility.

Advocacy

To raise awareness why not reach out to politicians? Politicians are familiar with public speaking and love publicity. In many countries it is surprisingly easy to organise an information day/event at your national or federal parliament. Once again you can involve a range of autism stakeholders – and combine this with a photo opportunity where national policy-makers would be photographed “breaking through paper” . Our team is happy to talk to you and send guidelines to help. Photos could then be sent to the traditional media. Similarly, this approach could be taken with well-known public figures– taking the message offline.

6. Resources



[Download all the resources in a compressed format](#)



[Logo Pack](#)

(+ editable file)



[Banner Pack](#)

(+ editable file)



[Imagery \(+ editable pack\)](#)



[Flyer \(+ editable file\)](#)



[Poster \(+ editable file\)](#)



[Infographic](#)

(+ editable file)



[Social Media Pack](#)

(+ editable file)



[Sample press release](#)



[Manifesto](#)



[Twitter user guide](#)



[Facebook User Guide](#)

7. Campaign checklist

Now you’ve read the Toolkit we hope you’re ready to launch and promote this initiative with us and make this campaign a great success over the coming months!

Here’s a summary of the next steps you should take:

- I have translated the resources (including the visuals)
- I have signed up for the campaign on Thunderclap, and encouraged others do so
- I have taken pictures with the banner to raise awareness accessibility barriers faced by autistic people. Before April 2nd, I am sharing them on social media
- I have informed my friends, members and partners about the campaign and invited them to join
- I have mobilised ambassadors to join the campaign and help spread the message
- I have organised events in line with the campaign
- I have translated or adapted the press-release for my local context
- I am taking pictures breaking through paper, or holding the campaign visual and invite all my friends and colleagues to do the same in order to share them on social media



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