

To be released the 2nd April 2022,
on the occasion of World Autism Awareness Day

Autism-Europe calls for “A happy journey through life” for autistic people and their families

- Autism-Europe (AE) is running the Europe-wide campaign “A happy journey through life” to highlight that a holistic approach is needed across the lifespan to ensure that autistic people can enjoy their rights and live happy and fulfilling lives.
- To mark World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD), April 2, AE invite autistic people and their families to share their testimonies about what a happy life means to them.
- For 2022, the motto of the #AutismDay2022 campaign is in line with the theme of Autism-Europe’s 13th International Congress - “A Happy Journey through life”. The Congress will take place on 7-9 October 2022.

It is estimated that 5 million people are on the autism spectrum in the European Union. Most of them experience discrimination in many areas of life. The campaign “A happy journey through life” aims at highlighting the concerns and wishes of autistic people and their families with regard to different key issues such as access to education, employment, adequate support for inclusion, independent living, accessibility, and political participation, among others.

One of the objectives is to illustrate that autistic people often struggle to enjoy their fundamental rights – also as EU citizens. In 2022, the **European Union is undergoing its second review before to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**. In this regard, the alternative report submitted by Autisme-Europe has a special focus on inequality areas experienced autistic people. It examines the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities in the European Union’s legislation and policies from the perspective of autistic people and their families. It highlights the main gaps, and provides recommendations to further improve the respect of the rights of autistic people in the EU.

How can I support the campaign?

People willing to support the campaign can share the banners and key messages created by AE using the hashtag #AutismDay2022.

AE has also released a campaign toolkit that explains the objectives of the campaign and includes communication materials and strategies, as well as in Easy-To-Read format.

13th Autism-Europe International Congress

Taking place on 7-9 October 2022, the Congress hold “Happy Journey through Life” as the theme – to highlight the importance of taking a lifespan perspective on autism research and practice, with the promotion of wellbeing for all being the focal point.

The Congress is unique in terms of its history, scale and that it provides a platform for researchers, practitioners, students, autistic people and family members to come together.

[More information about the Congress here.](#)

Notes to editor

World Autism Awareness Day was declared by the United Nations General Assembly in 2007 as an annual day to draw attention to the urgent needs of people with autism around the world.

Autism-Europe is an international association whose main objective is to advance the rights of autistic people and their families and to help them improve their quality of life. It ensures effective liaison among 90-member autism organisations in 38 European countries, including 25 Member States of the European Union, governments and European and international institutions.

Acceptable language: Autism-Europe operates on the principle of respect for diversity. AE feels that it is important to use language that people are comfortable with. However, there are some terms that are likely to cause offense and that it is advisable to avoid using.

For more information and interviews, please do not hesitate to contact:

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