



World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD) 2024

PRESS RELEASE

Autism-Europe to launch “Not invisible” campaign

BRUSSELS, dd/mm/2024 – Autism-Europe (AE) celebrates the UN World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD) on 2 April, and throughout the entire month of April 2024. On this occasion, AE also launches its new multi-annual “**Not invisible**” campaign.

Autism visibility in the 2024 elections: a pledge for candidates to support autistic people’s rights

Urgent action is needed across Europe to target the pervasive discrimination faced by autistic people in all areas of life. While it is estimated that 7 million people are autistic in Europe, autistic people continue to face barriers to inclusion across all sectors of society. For example, research shows that only 20% of autistic people are in full-time employment.

Moreover, because of stereotyped ideas about autism, women and people in marginalised communities in general experience multiple discriminations. They often struggle to get a diagnosis, receive a diagnosis late in life, or are misdiagnosed with conditions other than autism, which in turn hampers their access to the necessary support.

In light of the upcoming European elections in June, Autism-Europe published a pledge for MEP candidates to express their support to the full realisation of autistic people’s rights. By signing the pledge, candidates indicate their commitment to cooperate with autistic people and their representative organisations during their mandate and to support the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UN CRPD) across EU policies. The pledge is also a commitment to build on the recent European Parliament [resolution](#) to harmonise the rights of autistic persons adopted in October 2023.

“Nothing without us”

Autism is often described as an “invisible” disability, but where does this invisibility stem from? Often, it results from a lack of awareness, understanding, and recognition. AE wants to raise awareness of the barriers that autistic people face in society and calls for the realisation of their human rights, in line with the UN CRPD. AE calls for a society where autistic people are



recognised, valued, and get the understanding, and full enjoyment of the rights they deserve. Autistic people, their representative organisations, and their support networks should be empowered and visible in all spaces and matters that concern them.

How to support the “Not invisible” campaign?

AE invites its members, the autism community, EU policymakers and society at large to join the **#AutismNotInvisible** campaign for **#AutismDay2024** and show their support for a better society for autistic people and their families. From 2 April and throughout the whole month of April 2024, AE will share policy messages on its social media channels as well as quotes expressing the lived experiences of its members and network.

[Please find more information on AE’s website.](#)

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

✚ **Aurélié Baranger**, AE Director, at aurelie.baranger@autismeurope.org

Notes

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

Autism-Europe is an international organisation based in Brussels focused on advancing the rights of autistic people and their families as well as helping them improve their quality of life. It ensures effective cooperation among 90 member autism organisations in 40 European countries, including 26 Member States of the European Union.

Acceptable language. Autism-Europe operates on the principle of respect for diversity. It is important to use language that people are comfortable with: there are some terms that are likely to cause offense and that it is advisable to avoid using – check them [here](#).