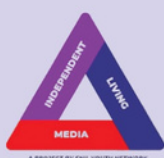




Guidelines

on Media Representation of Persons with Disabilities



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About ENIL

ENIL is an organization in Europe for Independent Living.

Independent Living is when you can decide where and how you live.

It is run by disabled people.

ENIL works for human rights, equality, and independent living.

I can find more information when I click [here](#).



About the ENIL Youth Network

ENIL has a group called Youth Network.

Youth Network connects young disabled people and the people who help them.

Members are 18 to 35 years old.

ENIL Youth Network offers learning on how disabled people can get what they deserve.



“Independent (Living) Media” Project

ENIL had a project called
the Independent (Living) Media.

This project ran in 2025.

Many young people with and without
disabilities took part.

This photo is from the project.



If I want to learn more about it
I can click [here](#).

“Independent (Living) Media” Project

Independent (Living) Media is about how young people with disabilities are shown in the media.

Media is anything that helps people share information, stories, or messages with others.

The media are

1. TV



2. Radio



3. Newspapers



“Independent (Living) Media” Project

4. Social media

- Instagram



- Facebook



- TikTok



- Youtube



5. Websites



“Independent (Living) Media” Project

7. Magazines



8. Books



The project helped young people learn, talk, and create better stories.

The project included

- A survey for young people
- Online workshops
- An international summer school called “Crip, Cut, Rewrite!”

This photo is from the project.



If I want to learn more about it
I can click [here](#).

What Young People Said (Survey Results)

1. Media representation is important for visibility and inclusion.

Visibility is when people are seen and noticed.

Inclusion is when everyone belongs and participates.



2. Stories about disabled people often use stereotypes.

Stereotypes are simple ideas that are wrong about people.

For example, a stereotype is that people with disabilities can not work.



3. Young disabled people feel bad when they see negative stereotypes.



4. Media workers want to improve but need more training and knowledge.

What Young People Said (Survey Results)

4. Media workers want to get better but they need more training and knowledge.



5. Young people want more real stories and to see disabled actors.



6. Digital media changes how people think about disability.

Digital media is all we see on a tablet, phone, or the internet.



About the Summer School

Young people from 12 countries joined the summer school in the European country of Bosnia and Herzegovina.



They learned about human rights, media, and independent living.

They discussed stereotypes and how to change them.

They created ideas for social media and the guidelines you will see in the next pages.

Guidelines are a list of rules you must follow to show disabled people fairly in the media

GUIDELINES





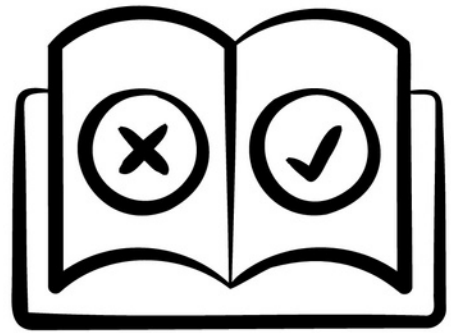






The Guidelines

These simple rules help media workers tell stories about disabled people in a fair and respectful way.



They want to:

- Promote respect and understanding
- Share real stories from young disabled people
- Encourage accessible and inclusive media



The Most Important Guidelines

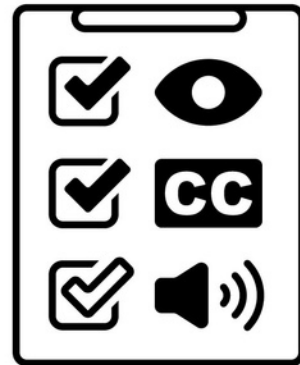
1. Authentic Stories

- Disabled people should tell their own stories.
- Media creators must respect their words and experiences.



2. Accessible Communication

Accessibility is a right and all must get the information they want in a way that helps them.



3. Correct and true information

- Do not use stereotypes or sensational stories.
- Always ask for consent and protect people's privacy.



4. Protect Mental Health

Media must stop harassment, hate speech, and negative comments.



The Guidelines

5. Work together with disabled journalists, creators, and experts.



6. Teach others.



7. Make teams with abled and disabled people together.



8. Disabled people can be leaders and creators.



Do ✓

Here is a list with all the things you must do to make your content easy for people with disabilities.

🔍 Make your content accessible.

👤 Show the whole person, not only their disability.

💬 Ask what terms or language they prefer.

👉 Use respectful language.

📖 Learn about the topic before creating content.

🧩 Co-create with disabled people.

👥 Include disabled people in your teams.

📸 Show real life, not stereotypes.

🛡️ Protect consent and dignity.

♿ Highlight accessibility everywhere.

🗣️ Encourage learning and safe talks.

🌱 Educate kindly.



Dont's X

Here is a list
with all the things
you must not do to make your
content easy for people with
disabilities.

🚫 Do not use offensive
or old-fashioned words.

! Do not use hate speech.

🧑 Do not assume abilities or
needs.

⚠️ Do not treat disabled people as
“inspirations” for ordinary things.

😞 Do not use pity, shock, or
dramatic music.

🔊 Do not exaggerate.

📺 Do not include disabled persons
only in disability stories.

🔄 Do not compare disabilities.

🔒 Do not share without consent.

♿ Do not forget accessibility.

🧑 Do not create stories about
disabled people without involving
them.



Key Terms (Easy Explanations)

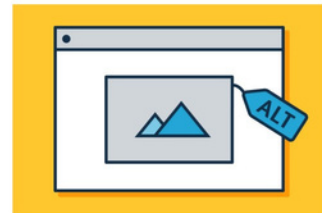
Accessibility

Making content usable for everyone (captions, alt text, ramps, easy-to-read formats).



Alt Text

Short text that explains what is shown in an image.



Captioning

Text that shows speech and important sounds in videos.



Human Rights Model

Disability is part of human diversity. Society must remove barriers.



Identity-First Language

Example: “disabled person.”
Focuses on disability as part of identity.



Person-First Language

Example: “person with a disability.”
Focuses on the person first.



Intersectionality

People may experience many kinds of discrimination at once.

Key Terms (Easy Explanations)

Inspiration Porn

When disabled people are shown as heroes to inspire others, not as real people.



Self-Representation

Disabled people tell their own stories.



Sensationalism

Using drama, shock, or exaggeration.



UN CRPD

United Nations
Convention on the Rights of
Persons with Disabilities.



Key Terms (Easy Explanations)

Universal Design

Design that works for everyone from the start.



Visibility

Visibility is when you see disabled people.



Representation

Representation is when you see them fairly, fully, and respectfully.



Resources

Here follows a list
with the sources
you need to help you
make content for all.

1 . United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

If I want practical information
on the representation of disability
I click [here](#).



2. National Center on Disability and Journalism (NCDJ)

If I am a writer, journalist or editor,
I can get the rules
on how to talk about disabilities,
I click [here](#).



3. The Ability Center

For writing, social media
and visual content creation
(alt-text, language, framing),
I click [here](#).



The Ability Center

Resources

4. Disability Studies, University of Leeds

If I want to break the stereotypes and be respectful on how I make my content,

I click [here](#).



5. Ford Foundation

If I want to know more about visibility and inclusion in media,

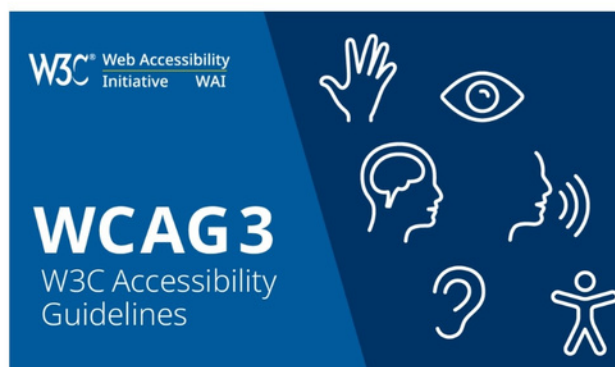
I click [here](#).



6. Web Accessibility Initiative (W3C)

If I want to read the rules that make everything on the internet friendly and accessible to all,

I click [here](#).



7. Section 508 / U.S. Government

If I want to make PDFs with tagging, alt-text, and structure,

I click [here](#).



Resources

8. University of California, Riverside

For rules on creating accessible content on social media (captions, alt-text),

I click [here](#).



9. WebAIM

For many useful tools and guides about web accessibility,

I click [here](#).



10. University of North Carolina, Greensboro

For rules and explanations to make accessible design,

I click [here](#).



The Team

The guidelines were created
by ENIL's team.

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