

# To run a Workshop in Easy-to-Read

## Guide for trainers

### Introduction

This is a guide how to organize and run a workshop for staff and other professionals on easy-to-read and the concept of easy-to-understand. The workshop gives the basic knowledge for participants to produce information for people with intellectual disabilities. The workshop is based on the material Easy-to-Read and the leaflet “Making our Human Rights easy to understand”, which are to be found on the website <http://www.puzzle-project.eu>

The guide has three sections; Before, During and After.

“Before” focus on the preparation you need to do before running a workshop.

“During” shows step-by-step an outline for a workshop about easy-to-read.

“After” highlights the follow up and the next steps.

The guide has been produced within the Erasmus-project Puzzle in the spring of 2017. If you have any questions regarding this material, don't hesitate to contact me.

Good luck!

Ulla Bohman

[ulla.bohman@mtm.se](mailto:ulla.bohman@mtm.se)

Swedish Agency for Accessible Media

Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



## Before - Preparation

There are some key-questions to ask yourself when you begin the planning of a workshop:

- Why?
- Who?
- What?
- When?
- Where?

### Why?

Why do you want to run this workshop? What is your aim? Is it to engage more people in the work of human rights? Is it to enlighten people about the need for accessible information? Is there a specific reason why you want to do this now?

### Who?

Who should participate in the workshop and how many participants do you want? The number of participants will have an impact on the way you set up the workshop. With a small group, discussions and feedback on activities can involve all the participants. With a larger number of participants, you need to let some activities and discussions take place in smaller groups in order to get involvement from all.

What do you know about the participants' knowledge about accessible information and human rights, or their knowledge about the target group? In the Puzzle project workshop participants are professionals and support staff and the target group are people with intellectual disabilities.

The type of participants will have an important impact on the workshop set up.

What information do the participants need to sign up for the workshop?

### What?

You decide what the workshop should focus on, depending on the participants and the "why". Often it is useful to set a theme for the workshop that can be the frame for all the examples and assignments. The theme should be relevant for the participants – e.g. if the participants are teachers, find texts and pictures that has to do with teaching and schools.

If the participants come from different fields of work, frame the workshop around something that is general but up-to-date, like holidays.

### When?

Set the date.

The proposed workshop has a suggested timeframe of 3 hours, including coffee break. But, it can easily be stretched to a full day depending on how many practical activities you include.

## Where?

When deciding on the venue for the workshop, you must already be clear about what facilities you need. Do you need computer, internet, projector and screen – what about sound?

How do you want the room to be set up? My experience is that having participants seated in smaller groups around tables is better than a traditional classroom set up. If your group is small, put the tables in a “horseshoe” so everyone can see each other.

For additional material, like paper and pencils, remember to check if the venue has anything, or if you need to bring it yourself. Consider printed versions of information to work with and any additional background material and sort this out beforehand.

For the proposed workshop you need to bring copies of:

- Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

## Final preparation

When all the questions above are answered, you can start planning your workshop in detail. At this stage you need to decide if you want to close the workshop with some kind of evaluation. You also need to decide if you want to hand out certificates of participation and decide what kind of follow-up you want to do with the participants afterwards.

## How to choose examples

In order to make the workshop relevant and engaging for your participants, choose your examples of text and illustrations carefully. Try to find examples that are:

- Local – well-known by participants (a house should look like the houses in your area)
- Relevant – according to the theme of the workshop, the participants’ field of work
- Current – something that is up-to-date always engages participants more effectively
- Funny – it is always good to have fun during a workshop!

## Variation of methods and activities

Try to vary the methods and activities throughout the workshop. Here is a list to find inspiration from:

- Individual work – Pairing – Work in groups
- Post-it notes
- Identify difficult words → find synonyms
- Illustrate metaphors/expressions
- Write text to go with picture
- Find the key-information in a text
- Re-write any difficult text

And... a final piece of advice

- Take a break every hour – coffee and refreshments are vital!
- Use participants' experience and knowledge, and be open for dialogue!
- There is not **one** "right" answer or solution!
- Be well prepared!
- Have fun!

## During

### Background

The Puzzle project has focused on how to make human rights easy to understand for people with intellectual disabilities. The UN Convention on Human Rights for People with Disabilities states that we are all equal and should have the same rights. The Puzzle project revealed that persons with ID face a number of barriers to accessing information on human rights and have limited knowledge of their rights and that many people with ID:

- Do not understand the concept of human rights
- Lack awareness of Rights and that information on Human Rights is available
- Cannot access the information
- Cannot understand the information
- Are dependent on support from others to both access and comprehend the information available.

The Puzzle project has identified a set of working approaches to tackle these barriers. Information must be easy to find, to read and to understand, no matter the media, the format or the user's abilities. If it isn't easy to understand, it isn't accessible.

The Puzzle project introduces a wider interpretation of "reading" which includes reading with ears and fingers as well as with eyes. "To read" includes printed text, as well as sounds, pictures and videos.

Therefore, the proposed workshop uses the UN Convention as a frame and the wider interpretation of "reading" as "multimedia literacy".

### Content of the workshop

The different steps of the workshop are:

1. Welcome: Presentation of program, participants, expectations
2. About your Reader
3. What is Easy-to-Read?
4. Find → Read → Understand
5. Content, language, layout/form, pictures
6. Final activity
7. Summary/close

Below you will find step-by-step guide to the workshop, illustrated with slides. The slides are just some examples. You need to make your own slides with examples according to your theme and framework for the workshop, and of course in your own language.

## Step 1 - Welcome



Introduce workshop, schedule, participants and yourself.

Check participants' expectations for the workshop.



### Activity: Expectations

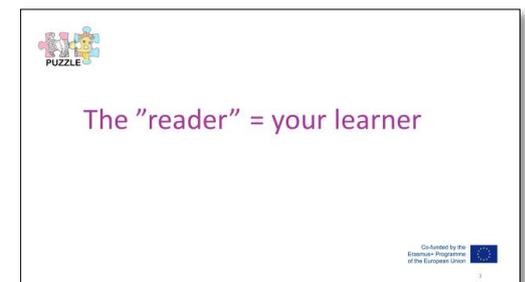
- Let everyone write down expectation on post-it notes (2 minutes)
- Let everyone say their expectation while putting the post-it note on the flipchart/wall.
- Comment on which expectations are in line with the workshop and which you will not meet.

The theme for this workshop will be Article 19, Living independently and being included in the community, in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

## Step 2 – The “reader” = your learner

When producing information you need to know your reader. ‘People with ID’ are a greatly diverse group. Some are literate and can read text, others have more complex communication needs.

In this workshop when we talk about “reading” we mean reading in a broader sense = to understand a message via text and/or illustrations/multimedia.



### Activity: What do you know about your learners’

- reading skills?
- capacity for reading pictures?
- understanding concepts?

Ask the participants to talk in pairs for a couple of minutes. Check what participants talked about and make a list of the skills/capacity of their learners on a flip chart.

When producing information you need to know each of your reader's reading and communication skills and his/her knowledge about the subject the information is to cover. Some information about how to bake a cake will be different if the reader never has made a cake, compared to if the reader has baking as special interest.

Even very simple text is often too difficult to understand for persons with ID who have more complex communication needs. The combination of images with text can significantly improve the accessibility of information for this audience. If you also can include multimedia with sound and video, the information will most likely be more accessible.

### Step 3 - What is Easy-to-Read?

When producing easy-to-read information, you have to consider content, language, layout and pictures/illustration with regards to your reader.

#### **A definition of easy-to-read:**

Easy-to-read is a method to adapt content, language, presentation and pictures for a target group who have difficulties in reading and understanding information.

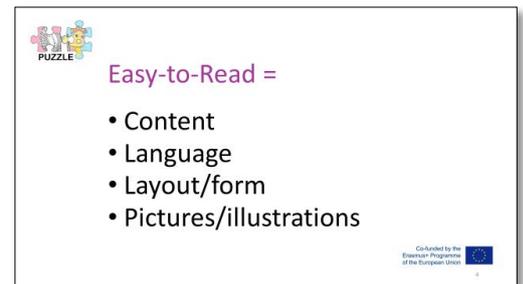
It is information that the content has a clear and logical structure.

The text is written with common words.

The sentences are short and simple to read and understand.

The text is presented with an uncrowded layout and with pictures that help the reader to understand the content.

To make information easy-to-read you must know your reader and his/her knowledge and interest about the topic.



**Easy-to-Read =**

- Content
- Language
- Layout/form
- Pictures/illustrations

Co-funded by the European Programme of the European Union

### Step 4 – Find – Read - Understand

But you also have to consider how to make the information

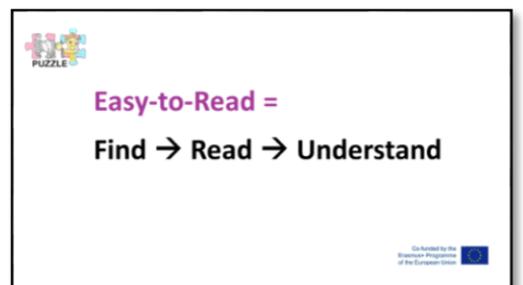
- Easy to find
- Easy to read
- Easy to understand

If one of these fails, the information is not accessible.

Easy-to-read information is easy to find, read and understand.

Since many persons with ID have difficulties with understanding and limited reading skills, it is important to consider various ways of producing information, to work with both text and multimedia.

The focus must be easy to understand with eyes, ears or fingers!



**Easy-to-Read =**

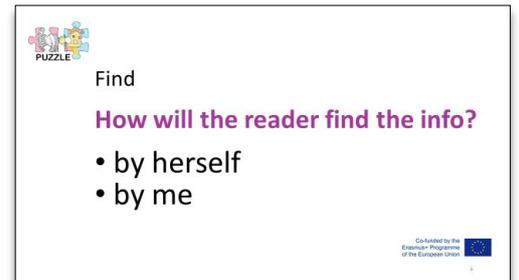
**Find → Read → Understand**

Co-funded by the European Programme of the European Union

## Find

People with ID frequently lack sufficient literacy skills to enable them to actively search and find relevant information on their own. They get their information mostly from their day service and school – and to a lesser extent from their parents and carers. There is wide understanding that information can be found via the Internet, but barriers of accessibility are prevalent online as in printed documents.

Where the information is to be found has an impact on the content and also on the structure of the content. If you give the information to the learner or show him/her where to find it, you automatically add to the knowledge about the information. The learner's frame of reference and background knowledge is being influenced.



Find

How will the reader find the info?

- by herself
- by me

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

## Read

No matter the media or channel, if it is text in a leaflet or something presented with the use of multimedia, the information must be easy to read.

**Activity: What is the media/channel you use most of the time for your learners?**

In order to make information easy to read you must present information in a clear way:

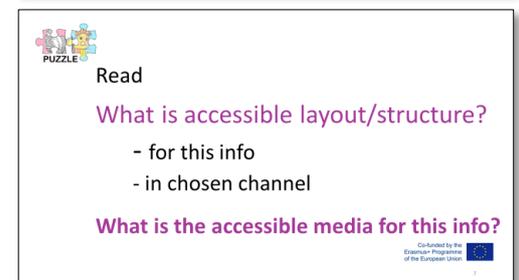
- Make information short
- Break down information into step-by-step
- Use a clear structure
- Give information a clear form/layout



Read

- familiar format/media
- reading strategy/conventions

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union



Read

What is accessible layout/structure?

- for this info
- in chosen channel

What is the accessible media for this info?

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

## Understand

Persons with ID have difficulties in understanding information.

Information should, regardless of media, be easy to read and easy to understand. Easy-to-read concepts and methods contribute greatly to this effort.

## Step 5. Content – language – layout - illustration

To make information easy to understand, you must consider content and structure as well as language, layout and illustrations



Understand

- Content
- Structure
- Language
- Pictures

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

### Content

What do you want the reader to know about this subject?

What does the reader want to know?

Let us use the UN Convention as an example.



Content

- What?
- Why?
- When?
- To whom?
- His/her interest/background knowledge?

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

### Activity: What is the key information in Article 19?

- Divide in groups. Hand out the Article 19.
- Let the groups take time to read through the article.
- Ask groups to identify what the key information is in Article 19 – the key information for their readers.



**UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**  
**Article 19 Living independently and being included in the community**

States Parties to the present Convention recognize the equal right of all persons with disabilities to live in the community, with choice equal to others, and shall take effective and appropriate measures to facilitate full enjoyment by persons with disabilities of this right and their full inclusion and participation in the community, including by ensuring that:

(a) Persons with disabilities have the opportunity to choose their place of residence and where and with whom they live on an equal basis with others and are not obliged to live in a particular living arrangement;

(b) Persons with disabilities have access to a range of in-home, residential and other community support services, including personal assistance necessary to support living and inclusion in the community, and to prevent isolation or segregation from the community;

(c) Community services and facilities for the general population are available on an equal basis to persons with disabilities and are responsive to their needs.

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

Make sure the structure of the information is familiar to the reader. Leave out all information that is not necessary. Focus on what is the most important.

### Language

Easy to read and understand language uses:

- Common words
- Avoids expressions
- Is concrete
- Uses active voice
- Repeats the same word – no synonyms
- Has a clear sender – receiver
- Has informative headlines
- Makes sentences short



Language

- Common words
- Avoid expressions
- Make it concrete
- Active voice
- Use same word
- Clear sender – receiver (we – you)
- Informative headlines
- Short sentences

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

### Activity: What is the difficult language in the key information in Article 19?

- Ask groups to look at what they said in the previous activity about key information.
- How can this be formulated with easy to understand words?
- Let the groups take some time to discuss and find new ways of expressing this.
- Ask groups to give examples.

### Layout

An easy to read layout is clear and simple. It should be easy for the reader to understand where the information starts and ends.

This is manual line breaks:

An Easy-to-Read text usually has a narrow column and an uneven right margin.

Always begin the next sentence on a new line.  
If the sentence is long,  
you can cut off the sentence where it is suitable  
and continue on the next line.  
If it is possible you should follow the principle  
one thought on one line.

Leave a blank line between the paragraphs.  
It makes the text easier to read.

\*\*\*\*

Here is same text without manual line breaks.

### Illustrations

Make content easy to understand by supporting text with illustrations and pictures that can anchor the intended message. Or, extend the meaning with illustrations that tell a more detailed story.

Words combined with pictures should be:

- Easy to interpret and understand
- Specific and NOT abstract
- Clearly connected to support the picture

**What is E-to-R Layout?**

- Manual line breaks
- Clear and simple
- Space between the lines
- Wide margins
- No centralizing of text
- Text in shorter blocks
- Visual boxes/vertical lines between columns
- Typography – common, clear typeface
- Never *italics* nor **bold** in the middle of running text
- Sufficient contrast

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

**Easy-to-Read is written using line breaks**

An Easy-to-Read text usually has a narrow column and an uneven right margin.

Always put the next sentence on a new line.  
If there is a long sentence in the text, you can cut off the sentence where it is suitable and continue on the next line.  
If it is possible you should follow the principle one thought on one line.

Leave a blank line between the paragraphs.  
It makes the text easier to read.

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

**Easy-to-Read is written using line breaks**

An Easy-to-Read text usually has a narrow column and an uneven right margin.  
Always put the next sentence on a new line. If there is a long sentence in the text, you can cut off the sentence where it is suitable and continue on the next line. If it is possible you should follow the principle one thought on one line. Leave a blank line between the paragraphs. It makes the text easier to read.

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

**Pictures/illustrations**

- Clear and simple
- Pictures support the text

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

Where individuals do not have reading ability, alternative media formats such as sound and video clips can make information easy-to-understand. Presented with simple messages conveyed in multiple media formats, the reader can choose their preferred individual mode of communication.

Multimedia production also provides a wider range of ways in which individuals can take part in the creation of accessible information. Persons with ID can participate in various roles as co-creators; as presenters, actors, interviewers, photographers etc.

## Step 6. Final activity

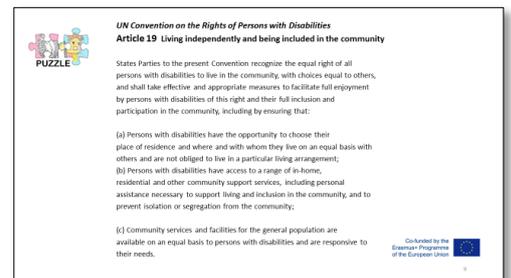
Now it's time for the participants to produce a draft of accessible information about Article 19, using all the knowledge they have so far about easy to read and easy to understand.

**Activity: Use the key information and produce some accessible information!**

- **Ask groups to make a draft of an accessible version of the key information in Article 19 using text/illustrations or multimedia.**
- **Ask groups to briefly present their drafts.**

You can end this activity by showing the video made within the Puzzle project by Lithuania on How to control my money!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yz-LIVCRWao&feature=youtu.be>



## Step 7. Summary/close

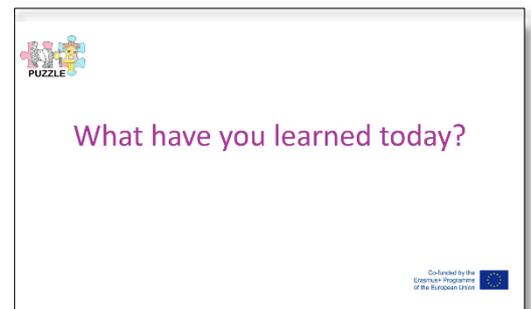
Summarize the workshop:

The Easy-to-Understand method is to combine text, pictures, sound and video (multimedia). In order to fully develop information that is accessible, you should do it together with your learners, persons with ID. An important approach for accessibility and inclusion is “nothing about us without us”.

**Activity: Ask the participants to reflect on what they have learned today. Give them a minute or two. Then ask them to share with the rest of the group (around each table if the number of participants is large) - with a maximum of five words; What the most important learning for themselves today has been.**

Give information about next steps.

End the workshop!



## After

There is always work to do after a workshop before you finally can close the activity. You might need to do some financial reporting, write a report to your organization on the outcome of the workshop etc.

If you got the participants to fill out an evaluation form, you need to take time to go through the feedback. If you have promised the participants documentation, make sure to send it within a reasonable time. You should always keep any promises you make during the workshop.

My experience is, that it is very valuable to take some time to go through the detailed plan of the workshop afterwards. Make notes about what worked well and what parts did not work out as planned. Make some notes about what you had to change on the spot and what you needed to leave out, because you ran out of time. The notes, together with the feedback from participants, will help you when you prepare yourself for the next workshop.

Once again, **GOOD LUCK!**

## Appendix

### **UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

#### **Article 19 Living independently and being included in the community**

States Parties to the present Convention recognize the equal right of all persons with disabilities to live in the community, with choices equal to others, and shall take effective and appropriate measures to facilitate full enjoyment by persons with disabilities of this right and their full inclusion and participation in the community, including by ensuring that:

- (a) Persons with disabilities have the opportunity to choose their place of residence and where and with whom they live on an equal basis with others and are not obliged to live in a particular living arrangement;
- (b) Persons with disabilities have access to a range of in-home, residential and other community support services, including personal assistance necessary to support living and inclusion in the community, and to prevent isolation or segregation from the community;
- (c) Community services and facilities for the general population are available on an equal basis to persons with disabilities and are responsive to their needs.