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A NEW DYNAMIC FOR  
**AUTISM**



WORLD AUTISM AWARENESS DAY CAMPAIGN 2019

# Campaign toolkit

AN INITIATIVE OF:



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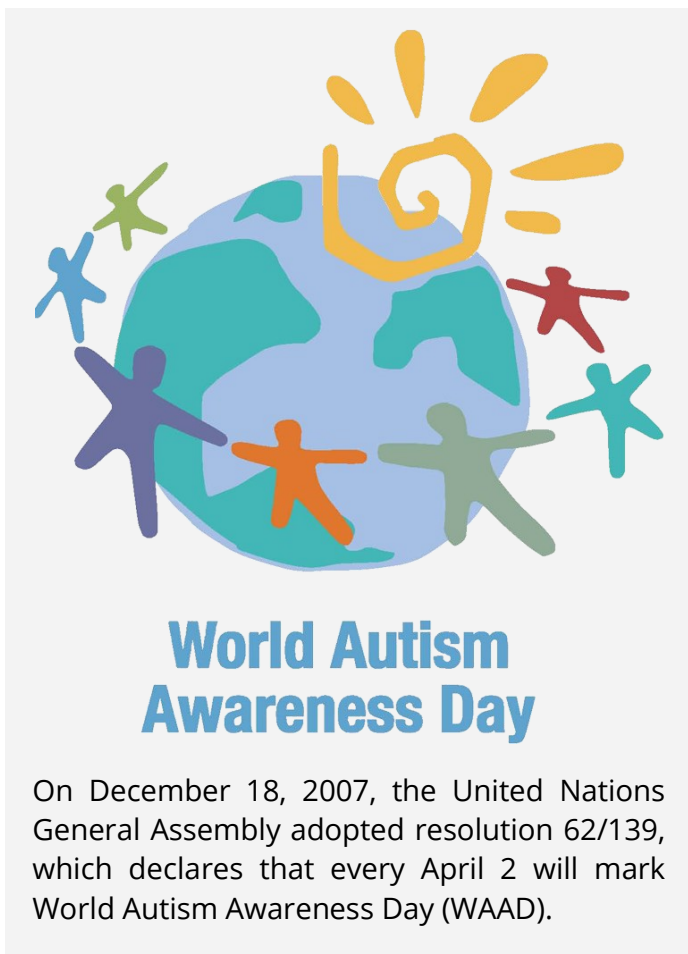
## 1. What is World Autism Awareness Day?

Each year, Autism-Europe works together with its member organisations to conduct campaigns that raise awareness of autism and the rights of autistic people across Europe.

As part of the long-running awareness campaign to be launched around World Autism Awareness Day 2019, Autism-Europe will be focusing on the theme **"A New Dynamic for Autism. I ∞ autism"**.

This campaign toolkit will bring together materials, strategies and recommendations on how you too can contribute to build momentum by conducting a successful awareness raising campaign.

We hope that you will join us in spreading the word, and that together we can create a new dynamic for autism and a more inclusive society for all!



On WAAD 2017 and 2018, Autism-Europe asked people "to break barriers together for autism" to understand what barriers to inclusion autistic people are up against, but also to identify how we all, as a society, can work together to overcome and remove them.



## 2. Background and current context

### A. Advocating for an EU strategy for autism

In January 2018, AE launched its [preliminary Recommendations for a European Strategy](#) for Autism in the framework of a high-level conference on the first research results to emerge from the ASDEU programme. AE, as the partner responsible for formulating recommendations for a public health plan for autism, presented the list of initial key recommendations for a holistic EU autism strategy (based on a mapping of existing policies in relation to autism conducted across the EU as well as an extensive consultation process).

On September 25 2018, AE held an [event in the European Parliament](#) in Brussels to explore the possibility of a future EU strategy for autism, and its added value for improving the quality of life of autistic people and their families. Research conducted as part of the ASDEU programme into autism prevalence, early detection, ageing and services provisions in different EU countries and regions was also presented.

This is part of long-standing efforts to raise awareness of the specific needs of autistic people and ask for specific policy actions to be undertaken to support their full inclusion and participation in society.

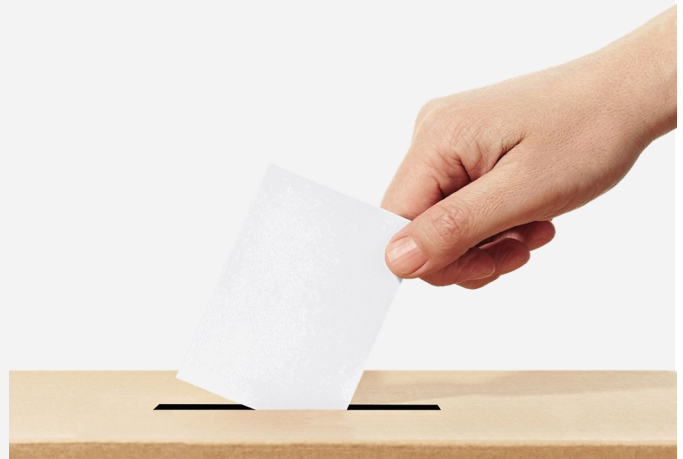
### B. The importance of the European Parliament elections 2019

2019 will be the year of the European Parliament (EP) elections. It is therefore important to seize this opportunity to influence future EU decision makers, and to encourage people to vote in the elections.

Our campaign “A New Dynamic for Autism” will ask candidates for the EP to pledge support for autistic people and their families, and to follow through on these pledges after the European Parliament elections in May 2019, by promoting policies fostering the full respect of the rights and inclusion of autistic people.

This campaign also takes into account key insights from the proposal for the European Parliament’s institutional communication campaign for the European Elections 2019, which will be running at the same time.

However, the campaign will not focus only on the EP elections. The proposed activities and the message as a whole will be applicable to many layers of society and promote awareness, understanding and positive actions for autism in general, at national, regional and local level.



## 3. The campaign

### A. The theme

This year, the campaign theme and visual are also closely linked to Autism-Europe's 12th International Congress, taking place in Nice, France, in September 2019. Under the theme "A new dynamic for change and inclusion", the Congress is intended to share state of the art knowledge and experience that will make it possible to progress towards an inclusive society for autistic people.

Amongst the goals of the congress is to raise autism awareness and understanding, promote a rights-based approach to autism, and share knowledge and experiences. The theme of the 2019 congress uses positive wording and reflects the fact that fostering interventions based on up-to-date scientific knowledge, as well as deinstitutionalisation and community living, are amongst key priorities in France, the host country.

In order to echo this message globally, the slogan of the campaign is **"A New Dynamic for Autism"**.

The slogan is versatile and can adapt to different contexts across the EU, and be applied to different themes to encourage positive change in various areas of life.

### B. The gesture

The congress logo and the campaign both feature the infinity symbol, which represents the diversity of the autism spectrum.

Furthermore, this distinctive shape is also a symbol of strength, something that goes hand in hand with the word "dynamic", which signifies "a force that stimulates change or progress within a system or process".



A NEW DYNAMIC FOR  
**AUTISM**



[Download the logo](#)

It shows the determination of our movement, and the strength of our push towards better support for people on the autism spectrum and their families.

Therefore, the campaign slogan "A New Dynamic for autism" is completed by the claim **"I ∞ autism"** (read "I infinity/love autism"), echoing the logo.

It is easy to promote the campaign gesture by reproducing the infinity symbol using one's hands, or for example, by forming the infinity sign with a group of people. There are also multiple ways to recreate it in a creative and artistic manner!



The “infinity gesture” symbolises unity. Making progress to improve life outcomes for autistic people and their families can only be achieved with mutual respect, and understanding. This requires autistic people, families, professionals and all members of society to cooperate.

This sense of coming together, building bridges, and making progress based on common goals, is one of the cornerstones of Autism-Europe’s International Congresses.



## C. Aim of the campaign

Autism-Europe’s 2019 campaign “A New Dynamic for Autism” has several key goals and objectives:

### **Goal 1: Raise global awareness of autism in society and promote better understanding of how to include and support autistic people.**

- Raise awareness of the specific needs of autistic people, in all their diversity, and how they can be addressed at various levels in society;
- Let stakeholders know what they can do to foster an accessible and autism-friendly society.

### **Goal 2: Raise awareness of policy makers, and notably candidates for the European Parliament elections 2019, and ask them to pledge support to address barriers faced by autistic people in Europe.**

- Inform policy-makers about the challenges and discrimination faced by autistic people across Europe;
- Recall the rights enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities and emphasize the need to work towards its full implementation, including for autistic people;
- Build knowledge and commitment of policy-makers to work towards a strategic approach to autism at the EU and national level to allow autistic people to fully enjoy their rights.

### **Goal 3: Bridge-building actions between the EU level and national actors to engage efficiently with the EU, and ultimately to voice and promote the interest and rights of autistic people.**

- Inform autism organisations and supporters across the European Union about EU processes and policies that can have an impact on the quality of life of autistic people;
- Recall the importance of voting in the European elections to support a more social Europe;
- Build capacity to promote the interest of autistic people at the EU-level, including by supporting important policy initiatives, such as the Work-life balance directive or the European Accessibility Act.

## D. Key messages

**Around 1% of the population is on the autism spectrum. Nowadays, many people are aware of autism, but more must be done for real understanding and support in society**

Autism impacts the lives of more than 20 million people across the European Union if we consider their families. One of the greatest barriers faced by autistic people is the discrimination and lack of understanding they experience in their day-to-day lives.

**Although we are all different, we are all united in our diversity**

Everyone on the spectrum has a place in our community. Nobody, whatever the level of support they may need, should be forgotten or left behind in the push towards improving quality of life and rights for autistic people and their families.

## E. Logotype identity standards and corporate type face

We want to remain coherent in all our communications. Using the “A New Dynamic for autism” logo provides credibility and coherence to the campaign, so to assist you we have established a few simple guidelines to be followed in all communications work.



[Download the Brand Guidelines](#)

**We need a holistic public health plan for autism to reduce inequalities throughout Europe**

The plan should be holistic and also address non-health sectors that have an impact on the quality of life of autistic people. Harmonisation in various fields would help them and their families to more easily exercise the right to free movement.

**EU leaders should understand the needs and priorities of autistic people to support measures for their full inclusion in society**

Common challenges have been identified across Europe for autistic people and their families. By working at the European level we can foster cooperation and share good practices to overcome these challenges.

## F. Official use of the campaign visuals

Autism-Europe members and other interested parties are invited to include the “A New Dynamic for autism” logo on their communication materials to show their participation in the campaign. Appropriate text should be included when using the logo. Those campaign materials must display Autism-Europe’s logo and the logo of your organisation, if applicable.

The “A New Dynamic for Autism” visual can also be used for awareness-raising and advocacy activities, events, fundraising activities, etc. The campaign materials may not be used for activities that would not be in line with Autism-Europe’s aims and objectives.

## G. Dates for your calendar

### PHASE 1: LAUNCH AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CAMPAIGN AT EU LEVEL



#### Preparation date

July 2018 – January 2019

#### Implementation date

February 2019 – April 2019



#### Objectives

- **Raise awareness among the candidates to the European Parliament** about our key political demands for autistic people in Europe;
- **Back the European Disability Forum campaign to support the right to vote for all:** Make polling stations accessible to autistic people and ensure that voting procedures (including for remote voting) are accessible and easy to understand;
- **Ensure that election campaign** facilities and materials, political debates, political party programmes and websites **are accessible** to, and inclusive of, persons on the autism spectrum.



#### Target public

MEPs, EU Institutions, EU political parties, EP Info Offices in Member States, National/Regional governments, Organisations of people with disabilities, EU press agencies.



#### Tools

- **Offline:** events, face-to-face meetings, campaign gesture
- **Online:** manifesto, pledge, hashtags, social media campaign, website



#### Members' engagement

AE members can be involved by contacting their MEPs/candidates for the EP and other key EU stakeholders, sending them the (translated) manifesto and asking them to endorse it. For those members from non-EU countries, they can implement the campaign activities using the campaign materials in the context of their regional and/or national elections.

MEPs play an important role in deciding the outcome of legislation affecting autistic people and their families. As one of Autism-Europe's key roles is to advocate for the autism community in EU policy making, boosting the support of future policy makers and reminding them of their pledge to support our cause in the next 5 years (the mandate of the EP) is an opportunity not to be missed.



## PHASE 2: AROUND WAAD 2019- LAUNCH AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CAMPAIGN AT LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVEL



### Preparation date

November 2018 – January 2019

### Implementation date

February – April 2019



### Objectives

- **Raise awareness about autism** using a holistic approach;
- **Let people know what they can do** to foster a more accessible and inclusive society for autistic people.
- **Ask people to share** testimonials, actions and initiatives in relation to creating an inclusive society



### Target public

General public, media, autistic people and their families, professionals, local/national governments, associations, organisations, institutions, academics, local/regional policy makers.



### Tools

- **Offline:** events, demonstrations, campaign gesture
- **Online:** social media campaign, campaign toolkit, video, press release, manifesto



### Members' engagement

AE calls on its members to support the campaign as much as they can by focusing on their areas of interest and adapting the campaign materials to support their objectives in their local languages.

Members can also support the first stage of the campaign by continuing to contact candidate for the EP in their own country and asking them to pledge support to autistic people and their families.

## PHASE 3: CALL TO VOTE PHASE AT EU LEVEL



Preparation date

April 2019

Implementation date

May 2019



Objective

Raise awareness of the importance of voting in the European elections



Target public

Autistic people and their families, policy-makers, professionals.



Tools

Social media campaign and events



Members' engagement

AE calls on its members to support this action in their own countries and regions. They can express their support on social media even if they are from non-EU countries. They can implement the campaign in the context of their regional and/or national elections.

## PHASE 4: AE'S INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS: relaying the call for action to the whole autism community and key-stakeholders



Preparation date

June – August 2019

Implementation date

September 2019



Objectives

Using the visibility of this landmark event with participants expected from more than 60 countries to make a strong statement, take stock of the campaign achievements and how to go forward.



Target public

Congress participants (autistic people, parents, professionals), policy-makers, general public



Tools

- **Offline:** Congress, stand
- **Online:** Campaign materials to date, reports, analytics



Members' engagement

AE calls on its members to attend the Congress and on delegates to participate in the activities proposed at the AE stand with the Congress venue.

## 4. Engaging with policy-makers across the EU



Once again you can involve a range of autism stakeholders – and combine this with a photo opportunity where national policy-makers would be photographed calling for a new dynamic for autism when doing the infinity gesture. Our team is happy to talk to you and send guidelines to help. Photos could then be sent to the traditional media outlets (such as newspapers in your country or region). Similarly, this approach could be taken with well-known public figures– taking the message offline.

### A. Advocate towards EP candidates and other stakeholders

Autism-Europe will also be using the campaign “A New Dynamic for Autism” to pave the way for an autism-friendly European Parliament in the next mandate, from 2019-2024. In order to set this objective into motion, Autism-Europe will be asking candidates to the European Parliament to make a pledge to support autistic people and their families in their future work.

### B. Campaign manifesto

Autism-Europe has drafted a Manifesto to highlight the priorities of the autistic people. The manifesto will be available in several languages and disseminated to all key stakeholders in relation to the elections.



[Download the Pledge](#)



[Download the Manifesto](#)

## 5. Engaging with the campaign online

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



### A NEW DYNAMIC FOR AUTISM

Be part of a movement towards an inclusive society for autistic people!

#### How can I support the campaign?



1. Reproduce the infinity symbol using one's hands or, for example, by forming the infinity sign with a group of people.
2. Grab your phone or camera.
3. Make a picture, video or story of yourself doing this.
4. Explain what kind of action you take to support an inclusive society for autistic people.
5. Share it on social media using the **#AutismDay2019** hashtag.

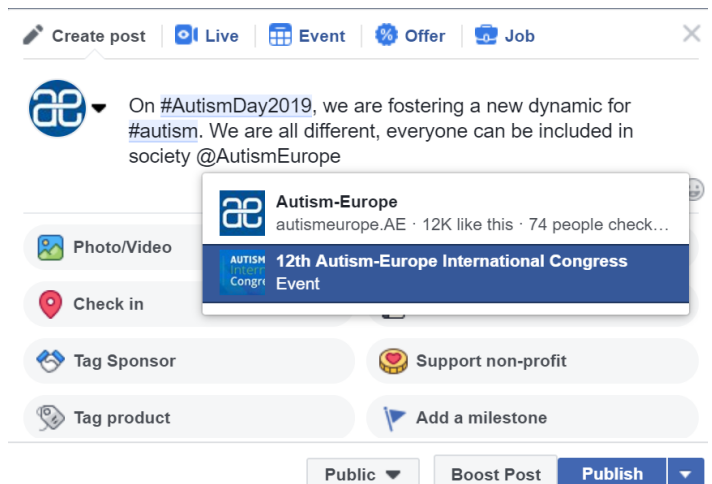
The hashtag is the same for all platforms:

**#AutismDay2019**

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

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

*On #AutismDay2019, we are fostering a new dynamic for #autism. We are all different, everyone can be included in society @AutismEurope*



### A. The video teaser

Before launching the second phase of the campaign, Autism-Europe is planning to produce a short video. This video will be circulated as a campaign teaser to generate interest and make people understand what the main topics are surrounding the inclusion and respect of the rights of autistic people.

Regardless of the approach chosen for the campaign, the teaser will show that each autistic people are different and that multi-level actions must be undertaken to promote a "new dynamic for autism", and will be completed with a short message explaining specific thoughts/needs.



## B. Twitter strategy

Start by following the @AutismEurope Twitter account and searching for #AutismDay2019 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.



## C. 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.

Members of the public are also invited to post their photos and brief messages of support for the campaign, tagged with the #AutismDay2019 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 Social Media Use Guide](#)

## D. Instagram strategy

In 2017, Instagram saw a notable increase in popularity among digital marketers. Due to the high engagement numbers and after Mark Zuckerberg's statement that he wants to make Facebook a more personal platform, since the beginning of 2018 Instagram is becoming an even more influential. What's more, with the integration of both social media conglomerates, it comes as no surprise to anyone that social media campaigns on the visual sharing network are on the rise.

Autism-Europe is using this platform for the first time to engage with a wider range of audiences by taking advantage of this network as a truly visual medium.

Follow the @AutismEurope account on Instagram and post of your photos, videos, stories and brief messages of support for the campaign, tagged with the #AutismDay2019 hashtag.

## 6. 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 and local level.

### 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 the campaign's launch, or simply when organising a campaign-related event.



[Download the sample Press Release](#)

### B. Awareness-raising Events and Fundraising Ideas

- Events on autism awareness attended by local authorities, service providers and/or business representatives;
- Art exhibitions on the topic of diversity, autism and inclusion;
- Sponsored sport or cultural events/marathons;
- Stands with material to spread the word about autism and autistic needs.



© Oltre il Labirinto Onlus

On WAAD 2018, Autism-Europe's member *Fondazione Oltre il Labirinto onlus* from Treviso (Italy) organised an inclusive cycle race to "break barriers together for autism".

## 7. Downloadable resources



**Download all the resources  
in a compressed format**

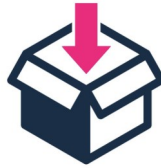


**Download this toolkit in  
Easy to Read version**



**Brand & Language Guides**

Logos, fonts, colour codes, infinity symbol, picture of the hands, icons, acceptable language.



**Marketing tools**

Web banners, Social media teasers, images and video; flyers, posters, infographics, email signature.



**Promotional tools**

Letter template, business card, roll-up banner, table tent.



**Social Media Use Guides**

Facebook, Twitter and Instagram guides for beginners.

## 8. Campaign checklist- Get involved now!

Now you have read the Toolkit, we hope you are 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)
- Before the EP elections, I have contacted candidate for the EP about our key political demands: how to address the needs of autistic people in Europe, what can be done at the EU -level
- I have taken pictures with the banner to raise awareness about the need of a "New Dynamic for autism"
- 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 doing the infinity gesture, or holding the campaign visual and invite all my friends and colleagues to do the same in order to share them on social media

Published with the support of the DG EMPL —  
Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and  
Inclusion of the European Commission, under the  
European Community Programme – Rights, Equality  
and Citizenship.



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