

User Steering Committee for the Deinstitutionalisation Process in Slovenia

within the framework of the Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia for
Deinstitutionalisation in Social Care 2024–2034 (StaDI 2024–2034)

Introduction

In accordance with the Strategy of the Republic of Slovenia for Deinstitutionalisation in Social Care 2024–2034 (hereinafter: StaDI), the Ministry for a Solidary Future established the User Steering Committee (hereinafter: USC) in September 2025. The Committee was established to participate in monitoring, evaluating and overseeing the quality of the deinstitutionalisation process.

The USC is composed of experts by experience. Members of the Committee support the ministry responsible for deinstitutionalisation¹ and the Centre for Deinstitutionalisation at the Social Protection Institute of the Republic of Slovenia in planning and implementing activities. We provide on-site support to stakeholders involved in the deinstitutionalisation process (institutions undergoing transformation, non-governmental organisations, multidisciplinary teams, service users and their families). We also participate in national and local promotion of deinstitutionalisation and prepare observations and recommendations on the progress of deinstitutionalisation in Slovenia, which are then presented to the ministry.

¹ The Strategy for Deinstitutionalisation in Social Care 2024–2034 was adopted by the Ministry for a Solidary Future in March 2024. Responsibility for deinstitutionalisation was transferred to the Ministry of Demography, Family and Social Affairs on 5 June 2026 in accordance with the Act Amending the Government of the Republic of Slovenia Act (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 555/26).

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**Opening doors
for equal rights.**

Members of the User Steering Committee

The USC consists of five members:

Nevenka Kos is a self-advocate and an Easy-to-Read ambassador at the RISA Institute, where she works as a test reader and consultant and contributes to the preparation of various publications (e.g. the *Guide to the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, brochures published by the Health Insurance Institute of Slovenia and the Human Rights Ombudsman). As a speaker, she regularly participates in seminars, conferences and other events in Slovenia and abroad. She has extensive experience in leading self-advocacy groups and providing peer support. She is the co-author of several Easy-to-Read publications (e.g. *Julija in Petra* and *Pod svobodnim soncem*) and also writes and publishes articles and other content on the rights of service users. She has participated in numerous Slovenian and international projects (*Lahko je brati*, *myPart*, *Train2Validate*, *Voices for Justice*, among others). Through her work in the Deinstitutionalisation of CUDV Črna na Koroškem project as a member of the user group, she has gained extensive knowledge of deinstitutionalisation, institutional living, transition processes and community-based services.

Sara Fras is a social worker. In her bachelor thesis on suicide among young people, she gave voice to people with lived experience of suicidality. She completed her Master's degree with research on adult guardianship, presenting first-hand experiences of people who have been placed under guardianship. Between 2021 and 2022, she volunteered in the transformation processes of Dom na Krasu and CUDV Črna na Koroškem, where she prepared person-centred plans and risk assessments together with residents and contributed to the organisation of staff training in both institutions. During the same period, she provided individual community support through the Hearing Voices Association Slovenia. At the Faculty of Social Work, she participated in the research project Transformation of Secure Wards into Community-Based Care for Adults and Children with Disabilities.

Tina Burlin has collaborated with the Hearing Voices Network Slovenia for several years. She studied philosophy and anthropology. Her experience in the field of personal assistance has significantly contributed to her knowledge of the disability support system and the provision of individualised support in everyday life. She completed peer support worker training organised by the Hearing Voices Association Slovenia. She facilitates peer support groups and a book club, gaining extensive experience in group facilitation and group work. She is a speaker and lecturer at numerous public events related to mental health. She is also an Italian language teacher and has volunteered for many years in various organisations, both in Slovenia and abroad, working in the fields of mental health, culture and human rights.

Gregor Benedik has been actively involved in the deinstitutionalisation process at Dom na Krasu for many years. During the past year, he has also participated in the Dom na Krasu Deinstitutionalisation Project, contributing to several working groups. For many years, he served as Chair of the Dom na Krasu Residents' Council. He is an active member of several user groups and regularly participates in professional and cultural events. He has extensive knowledge of institutional care in Slovenia, transition processes from institutions to the community, and community-based services.

Blaž Pirman completed a two-year vocational programme in biotechnology and care assistance at the Biotechnical Education Centre Ljubljana (BIC) and is employed at Druga violina. Together with his colleagues, he produced the film *The Invisible Ones*, in which he plays the leading role. The film makes an important contribution to reducing stigma and raising awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities. As a trainer and lecturer, he has extensive experience in adult education (e.g. Inclusive Adult Education for Persons with Disabilities). He is an active member of a self-advocacy group and a well-known advocate who regularly appears in the media and speaks at conferences.