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EDSA WEBINAR

SAVE THE DATE



WorkFit – supported employment from the UK Down’s Syndrome Association

Date: **Thursday, 21 November 2024** 17.00–18.00 CET

Speaker: **Alison Thwaite**

Translation: Croatian, Czech, Italian, French, German, Turkish and Ukrainian

Registration: To be announced

The WorkFit supported employment project has delivered significant impacts for people who have Down’s syndrome, their families, employers, and co-



workers/employees.

WorkFit offers an effective, scalable, and evidence-based model for actively supporting people with Down’s syndrome into work-related roles and encouraging them and their families to consider paid work as a realistic and feasible option.

Join us to hear how this unique programme develops meaningful and sustainable jobs across all industry sectors.

Biography

Alison has been with the DSA since April 2015. She manages the WorkFit programme throughout the UK.

Her professional background is HR Management and Commercial Development and she has worked with people who have Down’s syndrome in a voluntary capacity for over 17 years, following the birth of her niece, Olivia, who has Down’s syndrome and is her inspiration.

EDSA MEMBER OF THE MONTH



HRVATSKA ZAJEDNICA ZA DOWN SINDROM

The Croatian Down Syndrome Association-CDSA (Hrvatska zajednica za Down sindrom-HZDS) was founded 2005 in order to align and integrate the operation of several Down Syndrome organizations in the Republic of Croatia. CDSA represents 8 local Down Syndrome associations in the Republic of Croatia and around 600 children with Down syndrome and their families.

The constituting members of CDSA are 8 local association: The Down Syndrome Organization - Zagreb, The Down Syndrome Organization 21 - Split, The Down Syndrome Organization of the Međimurje County, The Down Syndrome Organization - Rijeka 21, The Down Syndrome Organization of the Zadar County, The Down Syndrome Organization of the Osijek County, The Down Syndrome Organization of the Dubrovnik - Neretva County, The Down Syndrome Organization of the Virovitica - Podravina County.

According to data from the register of persons with disabilities, there are over **2 050 people with Down syndrome living in Croatia**. About 50 percent are aged 0 to 20. The oldest person listed in the register is over 85 years old. According to data from the register, all people with Down syndrome received a **Croatian and EU disability card** at the beginning of 2024.

The **main goals** of the Association are:

- to improve the health and social care of people with Down Syndrome, to improve education of children and young adults with Down syndrome
- to ensure their proper integration into the society, to provide people with Down syndrome with job opportunities, to initiate and support scientific and other research related to the Down syndrome.

Membership in other associations

The CDSA is a member of the Croatian Association of Persons with Disabilities, European Down Syndrome Association and Down Syndrome International. Membership in the above-mentioned associations helps in better and stronger development of CDSA.

CDSA cooperation with state bodies

The CDSA has a lot of interaction and coordination with the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labor, Pension System, Family and Social Policy and the Ministry of Science, Education and Youth.

The CDSA representative is a member of the Croatian Government's Commission for Persons with Disabilities. In two mandates, CDSA representatives were members of the Council of the Ombudsman for Persons with Disabilities.

Participation in legislative activities

CDSA participated in the preparation and changes of several laws and standards. The first was the pedagogical standard that introduced the support of teaching assistants for students with developmental disabilities for the first time. The standard enabled the inclusion of children and young people with Down syndrome in the regular education system. In the last two years, a lot of work has been done on preparation of two laws, the law on inclusive allowance and the law on personal assistance.

CDSA Support

CDSA is giving support to the member associations, parents and people with Down syndrome, teachers, teaching assistants and other professionals. The greatest support is given to parents and schools in inclusion of children with Down syndrome in the regular education system.

CDSA Education

CDSA regularly gives educational lectures for the parents, teaching assistants, teachers, and professionals in the schools and kindergarten. Educations “How to teach children with Down syndrome”, “How to learn mathematics”, “Use of symbols for teaching children and adults with DS” are held several times a year, online or in person, and very often in schools.

CDSA publishing

CDSA publishing include **handbook „Down syndrome – a guide for parents and experts** “prepared by parents of children with DS, primary care physician, special education teacher and speech therapist. Handbook is distributed in local associations, maternity hospitals, pediatric, GP clinics and welfare centers. Also, CDSA translated seven publications from Down Syndrome Educational International from UK and six of them have already been printed already few times.

CDSA funding and projects

CDSA work and projects are founded through the calls from local government, state administration, European Union and donations from private companies, banks, and citizens. Every year, **CDSA receives 3 to 4 approved projects at the local or state level**. The largest project is support for education centers (special schools) for 10 teaching assistants, who for now can only go through associations, and the CDSA has been providing support to two centers for years.

So far, **HZDS has been a partner in 9 EU projects** led by faculties in Croatia, Portugal and Spain or Down syndrome associations from Italy, Spain and Romania.

CDSA is proud

- proud of the biggest move for people with Down syndrome, **inclusion in the primary schools with teaching assistants**
- proud of **inclusion in the secondary schools with teaching assistants**
- proud of the **employment of young people and adults in the open market**
- proud to participate, **define requirements and develop many applications for tablets and mobile phones** (ICT AAC) for the needs of people with Down syndrome and other

people with disabilities together with the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing in Zagreb (<http://www.ict-aac.hr>)

- proud to be the first in Croatia to start using **Numicon** as a great educational material for learning mathematics at home and in the schools

- proud to organise two conferences, one ***Inclusion in the school*** and second one ***Employment of people with Down Syndrome in Croatia***

- proud to have **two documentary films** together with Croatian Radio Television, first is ***Djeca ljubavi*** (eng. Children of Love) and second one ***Mogu li i ja raditi*** (eng. May I work)



NEWS FROM THE PROJECT WITH EDSA MEMBERS IN THE CONSORTIUM



All Sustainable: An Innovation Project for Developing Sustainable Citizenship Competencies in People with Disabilities

Authorship

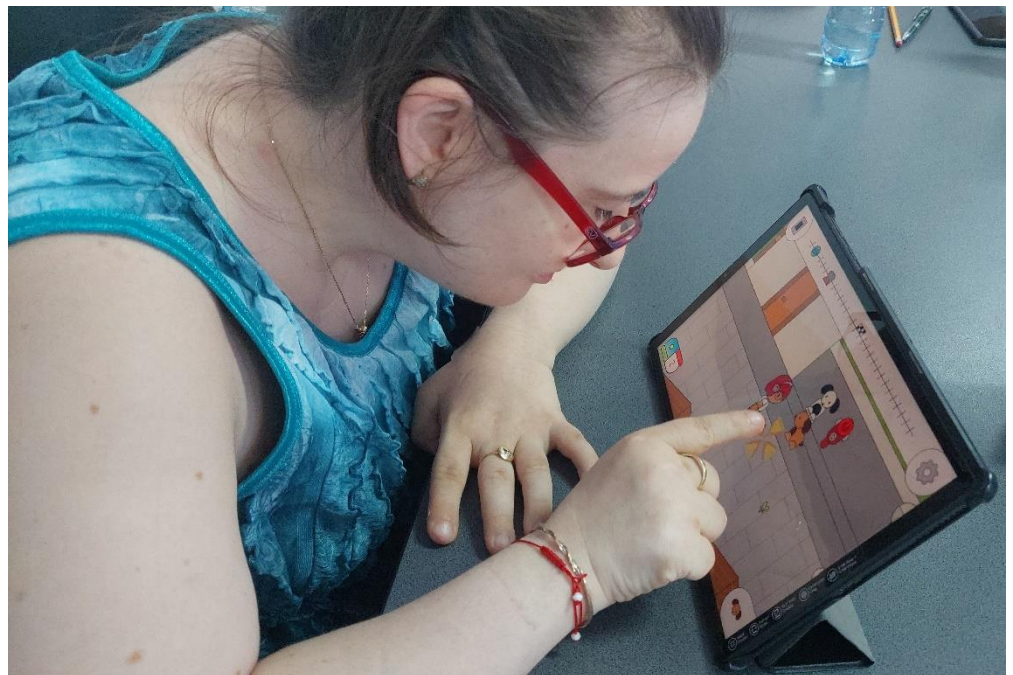
This article has been collaboratively developed by the ALL SUSTAINABLE Consortium, consisting of the following partner organizations: Cercioeiras (Portugal), Amica (Spain), INESC-ID (Portugal), COPAVA (Spain), AIAS Bologna (Italy), and ALDO-CET (Romania).

Abstract

The *All Sustainable* project represents an innovative initiative that combines the development of sustainability competencies with the use of digital tools for people with disabilities. This article details the design and implementation of an educational program that includes a digital game and specific training resources aimed at trainers and learners. It analyses the co-creation process of the project, the results obtained during the training and validation phases, and its impact on various stakeholders: people with disabilities, professionals, and families. Finally, the article reflects on the future possibilities for applying the program in the field of education and disability.

The educational digital game and the resources developed as well as the results of the project are available on its webpage: <https://all-sustainable.inesc-id.pt/>

[Read all the article](#)



G7 MEETING IN ASSISI AND SOLFAGNANO

Pat Clarke, EDSA representative at the European Disability Forum and as EDF's Vice President attended the First ever G7 Minister's Meeting on Inclusion and Disability. Alessandra Locatelli, Italian Minister for Disabilities, hosted the event and had invited Pat to moderate the second panel of the day on "Universal Accessibility and Prevention/Management of emergencies". The outcome of this meeting was the adoption of the G7 Inclusion and Disability Solfignano Charter ([here](#)). This charter aims to address the following issues for persons with disabilities.

1. Inclusion as a priority issue in the political agenda of all countries;
2. Access and accessibility;
3. Autonomous and independent life;
4. Enhancement of talents and work inclusion;
5. Promotion of new technologies;
6. Sports, recreational and cultural dimensions of life;
7. Dignity of life and appropriate community-based services;
8. Prevention and management of emergency preparedness and post-emergency management situations, including climate crises, armed conflicts and humanitarian crises

There is an expectation that future G7 presidency meetings will have a similar gathering of the Ministers for Disability.



Pat Clarke and Alessandra Locatelli, Italian Minister for Disabilities

NEWS FROM EDSA MEMBERS

DOWN SYNDROME EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL (DOWNSED)



Down Syndrome Research Forum

The Down Syndrome Research Forum is an established, international meeting of researchers and practitioners interested in advances in our understanding of how to best meet the developmental and educational needs of children with Down syndrome.

The event is sponsored by Down Syndrome Education International and hosted annually in partnership with researchers active in the field.

The 2025 Down Syndrome Research Forum will be held on 17th, 18th, and 19th March.

[Research Forum 2025](#)



The Down Syndrome Research Forum offers a venue for academic researchers and professional practitioners to meet to share and discuss current research, recent findings and implications for practice.

The forum is usually well attended by researchers in the field and can be especially helpful for postgraduate students to share work in progress and seek support and advice from others working or interested in Down syndrome research. Specifically, we encourage students to give short presentations of their work even if they are only in the planning stage and provide opportunities for students to discuss their study plans with experts in the field.

You can view the programmes and abstracts from previous years below:

- [2024](#)
- [2023](#)

- [2022](#)
- [2021](#)
- [2020](#)
- [2019](#)

Topics

Presentations are accepted on a variety of topics relevant to understanding and improving the lives of people with Down syndrome. Usually the focus is on development and education but we also welcome papers on health issues relevant to development, family issues and adult issues. Presentations on methodology, translating research to practice, interventions and case studies are also welcome.

Participants

Researchers and postgraduate students from throughout the UK, Europe, and elsewhere are invited to attend. We also encourage contributions from education and healthcare professionals working with people with Down Syndrome. We also welcome parents of children with Down syndrome and others with an interest in the detail of current research.

Steering Committee

The forum is organised by a Steering Committee of leading international researchers in the field.

The current members are:

- Kelly Burgoyne, University of Manchester, UK.
- Kate Cain, University of Lancaster, UK.
- Emily Farran, University of Surrey, UK.
- Susan Foster-Cohen, University of Canterbury, New Zealand.
- Jo van Herwegen, University College London, UK.
- Susan Loveall-Hague, University of Nebraska - Lincoln, USA.
- Silvana Mengoni, University of Hertfordshire. UK.
- Vesna Stojanovik, University of Reading, UK.
- Chair: Sue Buckley, Down Syndrome Education International, University of Portsmouth, UK.

EU FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES



CITIZENS, EQUALITY, RIGHTS AND VALUES PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

This programme aims to protect and promote rights and values as enshrined in the EU Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights in particular by supporting civil society organisations active at local, regional, national and transnational level.

The CERV programme in a nutshell

The Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV) programme was launched in 2021 and will run for seven years until 2027. It was created along with the 2021-2027 Justice programme under the Justice, Rights and Values Fund.

The CERV programme seeks to support and develop open, rights-based, democratic, equal and inclusive societies based on the rule of law. That includes a vibrant and empowered civil society, encouraging people's democratic, civic and social participation and cultivating the rich diversity of European society, based on our common values, history and memory.

The CERV programme has four pillars:

1. Equality, Rights and Gender Equality - promoting rights, non-discrimination, equality (including gender equality), and advancing gender and non-discrimination mainstreaming
2. Citizens' engagement and participation - promoting citizens engagement and participation in the democratic life of the Union, exchanges between citizens of different Member States, and raising awareness of the common European history
3. Daphne - fight violence, including gender-based violence and violence against children
4. Union values - protect and promote Union values

Civil society organisations active at local, regional, national and transnational level, as well as other stakeholders, can apply to receive CERV funding for initiatives aimed at citizens' engagement, equality for all and the protection and promotion of rights and EU values.

Here you can apply for [Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme \(CERV\)](#).

For the latest news on funding opportunities & funded projects under the CERV and Justice programmes, sign up [here](#) to receive the [funding newsletter](#) on a regular basis.

Many countries have a national contact point to help applicants and beneficiaries with questions and issues related to the CERV programme (including how to apply for funding). You can view the list of CERV Contact Points [here](#).

If your country does not yet have a CERV national contact point, feel free to contact the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA).

MAKE THIS NEWSLETTER REALLY YOURS!

Have you got any news that we could publish in EDSA newsletter? Please send us any information you would like to announce and we shall be happy to disseminate it all over Europe!

CONTACTS

e-mail: internazionale@aipd.it

THE STAFF

Carlotta Leonori
Paola Vulterini