

**2021**  
**EASPD**  
**Annual**  
**Report**

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Persons with Disabilities



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# Message from our President



I am delighted to welcome you to read the EASPD Annual Report for 2021. For the organisation it was a highly significant year. We progressed on many levels, external and internal. It was a year of many highlights, with milestones met and ambitions furthered.

Of course, Covid 19 continued to pose a very real threat across Europe to health and wellbeing, particularly to people with disabilities, people who have other conditions and to the elderly. Our members continued to find ways to give support to people and their families.

Not only was 2021 a significant year for our achievements. It also marked an anniversary: twenty-five years since EASPD was first created. In October we came together in a physical conference and Gala dinner in Brussels to celebrate.

The atmosphere throughout these days was one where everyone clearly felt liberated at the opportunity to come together after so much isolation. However, the Gala dinner, in particular, did feel bitter-sweet as not only did it mark the organisation's 25th anniversary but also the retirement of our first Secretary General, Luk Zelderloo.

Luk's many talents and skills were uniquely suited to building EASPD from nothing into a major European representative organisation. Luk was amongst a mere handful of its founders. His drive, commitment, energy, belief in the organisation, belief in the rights of disabled people, cultural and political awareness, willingness to travel many thousands of kilometres and sense of fun made a reality of the founder's vision of EASPD.

To balance the sadness at saying goodbye, but not farewell, to Luk, we were very happy to welcome our new Secretary General, Ms. Maya Doneva. Maya was the outstanding candidate for Secretary General and we are delighted with the very positive start she has made since taking charge in November 2021.

On behalf of myself and the current Board I take this opportunity to humbly thank the former Presidents, Luk and Board members who had the vision twenty-five years ago to create EASPD and, despite many challenges, to build it into the wonderful organisation that it is today.

*James Crowe*



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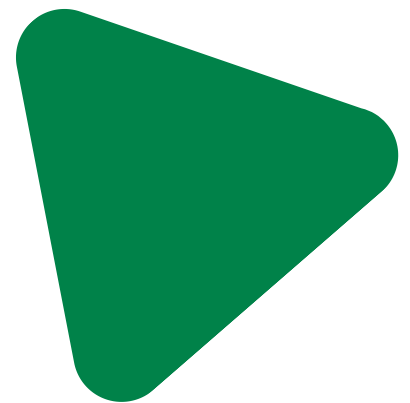


# Who we are

Located in Brussels, the European Association of Service providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD) represents over 20,000 support service providers for persons with disabilities. Driven by our members and supported by a team of professional staff, EASPD strives to deliver high-quality services that promote the full participation and inclusion in society of all persons with disabilities. Alongside our 170 members we strongly believe that support services for people with disabilities play a major role in enabling people to enjoy their human rights on an equal basis with others.

## Mission

Our mission is to deliver the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by supporting our members in the design, development and set up of individualised models of support, responsive to specific needs and wishes.



## Vision

EASPD's vision is for any type of support to be individualised and available, accessible and responsive to the needs and wishes of persons with disabilities. Human rights-based support services play an important role in granting access, participation and inclusion in society. We want society to fully understand that these support services are human rights enablers.



# Our three pillars

## Impact

Have an impact on European policy in our areas of interest.

## Innovation

Foster innovation at all levels.

## Information

Stay informed and update our members and partners regarding latest developments.

# Our Strategy

2021 marked the final year of EASPD's 2018-2021 multi-annual Strategy 'Commit!' Developed with members, this strategy reaffirms our commitment to human rights-based support services and our key role in creating a more Social Europe.

'Commit!' is driven by three objectives:



## Representation



## Innovation and Know-How



## Member-Led Approach



# Our Team

As a member-led organisation, EASPD's General Assembly holds the highest competence within the organisation, it is with their authority that EASPD's Executive Committee, Board and Secretariat support the implementation of the organisation's activities.

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND BOARD



**James Crowe**  
President  
Crowe Consultancy  
Ltd, UK



**Javier Güemes**  
Vice-President  
Fundación ONCE  
Spain



**Valerija Bužan**  
Vice-President  
Center Val  
Slovenia



**Karin Astegger**  
Vice-President  
Lebenshilfe Salzburg  
Austria



**Peter Saxenhofer**  
Treasurer  
INSOS  
Switzerland



**Maya Doneva**  
EASPD Secretary  
General (Ex officio  
of Board)



## BOARD MEMBERS



**James Churchill**  
Social Care  
Training, UK



**Mirela Juka**  
Down Syndrome  
Albania, Albania



**Miguel Valles**  
CECD Mira Sintra,  
Portugal



**Agapi Papadaki**  
Amimoni,  
Greece



**Kathrin Völker**  
BAG WfbM,  
Germany



**Lieve  
Dekempeneer**  
Hubbie, Belgium



**Vasilka Dimoska**  
PORAKA,  
North Macedonia



**Elisabeth  
Lammers**  
Unapei, France



**Eoin Nash**  
COPE Foundation  
Ireland



**Petra Rantamäki**  
KVPS  
Finland



**Ákos Pordán**  
Hand in Hand  
Foundation, Hungary



**Stef de Cock**  
Equal Employment  
Europe, Belgium



**Fabrizio Fea**  
Associazione Scuola  
Viva onlus, Italy



**Jose Maria Solé I  
Chavero**  
SUPPORT Girona, Spain



**Evert-Jan  
Hoogerwerf**  
AIAS Bologna onlus, Italy

# SECRETARIAT

Based in Brussels and led by EASPD Secretary General, Maya Doneva, EASPD's Secretariat supports the implementation of EASPD's key activities. In 2021, we waved goodbye to some colleagues and welcomed new faces, including our new Secretary General.



**Maya Doneva**  
EASPD Secretary  
General

## Project Development Team



**Timothy Ghilain**  
Head of Project  
Development



**Giulia Bergamasco**  
Project officer



**Omor Ahmed**  
Project Officer



**Ana Hannotte**  
Project Officer



**Domenico Manente**  
Project officer

## Knowledge and Innovation Team



**Renaud Scheuer**  
Head of Knowledge  
and Innovation



**Zoé Lardou**  
Learning and  
Development Officer



**Miguel Gonzalez**  
Research and  
Development Officer



**Policy  
Team**



**Thomas  
Bignal**  
Head of Policy



**Konstantina  
Leventi**  
Senior Policy Officer



**Irene  
Bertana**  
Senior Policy Officer



**Fabrizio De  
Angelis**  
Policy officer



**Fabiana  
Scarano**  
Junior Policy Officer

**Operations  
Team**



**Rachel  
Vaughan**  
Head of Operations



**Sonia  
Staskowiak**  
Senior Finance Officer



**Najia El  
Jaouhari**  
Finance Officer



**Sydney Von Ihering**  
Communications and  
Project Officer



**Dimitri Papakoch**  
Events and Operations  
Officer



**Marina  
Antanasiotis**  
Membership Officer



**Tavishi Rekhi**  
Communications  
Officer



**Dionyssis  
Antanasiotis**  
Office Assistant



**Adriana Elena Popa**  
Membership Officer (On  
maternity leave)

# Highlights of 2021

EASPD continued its work with its members to ensure the delivery of high-quality services for persons with disabilities. In a year full of online events, peer learning activities, new projects and a growing membership we had a few particularly notable highlights. Find out more about our top moments of 2021 below.



## Celebration of EASPD's 25th Anniversary

2021 marked the 25th anniversary of EASPD. EASPD began with just three or four organisations at the table, and now represents more than 20,000 support service providers.

Over the last 25 years EASPD has striven to promote the delivery of higher quality services that contribute to the implementation of the UN CRPD. To celebrate the organisation's achievements, we hosted a number of activities, including an anniversary conference and gala dinner, launched the Innovation Awards and unveiled a new EASPD logo.

## Launch of EASPD's new logo and website

In 2021 EASPD's visual identity underwent a refresh! Our new logo represents the bright, dynamic and modern organisation that we are.

Our team love it, and we hope that you do too!

Alongside an updated logo, we also launched our new website to provide clearer, up-to-date and more easily accessible information to our members, partners and general audiences. You can see it for yourself at [www.easpd.eu](http://www.easpd.eu).



## Transition to New Secretary General

In 2021 EASPD said farewell to its Secretary General of 16 years, Luk Zelderloo, and gave a warm welcome to Maya Doneva. Over his time working for EASPD, Luk worked tirelessly across Europe for the delivery of high-quality support services for persons with disabilities. An expert in social entrepreneurship and innovation, his successor, Maya, will bring with her experience as CEO of Karin Dom foundation, one of the largest and oldest social service providers in the Balkan region. She also founded one of the first social enterprises in Bulgaria – The Social Teahouse Network.

# Representation

In 2021 EASPD continued to build on its work from 2020, to present and draw urgent attention to the reality of support service providers during the pandemic. Our work this year has included forging stronger connections with our partners at a European level and contributing to the development of EU social policies.

## Partnerships

### Social Services Europe

EASPD was very active in its partnership with Social Services Europe. In the first half of the year, EASPD held the organisation's Presidency. We worked on European initiatives like the Social Economy Action Plan, the Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan, as well as on thematic topics like public procurement. Social Services Europe and its members were also active in the Coordinated Action on Social Services and COVID-19; which led to an application for the creation of a Helpdesk to help social services access EU Funds.



### Social Platform

This year EASPD has been actively involved with the work of the Social Platform, in particular on their work on the proposal for a Directive on Minimum Wages, the EU Fiscal Rules reform. There was also important work done together around the European Pillar of Social Rights.



### European Expert Group on transition from Institutional to Community-based services

EASPD worked in the EEG with a focus on the EU Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the EU Pillar on Social Rights Action Plan and the Recovery and Resilience Facility. The EEG closely monitored the Recovery and Resilience Fund's plans in several countries and provided its feedback on the actions proposed related to Independent Living and Inclusion in the community.

## Alliance for Investing in Children

EASPD is an active member of the Alliance for Investing in Children, which brings together European networks sharing a commitment to end child poverty and to promote child well-being across Europe. In 2021, the Alliance contributed to the shaping of the Child Guarantee. It published a statement in October for the drafting of Action Plans in the area of transition from institutional to community-based care for setting up early childhood intervention systems which address specific vulnerabilities and prevent family separation.



## Inclusive Labour Market Alliance

EASPD has also been involved in the ILMA. On 16 November 2021 the organisation hosted an event on different policies adopted by companies in order to foster inclusive recruitment in the EU labour market. The event, in the form of a webinar, was followed by almost 300 participants. The EASPD actively participated to the organisation, dissemination and moderation of the event.

# Policy Milestones



## EU Disability Rights Strategy

The European Commission launched the European Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030 in February 2021. It aims to progress on all areas of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, both at EU and Member State level. The Flagship Initiatives where EASPD will give its contribution are a package of initiatives to improve labour market outcomes of persons with disabilities (in 2022), guidance to Member States on independent living and inclusion in the community (in 2023) and the framework for Social Services of Excellence for persons with disabilities (in 2024).





## EU Child Guarantee

The proposal on a Child Guarantee was published in March 2021, under the first Commission EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child. The Child Guarantee invited Member States to develop Action Plans to secure effective and free access to early childhood intervention and care, education and school-based activities, healthcare, nutrition and housing to children in need. Throughout the year, EASPD contributed to the shaping of the proposal, together with the Alliance for Investing in Children, and mobilised members to influence the development of the national Action Plans



## EU Social Economy Action Plan

The EU Action Plan on Social Economy was issued on 9 December 2021 and included many of the requests made by EASPD. In April 2021, EASPD developed a position on the Social Economy Action Plan. The document underlined the importance for social economy enterprises and social service providers across the EU to benefit from adequate legal and policy frameworks that guarantee a steady development of the social economy. EASPD also worked on the Action Plan through Social Services Europe.



## The EU Green Paper on Ageing

The European Commission (EC) released the Green Paper on Ageing on January 2021 with the purpose to launch a broad policy debate on ageing to discuss options on how to anticipate and respond to the challenges and opportunities it brings. EASPD contributed to the debate bringing a range of arguments from the ageing of persons with disabilities to staff shortages in social care. The Green Paper also led the EC to highlight their ambition to launch an EU Care Strategy in 2022.

## Membership of the Disability Platform (replacing the High-Level Group Disability)

EASPD successfully applied to be a member of the new European Disability Platform, replacing the High Level Group on Disability. The Disability Platform is the place to be for discussions and debates at EU level around the implementation of the EU Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Disability Platform includes representatives from the Commission, Member States and Civil Society.



# Events

In the year where EASPD celebrated its 25th anniversary, EASPD's team and members were kept busy with a whole host of events including webinars, online trainings, member cafés and our first in-person conference in 18 months!

# 56

## Total events hosted by EASPD in 2021



This included.....

- 6 Policy Cafés
- 3 Project Cafés
- 3 Knowledge Cafés
- 18 Webinars
- 7 PCT online workshops

## To Inclusive Education and BEYOND EASPD May Conference

The 'To Inclusive Education and BEYOND' online conference was hosted by EASPD in collaboration with CECD Mira Sintra and the BEYOND project from 5th-7th May, 2021. Spread across 5 panels and 11 workshops, the conference brought together a variety of stakeholders alongside discussing the impact of COVID-19 on achieving inclusion at school. Following the discussions of the conference EASPD released the '[Lisbon Declaration on Inclusive Education.](#)'

## The future is now: Person Centred Technology to empower people and disability services EASPD 25th Anniversary Conference

On 13th and 14th of October 2021 EASPD hosted its first in-person conference in 18 months. The conference brought together members and stakeholders to explore the way forward for the use of technology in service provision for persons with disabilities. The conference also played host to EASPD's 25th Anniversary celebrations, including a Gala dinner with special guests from across Europe.



# Innovation and Know-How

In 2021 EASPD continued to build on its work to play a leading and convening role in the development of innovative support models for persons with disabilities. This included the identifying and contributing to the design, development and sharing of innovative support models.

## Projects

### Workforce Development

#### Enhance (European Curriculum for Family and Community Nurses)

ENhANCE targets the specific mismatch between the skills currently offered by nurses working in Primary Health Care (PHC) and those actually demanded by both public health care institutions and private service providers, when applying innovative healthcare models centred on PHC.

This year the project ended with a final conference to share the project's Curriculum for Family and Community Nurses.



January 2018 - May 2021

Erasmus+ Programme

Coordinator: National Research Council  
Institute for Educational Technology

Contact: Adriana Popa

#### IN TOUR (Inclusive Tourism Professions. European Curricula For Accessible Tourism Manager And Frontline Staff)



January 2020 - December 2022

Erasmus+ Programme

Coordinator: Associazione Italiana  
Sclerosi Multipla Onlus Italy

Contact: Giulia Bergamasco

The In-Tour project aims to fill the gap in the training system in Europe on Accessible Tourism. In 2021 the In-Tour consortium published a report on the skills needs in the Inclusive Tourism sector and it defined the key activities and accessibility-related competencies for Inclusive Tourism Managers and Inclusive Tourism Front-line Staff occupational profiles.



# B-WISE - Blueprint for Sectoral Cooperation on Skills in Work Integration Social Enterprises



January 2021- December 2024  
Erasmus+ Programme  
Coordinator: EASPD  
Contact: Konstantina Leventi

The B-Wise project targets the skill needs of disadvantaged workers who do not have the same access to the labour market, their support workers such as job coaches, and their managers. In 2021 the B-WISE project, conducted research to identify the current situation in terms of the skills gap and to determine the potential future needs in the WISE sector in Europe.

## a4i - Alliance for Inclusive Investment in Social Care and Support

The a4i project entered into its final year in 2021 and led to the development of a complete face-to-face and online training course about private investment in social care and support. The Training Programme (and other outputs) was developed jointly between a consortium of social care providers, banks and universities. It also comes alongside research, guidance and promising practices, available on the project's knowledge centre:

<https://www.socialinvestment.eu/en/knowledge-center>



January 2019 - December 2021  
Erasmus+ Programme  
Coordinator: EASPD  
Contact: Thomas Bignal

## AdPHS - Advancing Personal and Household Services

In 2021, the Ad-PHS project concluded. Our work on the project in this year was focused on finalising the reports developed by the partners to support public authorities and other stakeholders in developing policies to structure the sectors of personal and household services. These reports were revised and published in light of the inputs shared during the Ad-PHS final conference, held in Winter 2021.



December 2018 - December 2020  
Erasmus+ Programme  
Coordinator: EASPD  
Contact: Renaud Scheuer

## Education

### Inclusive University Digital Education (INCLUDE)

The INCLUDE project aims to promote the realisation of accessible and inclusive higher education opportunities for students with special educational needs. The project kicked off in 2021!



June 2021- September 2022  
Erasmus+ Programme  
Coordinator: EASPD  
Contact: Rachel Vaughan

## IE+: Promoting positive attitudes and evidence-based policy for inclusive education

The IE+ project provides decision-makers (policy-makers and education providers) with the information, training and tools that allow for evidence based policy making. The project ended in 2021 having produced a training which will enable decision makers to develop policies which facilitate the transition towards inclusive education.



January 2018 - January 2021  
Erasmus+ Programme  
Coordinator: EASPD  
Contact: Rachel Vaughan

## To Inclusive Education and BEYOND



September 2018 - August 2021  
Erasmus+ Programme  
Coordinator: EASPD  
Contact: Rachel Vaughan

BEYOND aims to empower special schools and service providers supporting children with special needs, to facilitate the transition towards fully inclusive education systems. The project came to an end in 2021 following the hosting of its closing conference which addressed the key challenges and opportunities for the inclusion of all learners in mainstream schools. The project produced an online training for service providers and special schools on how they can help to facilitate the transition towards fully inclusive education systems.

## IMAS - Improving Assistance in Inclusive Educational Settings II



October 2018 - March 2021  
Erasmus+ Programme  
Coordinator: University of Graz  
Contact: Zoé Lardou

IMAS II wants to ensure the further development and strengthening of inclusive competences of learning and support assistants. The IMAS II project finalised the training activities as well as the participatory research with students with and without disabilities. They also uploaded the final materials on the five training modules they had created, available in English, German, Portuguese, Slovak and Bulgarian.

## Hi-Ability

During the first year of its course the partners of Hi-Ability developed the 'Hi-Ability Toolkit for Educators.' The Toolkit is aimed at educators and facilitators who work with persons with intellectual disabilities. The 8 modules provide the necessary tools and resources for them to improve their knowledge and skills in environmental education.



December 2020- November 2022  
Erasmus+ Programme  
Coordinator: Cooperativa Sociale Controvento ONLUS  
Contact: Dimitri Papakoch

# Person Centred Technology

## DDSkills

DDSkills started the year with the development of its course plan. The team developed a course that will accredit the participating professionals with an ISO 17024 certification after successful completion. Throughout the process, the team also had compelling discussions on how to approach practical "real life" workplace situations.



January 2020 - December 2022  
Erasmus+ Programme  
Coordinator: TO ERGASTIRI  
Contact: Ana Hannotte

## Smart4Health

November 2019 - February 2023  
Horizon 2020  
Coordinator: UNINOVA  
Contact: Renaud Scheuer



Smart4Health is about enabling citizens to manage their own health data, via an online platform. In 2021 the project made good progress with the release of a MOOC about digital health for beginners, online Therapist Handbook about back pain and the start of the first case studies for the prevention of lower back pain.

The project was also shared in various events, including several workshops and the technology fair at the EASPD Conference in October 2021.

## ENTELIS+ (Accessibility skills for a technology enhanced learning in an inclusive society)

Throughout 2021, Entelis+ ran the #RightToConnectNow campaign which raised awareness on the digital divide, need for inclusive education, and the importance of accessibility as an enabler for inclusive learning. It prepared policy recommendations, piloted training in 4 countries and released the Entelis+ digital accessibility training module. A highlight was the final project event in Brussels at EASPD's 25th Anniversary Conference in October.



January 2020 - January 2022  
Erasmus+ Programme  
Coordinator: EASPD  
Contact: Omor Ahmed

## Accessibilitech



September 2018 - August 2021  
Erasmus+ Programme  
Coordinator: EASPD  
Contact: Miguel Buitrago

The Accessibilitech project has among its main objectives to define, validate and implement an advanced methodology to identify, analyse, disseminate and transfer experiences and innovative solutions that use technology to guarantee accessibility for people with disabilities in telework, e-learning and online care services. For this, the project started the technical work and the call for submissions of good practices and solutions, that will be part of a database.



## SEURO (Scaling EUROpean citizen driven transferable and transformative digital health)



SEURO

The SEURO project was launched in May, and has developed its first models for the friendly pilot test. By the end of the year, the project also came up with a small explanatory video for the tester/users, to introduce them to the applications and ensure they provide complete feedback of their experience.

May 2021- May 2024  
Erasmus+ Programme  
Coordinator: EASPD  
Contact: Ana Hannotte

## Co-Care: Co-created ICT solutions for Alzheimer's Informal Caregiving



Co-Care

The Co-Care project brings together universities, ICT professionals, the health and social care sector and informal carers for people with Alzheimer's to improve teaching and learning approaches and foster entrepreneurship. In 2021, Co-Care piloted a training course for universities in the UK, Portugal and Spain and after a year of virtual meetings finally got to meet each other again for a project meeting in Setubal, Portugal.

January 2020- December 2022  
Erasmus+ Programme  
Coordinator: Universitat de Vic -  
Universitat de Catalunya  
Contact: Sydney Von Ihering

## Employment

### EQUALVet (Equal Vocational Education Training)



EQUALvet

January 2019 - September 2022  
Erasmus+ Programme  
Coordinator: Margarita VTC  
Contact: Zoé Lardou

EQUALvet aims to develop a vocational training programme for people with intellectual disabilities in three professions: cook assistant, gardener assistant and cleaner. The EQUALVET project finalised the three training manuals (for cleaners, gardeners as well as a trainers' manual. Two of the partners also ran pilots for two of the manuals: gardener and cleaner.

### Supported Employment E-Portfolio

September 2020 - August 2022  
Erasmus+ Programme  
Coordinator: PHH Academie  
Contact: Fabrizio De Angelis

The main objective of the E-portfolio project is to improve services for vulnerable job seekers, employees and their employers by creating a quality dynamic interactive E-portfolio framework. In 2021, the project finalised the toolkit with the list of abilities which will be used to constitute the ability profile of each person with disabilities and carried out an impact assessment on its practical application.



# Inclusive Living

## UNIC (Towards User-centred funding models for long-term care)

UNIC aims to support the transition to user-centred funding models (such as Personal Budgets) in long-term care (LTC). In 2021, EASPD and fellow UNIC partner VAPH held a knowledge cafe event on the Personal Budgets System in Flanders, developed a collection of promising practices on personal budgets in Europe and across the world, and also designed a roadmap for public authorities to help them design, develop and implement a personal budgets system.



October 2020 - September 2023  
European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation  
“EaSI (2014-2020)  
Coordinator: EASPD  
Contact: Konstantina Leventi

## Skills II: Improving the Skills and Competencies in Self-Directed Support

Skills II aims to improve skills and change lives through self-directed support, and move away from an institutional approach towards an approach based on Human Rights. In 2021, the project started testing a range of resources created to help countries develop systems of self-directed support.



September 2019 - August 2022  
Erasmus+ Programme  
Coordinator: Service Foundation for People with an Intellectual Disability (KVPS)  
Contact: Miguel Buitrago

## DI Greece: Technical Support on deinstitutionalisation (DI) process in Greece



The Technical Support on deinstitutionalisation (DI) process in Greece was concluded in 2021. It provided assistance to the Greek Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) in completing a DI national Strategy, Roadmap and Action Plan, defining and implementing processes and methodologies for effective DI, creating communication tools, and developing training programmes. In September 2021 the Technical Support to implement reforms to support the development of family centred early childhood intervention services in Greece (ECI Greece) project kicked off. The project is funded by DG Reform and is supporting the Greek government in developing a modern evidence-based legislative and financial framework for family-based early childhood intervention services.

# Rights

## SMARTS (Supporting Me About Rights to Sexuality)

The SMARTS project aims to better identify the support needs of persons with intellectual disabilities and persons with mental health conditions in the field of sexuality, as well as develop their skills and those of care providers, to make supported decisions in the field. In 2021 the project developed guidelines on supported decision making in sexuality for professionals (service managers and staff members), family caregivers and people with disabilities. The project also hosted a Learning Teaching and Training event on supported decision making



SMARTS

September 2020 - August 2023  
Erasmus+ Programme  
Coordinator: EASPD  
Contact: Zoé Lardou

## Early Childhood Intervention (ECI)

### Technical Support to implement reforms to support the development of family centred early childhood intervention services in Greece (ECI Greece)

The ECI Greece project aims to support the Greek government in developing a modern, evidence based legislative and financial framework for early childhood intervention services as a crucial step towards DI, and the effective inclusion of children with disabilities in society and their families through quality and adapted care and support. In 2021 the first project meeting was held in November; key stakeholders were contacted for their support in the project and the ECI service providers who will be trained in the project were identified.

September 2021 - September 2023  
Coordinator: EASPD  
Contact: Irene Bertana



# Exchange and Collaboration

## Lighthouse Network

The Lighthouse Network promotes peer-learning by bringing together EASPD members with certain expertise, and others who would like to improve their knowledge and capacity. In 2021, the Lighthouse Network give all Member Fora the opportunity to take part in the Lighthouse Network activities and cooperate with one another in a wide range of activities, namely: mentoring and training sessions, study visits, as well as short-term projects. If you wish to know more about the Lighthouse Network activities conducted in 2021, you can find information about them in each Member Forum's section.



## EURECO

In 2021 the EURECO platform organised two forums. This first in the spring addressed the digital momentum for persons with disabilities and support services post COVID-19: Opportunities, risks and research needs. Its second forum also addressed digitalisations, this time looking at the digital divide and the co-creation of sustainable and inclusive social infrastructure in regions beyond large cities.

Concrete outcomes of these events include reports addressed to pertinent stakeholders with the view of shaping the policy and research agenda. These events have also helped strengthen connections among the members of the EURECO network, hopefully leading to further collaboration in research and projects. Both events were organised online and were attended by over 100 participants. Additionally, the EURECO network continued its ongoing work via frequent reports, updates, and newsletters. The EURECO Steering Group is also working on reshaping the network structure, including via the creation of a dedicated EURECO webpage.

## EASPD Innovation Awards

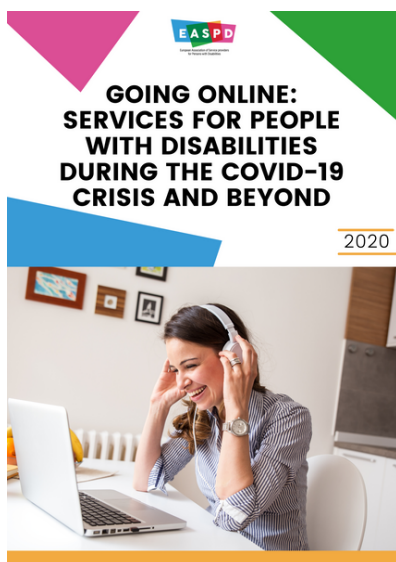
To celebrate EASPD's 25th Anniversary, and to highlight the work of our members, EASPD launched the first edition of its Innovation Awards. 80 practices were submitted for the Innovation awards. These practices each contribute to the advancement of service provision in one or more of the thematic areas of the EASPD Member Fora which include: Arts and Culture, Early Intervention Education, Employment, Inclusive Living, Person-Centred Technology, Policy Impact and Workforce Development and Human Resources. The awards and subsequent booklet EASPD published spotlights the 8 winners of the Innovation Awards and 17 other top-rated practices, chosen by the specialised jury put together by EASPD.





# Publications

Policies and frameworks exist to be scrutinised and analysed in order to ensure its yielding results. Research plays a sizeable role here and this year EASPD published 6 studies that delved into key areas of impact on service providers for persons with disabilities.



## Going Online: Services for people with disabilities during the COVID-19 crisis and beyond

The report focuses on online services for persons with disabilities and suggests recommendations on how to tackle the various issues in order to ensure that safe, accessible, empowering and sustainable online services of a high quality can be ensured.

## Impact of Social Services on Local Development

The study looked into the impact of social services on local development by collecting and analysing information about evidence on the different areas of impact of social services on the economic and employment aspects of local development in Europe.

## Impact of Social Services on Local Development

Study by EASPD



## STUDY ON INNOVATIVE FRAMEWORKS FOR MEASURING THE QUALITY OF SERVICES FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES



## Study on Innovative Frameworks for measuring the Quality of services for Persons with Disabilities

The study aims to provide a framework to measure the quality of services for persons with disabilities that are outcomes focused, centred on the quality-of-life concept, and aligned with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.



## Models on Innovative practices focusing on supported decision making mechanisms

The study identifies and analyses legal frameworks; services and academic curricula in the EU Member States and beyond. The main motivation was to obtain value-added and up-to-date information on the state of the art of supported decision-making mechanisms deriving from Article 12 (Equal Recognition before the Law) of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities



### Social Services Workforce Recovery after COVID-19 Pandemic-readiness:

Good Practice Examples from Finland, Romania, Spain, Ireland and Germany



## Social Services Workforce Recovery during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Good Practice Examples from Finland, Romania, Spain, Ireland and Germany

This study concisely analyses the challenges that social support services workforce faced during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study collects good practices and potential solutions for the recovery of the social services workforce in the long-term in Finland, Romania, Spain, Ireland and Germany.

## Study on training of service providers staff based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities principles

This study monitors examples of trainings to encourage social service providers and EASPD members to implement the training and to try to translate the principles of the UN CRPD into practice.



Training of service providers staff based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities principles

# Member-Led Approach

This year EASPD's activities continued to be driven by its members as we celebrated 25 years of working together for the delivery of high quality services for persons with disabilities.

## New Members

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## New Observers



# Member Fora

The EASPD Member Fora represent the interest of EASPD in their own field through active research, policy development, and networking among members. During the course of the year, each member fora had some key achievements.



## Early childhood Intervention

- Two webinars on building and strengthening Integrated National Early Childhood Intervention systems under the lighthouse network and on ECI in Theotokos Foundation.
- Research on ECI in Albania, Greece, Kosovo, Montenegro, and North Macedonia; and webinar ECI in the Balkans: Gaps between policies and good practices in December
- Opinion piece by co-chair and facilitator on ECI for COFACE newsletter “Supporting children and their carers should start as soon as possible.”

## Education

- Hosted EASPD’s annual conference in May on inclusive education.
- Released the Lisbon Declaration with key recommendations for the achievement of inclusive education.
- Hosted a week-long training course in Kosovo with 22 participants.
- Developed a manual on supporting the transition from education to employment within the framework of the lighthouse network.



## Employment

- Contribution in drafting EASPD position on package of initiatives on improving labour market outcomes for persons with disabilities to be submitted to the European Commission.
- Lighthouse Network: Collection of promising practices on digitalisation and technology in support of persons with disabilities at work and in VET.
- Contribution in designing EASPD position on Draft General Comment on Article 27 of UNCRPD to the UN.



## Inclusive Living

- Hosted a training on 3 different occasions on 'Lobby and Advocacy on Deinstitutionalisation' given by Member Forum Co-Chairs Eric Bloemkolk and Ludmila Malcoci.



## Person Centred Technology



- Two online trainings on accessibility and introduction to document and Web accessibility for persons with disabilities.
- A series of 7 webinars on varied topics in the field accessibility and assistive technology.
- Co-facilitated EASPD's 2021 International conference in Brussels.
- Published a policy paper in the conference titled 'Technology in Social Care and Support Service'.
- Facilitated a two day study visit in Malta where participants shared their knowledge, experience and best practices in Assistive technology and Augmentative & Alternative Communication (AAC) and Electronic Assistive Technology (EAT).

## Workforce Development and Human Resources

- Coordinated a Lighthouse Network activity.
- A study on UN CRPD training for support services staff.
- Provided inputs for a different study on Workforce recovery strategies following the pandemic.



## Arts and Culture

- Ten organisations from this Member Forum worked together to create a video based on the Greek myth of Persephone. Each organisation presented a section of the myth in their chosen art-form (drama, music, dance, art, scriptwriting) and filmed their work. All video recordings were combined and edited to present both the work in process and the complete story.
- Worked with the European Network of Cultural Centres to produce a report on cooperation between cultural centres and disability service providers as part of EASPD's Lighthouse Network 2021.

## Policy Impact

- Met five times and was successful in defining EASPD's positions in areas such as the Social Economy Action Plan, access to EU Funds, EU Fiscal Policy and more.
- Worked with members on the development of key EU policy initiatives; including the Child Guarantee, the European Disability Rights Strategy, the EU Care Strategy, Public Procurement and State Aid and more.





# Provider Fora

EASPD's Provider Fora are national seminars which aim to strengthen the voice of service providers at national level. The forums offer an opportunity for service providers to network, discuss key challenges and approaches for the service provision sector in their country and learn about EU relevant policies and funding opportunities. In 2021 EASPD hosted 6 provider forums.

## Supporting Persons with Disabilities During Covid 19 Pandemic

### 11th May | Online Slovene Provider Forum

On the 11th May, together with SOUS, EASPD co-hosted this online event that explored the impact of COVID-19 on persons with disabilities. The event provided a state of play in support services in Slovenia and provided an opportunity to exchange practices and experiences among European and Slovenian providers. The event's discussions focused on the provision of Early Childhood Intervention, education and independent living services for children and adolescents support services and employment and independent living services for adolescents and adults.

## A paradigm shift in comprehensive care for people with disabilities

### 7th June | Online Hungarian Provider Forum

Co-hosted with the Civil Advocacy Network on 7th June, the Hungarian Provider Forum informed attendees about the state of the deinstitutionalization (DI) process in Hungary and shared and promising practices on the topic. Speakers included representatives from the Hungarian Ministry of Human Capacities and Luk Zelderloo, Secretary General, EASPD. The event, which also addressed the DI process for persons with severe multiple disabilities, helped to establish an active dialogue between stakeholders.

## Healthy ageing for persons with disabilities

### 10th June | Online Czech Provider Forum

Co-organised by EASPD and Slezská diakonie, the online Czech provider forum was hosted on 10th June. The event reflected on the current state of service level provision for persons who are ageing as well as common challenges. The event included the participation of a representative of Diakoneo, active in Bavaria (Germany), who shared good practices including the creation of a framework concept for palliative care and hospice accompaniment.

# Challenges of deinstitutionalisation: staff and their skills

14th June | Online Polish Provider Forum

On 14th June EASPD and Fundacja Eudajmonia co-hosted the Polish Provider Forum on deinstitutionalisation. The forum was focused on the current stage of development of the Strategy for deinstitutionalisation of social services in Poland, as well as on the context of the demand for specialised social services staff. The speakers were experts and practitioners actively involved in the process of developing community-based services. The event helped to closer cooperation between stakeholders and support the planning of future initiatives including the Regional Convention of Organizations and Environmental of People with Disabilities.

## Regional Balkan Provider Forum

3rd June | Regional Provider Forum

On the 3rd of June EASPD together with the The Republic Center for Support of persons with Intellectual Disability – PORAKA in North Macedonia, organised the 2nd edition of EASPD Regional Balkan Provider Forum. The focus of this year was Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) and the main aim of this event was to provide a source of inspiration for decision makers and service providers willing to develop or improve ECI services and programmes across the Balkan region.



## A paradigm shift in comprehensive care for people with disabilities

24th June | Varna, Bulgaria

On the 24th June, EASPD and the National Alliance for Social Responsibility (NASO) brought together representatives of state institutions, municipalities, managers, providers and specialists in the field of social services, for an event in Varna, Bulgaria. The event was split into three panels which provided an opportunity to present and discuss current issues in the social sector.

# Financial Report

## Revenues

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Membership fees	€ 252,478
Structural funding	€ 783,541
Projects	€ 1,196,894
Others	€ 195,253
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>€ 2,428,168</b>

## Expenditure

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Staff expenses	€ 1,165,581
Running costs	€ 114,774
Others	€ 1,114,199
<b>Total charges</b>	<b>€ 2,394,554</b>

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<b>Net Result</b>	<b>€ 33,614</b>
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# Message from our Secretary General

I hope you have enjoyed reading about all our activities this year. Looking back on the last 12 months, I am reminded of how much we have achieved despite challenging circumstances. 2021 was a very dynamic and turbulent year for the social sector and for all Europe due to the aftermath of the pandemic, but also one of the most important years for EASPD yet. After 25 years with Luk Zelderloo as founder and leader, I was very proud to take over the role of EASPD Secretary General. Whenever there is such a significant change in leadership the transition is not always easy or smooth and there is always the risk of the "lost mission" in between leaders. I am glad that that was not the case for EASPD and we managed to go through this process in the most efficient way and keep on supporting our members and partners and to rely on our common values and principles. Our plans for the future and our strategy still stand valid and strong in the tests of health and economic crisis. Even when external circumstances are changing rapidly around us - what matters is that we as a network are united, cooperating and moving the social service sector towards the direction of improvement and growth. That is what EASPD has been doing for the last 25 years and I know that this is what is ahead of us for the next 25 - quality work, larger impact and community oriented innovation!

*Maya Doneva*

