

Center for Support of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities

Estia, Center for Support of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities

Estia is a network of Supported Living Houses within the community that support the independent living of individuals with intellectual disabilities based on a **person-centred approach**. It offers a holistic approach to **children and adults with intellectual disabilities** with topics ranging from special education and vocational training to independent living and inclusion in the community. Estia uses alternative ways of education, such as drama therapy to support emotional intelligence and critical ability.

Beneficiaries of the service

Estia supports children and adults with **intellectual disabilities**. The users of the practice have multiple levels of support needs, such as basic needs, personal hygiene, daily living activities, medical care, support during their external activities, participation in events and social interactions.

The staff

ESTIA has a variety of staff members include (but are not limited to) a **scientific director, operational managers, caregivers, staff members, social workers, and administrative assistants**. The staff participates in managing educational programmes and on-the-job training activities.



Athens, Greece



Contacts

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The approach

- ① A personal development plan focused on the strengths, needs and wishes of the individual is drawn up in collaboration with each individual, their family and the staff.
- ② Self-advocacy groups educate the users about their rights and responsibilities, and support them in decision-making.
- ③ All the users participate in Estia's Day Care Center.
- ④ Established cooperative relationships in the community support the users in achieving inclusion participation in community programmes.

The model

The model provides **24h support** to sixteen individuals with disabilities in total, living in **three separate houses**. The family of the user expresses interest for their relative with a disability to join the service and then Estia guides the potential user through a preparation phase. Estia uses a **gradual integration approach**, during which informational meetings are organised with the potential users to assess their needs and preferences. Get-to-know meetings with the Supported Living Houses and their existing users are also organised. After this phase, the potential users decide with the support of their family and Estia's staff if they will join the service.

All the users participate in Estia's Day Care Center, developing their daily living, social interaction and communication skills, participating in vocational training workshops, sports activities and speech and occupational therapy sessions.
All Estia's houses are unique, as are their users.



24h Support



Gradual integration approach



Strengths

- Supportive network in the community.
- Multiple options to participate in community-based activities.
- High-quality standards of living.
- Carefully selected staff.
- Risk-taking philosophy.



Weaknesses

- Bureaucracy in the financial aspect.
- Risk of overprotecting role of the family.
- The duties of the staff may be exceeded when the user has no family left and Supported Living House assumes legal guardianship.