

Preparatory programme for the independent living of individuals

Margarita, Preparatory programme for the independent living of individuals

Margarita is a non-governmental organization whose vision is to promote the equality of persons with intellectual disabilities within society. Margarita has a multi-level and scalable programme based on three pillars:

1. Development of independent living skills by implementing training in daily life skills.
2. Community-based education.
3. Vocational training and inclusion in the labour market.

Beneficiaries of the service

The beneficiaries are individuals with **intellectual disabilities**, aged between 15 to 50 years. The needs of the users are related to socialisation and inclusion in the community.

The staff

Margarita employs **special education teachers, a social worker, a psychologist, an occupational therapist and a psychiatrist.**

The programme is supported by auxiliary administrative staff on a case-by-case basis. The staff is supported with training delivered by the organization, participation in conferences of European Organizations and participation in ERASMUS+ programmes.



Athens, Greece



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The approach

- 1 The service users are engaged in the preparation of their individual plan and are supported in the implementation of their wishes and requests.
- 2 The services provided to each person vary in frequency, depending on their individual needs. They follow a person-centred approach.
- 3 The individuals are called to make decisions and choices ranging from their personal choice of entertainment to their future life based on a Supported Decision-Making model.

The model

Margarita has implemented a Living in the Community programme, which supports individuals with disabilities to gain skills considered essential for their lives in the community. The programme is divided into two phases:



1. Five-hour daily programme

A five-hour daily programme from Monday to Friday whereby individuals participate in daily living skills training, which includes self-care, hygiene training and household management, as well as the development of social skills. Users are also trained in using community-based services such as public transport.



2. Community living training programme

When the individuals are ready and have acquired the necessary skills, they can move to the second phase: a community living training programme located in an apartment in Athens. Individuals are split into groups of four and live in a house for two days in order to practice the skills acquired during the first phase.

The purpose of this programme is to train and prepare persons with intellectual disabilities to live independently with the ultimate goal to either transition to community-based living, or their own apartment or continue living with their families and avoid institutionalisation later in life.



Strengths

- The users acquire essential daily living skills that help them to care for themselves and avoid institutionalisation later in life.
- The model offers a connection between theory and practice.
- Supported decision-making.
- Person-centred approaches.



Weaknesses

- The outdated medical-centred financing system of services hinders the inclusion of models.
- Absence of community-based living options.