

European Down Syndrome Association news

CROATIA APPPRP Down Syndrom Centar Pula



Founded: The organisation was founded in 2002, the Down Syndrom Centar in 2005, together with the EDSA office, Croatia. It is a non-governmental association.

President: Mrs. Branka Butorac, M.D.

Members: 50

Finances: We get donations and financial support from the City of Pula, County of Istria, and the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare.



Branka Butorac, here with Mr. Neven Ljubicic the Minister of Health and Social Welfare, after the signing of the financial contract on 21.03.2006. Her daughter, who has Down syndrome, is 12 years old

Main goals

Promoting and protecting the rights of persons with Down syndrome, establishing the Down Syndrom Centre for persons between 0-21 years of age and implementing EDSA directions in the national health legislative.

Services

We offer counselling for families and give speech therapy support and physiotherapy to the children. We inform about how to prevent obesity.

We organise some recreational activities, family days and leisure trips.

Publications

There is no special journal, but we publish articles in the "Patient Today" magazine every 2 months.

We have a promotional DVD, posters and a special shopping bag.

Awareness campaign

There is no national campaign but in Pula we have a special day on the 2nd of December.

On World DS Day we will organise a meeting in Pula with all the Croatian associations.

Projects and campaigns

- Promoting better dental care
- National campaign for promoting the rights of people with Down syndrome and raising funds
- Founding the first Down Syndrome Rehabilitation Centre in Croatia.

General information

A main problem is that Down syndrome is treated as a mental retardation, without recognising the specific medical and social needs.

There is little or no knowledge about Down syndrome in society. The education of the children is on a low level and there is no employment for adults.

The implementation of EDSA directives in our legislation has high priority and we are working hard in the area of spreading knowledge about Down syndrome and changing public opinion.

Numbers

There is no official and statistical information about how many children with Down syndrome are born, nor about the total Down syndrome population.

Situation of babies and toddlers

There are no services for babies and children under 4 years.

Situation of schoolchildren

Children with Down syndrome rarely attend mainstream kindergartens or schools. They stay at home or go to special schools, attended by children with all kinds of disabilities (mentally retarded and physical handicapped children are there together).

Situation of adults

Adults do not work, they live with their parents or in institutions for the mentally handicapped.

There is no official statistical information about older persons with Down syndrome.