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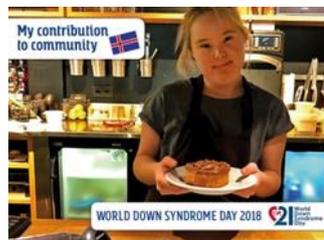
## WDS D 2018 - EDSA

### “MY CONTRIBUTION TO MY COMMUNITY”



The 1st of March started the EDSA’s WDS D-campaign: "My contribution to community" on the EDSA website. <http://www.edsa.eu/category/world-down-syndrome-day/>

21 contributions from 21 different countries, one each day until World Down Syndrome Day on 21st march.



## EDSA AT THE UNITED NATIONS



### EDSA WILL PRESENT THE VALUABLE NETWORK IN NEW YORK AT WDSO 2018 ON MARCH 21<sup>ST</sup>

#### PRESS RELEASE

– ValueAble, the network of the hospitality employers who promote job inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities, presented in New York on march, 21st.



21 March 2018 marks the 13th anniversary of World Down Syndrome Day (WDSO). The general topic of this year is: #WhatIBringToMyCommunity – how people with Down syndrome can and do make meaningful contributions throughout their lives, whether in schools, workplaces, living in the community, public and political life, culture, media, recreation, leisure and sport.

That day, at United Nations Headquarters, New York, a conference titled “What I bring to the workplace” will draw together people with Down syndrome, their advocates, major employers, experts in the field of disability employment, and government officials.

“A ValueAble network” project, promoted by Associazione Italiana Persone Down, will take part in the conference on behalf of the European Down Syndrome Association as a European exemplar case of best practices of job inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities (IDs). The project, funded by the European Commission in the framework of the Erasmus + programme was thought with the aim of creating a European network of companies working in the hospitality business and willing to provide internships or employment to people with Down syndrome and other IDs. Today, the ValueAble network ([www.valueablenetwork.eu](http://www.valueablenetwork.eu)) exists in Italy, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Hungary and Turkey and already boasts of 52 companies. Further 43 enterprises have already experienced working with people with IDs and are evaluating to join the network. Within ValueAble, more than 100 people with IDs were given the opportunity to work in their own countries and show that they can and do make a meaningful contribution to businesses, as their employers now recognize. Aiming to consolidate such a practice, now the international mobility phase of the project has begun and interns with IDs are experimenting spending their training period abroad, while hospitality managers can benefit from specific

online training modules on general and job-related ID issues. Study visits for them will also be organized at the Italian and Portuguese hotels where these internships are taking place.

“I do hope that the network will extend all over the world and that it will raise awareness about the fact that these workers can bring productivity and an added value to their workplaces”, says Paola Vulterini (AIPD) project manager.

## EDSA ANNIVERSARY.....



– What does it mean to you/your organization, being an EDSA member and what should EDSA focus on in the future? These two questions were answered by some of EDSA board members.



**Lars Brustad** (NNDS Norway)

NNDS – the Norwegian Down syndrome organization – has been a member of EDSA for many years. For the last years, we also have had a representative on the board of directors.

*What does it mean to you/your organization, being an EDSA member?*

For NNDS, and thereby for all our members all over Norway, our membership is essential in following what is happening on the DS front in Europe, and indeed in the rest of the world. By communicating, and not least, meeting representatives from other member organizations we are able to associate and make new important contacts. We get knowledge and experiences from other countries that is of great value to our members and us.

*What should EDSA focus on in the future?*

We hope that EDSA will get bigger and stronger, and that the EU bureaucracy and its politicians will see the great need and importance of this organization, and support it to a much larger extent than what is the case today. We take this opportunity to congratulate EDSA with its 30 years anniversary.



**Manuel Velázquez** (Down Espana, Spain)

*What does it mean to you/your organization, being an EDSA member?*

Down España is a federation of more than 90 spanish down associations. We

strongly believe in the power of the networks: if you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together. So being part of EDSA is very important for us as we can share knowledge all across Europe, learn from other countries and organizations, and improve the life of European Down syndrome people and their families.

*What should EDSA focus on in the future?*

EDSA should focus on lobbying at the European level and develop european projects in coherence with the [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#).

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**Anna Contardi** (AIPD, Italy)

*What does it mean to you/your organization, being an EDSA member?*

To interchange our experiences with other associations and countries.

*What should EDSA focus on in the future?*

To hope to change together the image of the people with DS in Europe and give them a better future. To be stronger in front of the institutions.

## EU OPPORTUNITIES



### EUROPE TO HAND OUT FREE INTERRAIL TRAIN TICKETS TO 18-YEAR-OLDS

Plans to give 18-year-olds living in the European Union a free Interrail train ticket have been given the green light by the European Parliament with a pilot scheme is set to start in 2018. Brussels have announced that 20,000 teenagers will be given the travel passes on their 18th birthday with the hope that the giveaway will be rolled out across the EU in 2020.

The Interrail tickets will allow the holders to enjoy unlimited travel across Europe's rail network for a defined period of time. Other modes of transport will be made available in member state countries that aren't covered by Interrail, such as Latvia, Cyprus and Malta. German MEP Manfred Weber, one of the politicians who spearheaded the proposal, told the European Parliament that the idea behind the scheme was to allow youngsters 'to discover the beauty and diversity of Europe over three weeks within a two-year period.'

Read more: <https://www.interrail.eu/en>

## T21 TRAVELING AFGHAN PROJECT – DOWN SYNDROME AWARENESS PROJECT

Dear EDSA Members! My name is Chandos and I run the T21 Traveling Afghan Project.

Eight years ago, an afghan (knitted blanket) I made began traveling the world, visiting families who have a loved one with Down syndrome. The afghan has visited numerous states in the US, as well as Germany, the UK and Slovakia. The project was created to be an example of the ties that bind us all together in the Down syndrome community.

The afghan travels along with a number of journals each family has written in and/or included photos for. It is quite the collection of books!

The purpose of my email is to see if there are any families in your corner of the world who would like to participate in the project. Each family would receive the afghan for one week before sending it on to the next family. We compile photos sent in by the families on Facebook and Instagram. I have listed both links below.

There is no cost to participate. Each family is simply responsible for shipping the afghan on to the next family. The afghan remains in a country until all the participants have had their turn, then it is shipped on to the next country.

I would love to help coordinate getting the afghan to your area!

Please feel free to contact me by mail [chandosjoy@gmail.com](mailto:chandosjoy@gmail.com) with any questions you may have!

Thank you for your time!

Chandos

Find us on:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/54958106542/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/t21travelingafghan/>



## 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!

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