



News from the president

Dear EDSA members,

I wish you a happy and healthy New Year! I hope that you all will continue to work for the benefit of people with Down-Syndrome. Even if nowadays a lot of our young adults are very independent and very selfconfident they still do need a lot of support from us to find their way in our so complicated society. Early intervention and (ongoing) education are on the prioritylist and in the coming years elderly people with DS will need our special attention

Annual General Assembly Rom, 23rd. and 24th October

23th and 24th October 2010 we had our annual meeting in Rom. This time there were representants from 18 different countries! All who were there, know that we had two very nice days together with a lot of possibilities to get to know eachother better, to hear about each others work and the organisations, we represent. There was also enough opportunity for informal talks and sharing personal information. This is good. That way contacts keep better.

PowerPoint-Presentations

Very informative were the presentations of the edsa members. It was amazing to see, how different our organizations are, regarding their seize, the money available, the services they

offer etc. The one thing in common is, that we all want to improve lifequality of people with ds. This is still a very big issue, especially in east and south-east Europe where the situation for people with ds is far from satisfying. Equal rights and equal opportunities for all children and adults must be EDSA's main objective.

Some of the ppt-presentations have been already sent to us and are shown on the EDSA-website (www.edsa.eu). If you have not send your ppt yet, please do so now. It is an useful introduction to your organisation and an important information about, who the edsa-members are.

Also those, who did not attend the AGA are ofcourse very welcome to send a presentation for the website as well. It was helpful, to use the standardized format which was send to you over the EDSA Mailinglist on 12th Oktober 2010. In that way we could compare our situation better.

How to design European projects?

Another interesting agenda item was the presentation of Paola Volterini about how to prepare proposals for European projects in order to get fundings. Paola has been doing this for the italian ass. AIPD since 2001 and managed to get money for several european projects. Other EDSA-members, who were involved as partners in these projects have benefitted from Paola competence.

It makes sense and is more effective,

if all associations learn how to do this project design. Therefor Paola will give a seminar on „project design“ for EDSA-members in the course of this year. The seminar will be held in the premises of the Educational Trust in Portsmouth and will be combined with the 2011 annual meeting. Exact date is not yet fixed.

Paola is not only good in designing european projects, she also bakes interesting european cakes!



New members

Three new EDSA-members could be welcomed in Rom, CoorDown, the italian DS-network, the DS-Ass. from Kosovo, which was represented by Driton Bajraktari and the new DS-Ass. from the Ukraine. Frank Buckley from DownsEd who has been very much involved in setting up the ds-work in the Ukraine during the last two years introduced this association in the EDSA-meeting.

Information about the Ukraine Down-Syndrome Project can be found in the ppt of Down Syndrome Education In-

ternational on the EDSA-website. You will also find links to the websites of the new member-associations.

AGA-minutes

There were a lot of other interesting items on the agenda, which are all listed in the minutes, who were sent to you on 16th december by Erik, the general secretary.

Teleconference meeting

During the Rom meeting Frank Buckley suggested to set up regular teleconferences. This can be a good alternative for EDSA as travel costs for those, who should attend boardmeetings are high and most organizations cannot afford to pay these. Frank explained how these webmeetings works and we decided to give it a try.

Frank invited us then on 19th november for our first teleconference. We were about 8 persons attending „this meeting“. It was not all perfect, but at least we could see each other, talk to the others, read documents and write or change textes. Impressive! Some who had planned to take part, did not manage to get connection or came too late (time difference in our countries!). It needs some more exercise, but all in all we should consider to use these new technology more regular.

Conference in Pristina, – new Balkan Network

28th and 29th October I attended a conference focusing on early intervention and support for children with additional educational needs in Pristina. This event was organized by Down Syndrome Kosova and supported by the European Union. It was the first of its kind in the western Balkans, with the aim of promoting regional communication and sharing experiences and knowledge related to early intervention and support. Representatives from the Western Balkan countries who were able to attend the conference gave a brief overview of the provision of early intervention for children with additional learning needs in their countries.

Cecilie Mackinnon, Sandy Alton and Bob Black from the DSA in the UK, spoke about early intervention and educational aspects. My own lecture was about the role of the family in early intervention.

Another topic I was asked to talk about was: Setting up and maintaining a support network between the european countries, while Bob Black spoke about the benefits of an international support network.

The establishment of a new Network took place on the second day of the conference when representatives of government and non-government organizations met and planned the format and functions of the Balkan Regional Early Support Network (BRESN).

It makes me sad to see, how little has been done in these countries for people with ds, how bad their chances were and still are compared to most other EDSA-member countries. But on the other side I am amazed and impressed about the energy of these young families, who are now working hard to catch up with others and create better conditions for their children. They do need and deserve our support. Perhaps some of us are able to help. I do not mean financial help, but other kind of support, like sharing literature and materials, good praxis, giving seminars etc. in a more direct way. Other support is possible with european fundings in the frame of projects.

World Down Syndrome Day 2011

In most of our organizations we are now preparing us for the celebration of WDS.

In Germany we will – like in the years before – organize the do-it-yourself-postercampaign. Our slogan on the poster: **Ich stehe auf Vielfalt! Und du?** In english: **I go for diversity! What about you?**

Besides that we will organize several other activities like the premiere of our film „DS and I“ and we will produce a postage stamp with our WDSD-logo. If you are planning events, publications,

activities please write me. It might be interesting to place this news on the EDSA-website. (Short text in english, if possible a foto and then a link where more information can be found.)

Short news:

Netherlands

In the Netherlands a very substantial book was published by our EDSA member Stichting Downsyndroom: „Gewoon of speciaal“ about the effects of and conditions for inclusive education, written by Gert de Graaf



Belgium

Conference on 25th and 26th march 2011 on „Feelings and Sexuality“. University of Gent. Info: EDSA website

Website of DS International

It is worthwhile to visit the DSI-website now and then. There are regular new stories about ds-topics. You will find also an article about the award winners of 2010, among them are several who were nominated by EDSA.

Conference in Lyon

On the saturday 19th march the french organisations celebrate WDS with a conference in Lyon around adult-topics. The next EDSA-board meeting is sceduled for friday, 18th march in Lyon. As soon as there is more information available I will contact you.

Kind regards

Cora Halder
EDSA President



First Information about the 11th World DS Conference

I suppose you have all seen the information about the next DS-World Congress in South Africa, august 2012. On the website you will already find the call for papers, exhibition-prices, estimated fees etc. Good to know this long beforehand, as you need to safe up some money if you want to attend this Worldcongress!

Information: www.wdsc2012.org.za/