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WDSO 2024



**21 March 2023** – In celebration of World Down Syndrome Day 2023, [World Youth Alliance Europe](#) organized a conference on the topic of ‘**Social Integration of Individuals with Trisomy 21 in European Society**’ at the European Parliament in Brussels. The conference gathered over 40 attendees including several experts, civil society leaders, scholars, and Members of the European Parliament (MEPs).

MEPs **Alex Agius Saliba (S&D, Malta)**, **Brando Benifei (S&D, Italy)**, and **Patryk Jaki (ECR, Poland)** participated in the conference and brought their valuable insight and expertise on the topic of Trisomy 21. Among the civil society representatives that were present was ‘[65 Degrees](#)’, represented by Louis Dorsan Van Caloen and also the participation of Agnieszka Maćków who read a letter speaking in the name of Scholar Professor Beata Gaj.

Speakers brought attention to the need of spreading awareness about disability and addressing unscientific attitudes in order to ensure equal access to infrastructure, work and participation in society. **MEP Alex Agius Saliba** pointed out that despite charters and legislations, “rights are still not available to everybody” and stressed the importance of “giving the persons with disabilities a fair chance – if we give them the tools, they can do something special”. While **MEP Patryk Jaki** mentioned family life and reminded the participants about the happiness that persons with Trisomy 21 bring into our societies.

This event provided a platform for experts, organisations and individuals working in the field of Down Syndrome to share best practices and successful strategies for promoting social integration and inclusion.

The event also raised awareness among policymakers and the general public about the challenges faced by individuals with Trisomy 21 in European society, and enabled us to discuss policy initiatives and advocacy efforts to promote the rights and inclusion of individuals with Down Syndrome.

The conference was organized in partnership with the EDSA.

From insightful presentations by the President of the European Down Syndrome Association (EDSA), Ms Dinka Vuković, and Vice-President of EDSA, Mr José Gutiérrez Caballero, to an inspiring video message by Ms Mar Galcerán, a member of the EDSA and first Spain's first parliamentarian with Down's syndrome. Additionally, we were honoured to have Anna Kedziorek Ramizer, Policy Officer at Directorates-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion and listen to her reflection on the EU Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Finally, MEP Patryk Jaki shared insights on improving representation and legislative projects for individuals with Trisomy 21.



*Article written by World Youth Alliance Europe*

## EDSA POSTERS CAMPAIGN

„Health Equity“ was the topic of our poster campaign in this year.

Health equity means that everyone has a fair opportunity to be as healthy as possible, without being disadvantaged in achieving it. But we know people with Down syndrome do not always get the healthcare they need. There are big differences in the quality of healthcare services available to people with Down syndrome around the world. In some places, people with Down syndrome have access to the same healthcare as everyone else. In other places, they may not have access to any healthcare at all.

This could also be seen in the pictures and the stories we collected from the EDSA members. Some contributions were very positive and the situation in the respective country was described as good or at least satisfactory.

But there were also reports of inadequate medical care, ignorance among doctors and difficulties among medical staff in communicating with children and adolescents with Down syndrome.

The provision of care and support for adults with Down syndrome is particularly problematic. There is still too little knowledge, expertise and understanding of their very specific problems.

For the poster campaign however our EDSA members mainly sent beautiful, positive pictures.

Thanks to all, who participated in the this year campaign! All posters can be seen here and on the EDSA website.

Best regards,

Cora





**#HealthEquityforAll**



**Jan fighting epilepsy for years**

**Epilepsy:** Epilepsy is more common in Down syndrome, most likely in infancy, or in adults over 30 years of age. A number of medications are available to prevent seizures.

World Down Syndrome Day

www.edsa.eu

**#HealthEquityforAll**



**Elvira and Ivan - great fun with healthy food**

**Nutrition:** Good nutrition is the basis for a good life and good cognitive development. Make sure your child with Down syndrome has a balanced diet with fresh food.

World Down Syndrome Day

www.edsa.eu

**#HealthEquityforAll**



**Karl - inconclusive diagnose ...**

**Awareness:** Medical staff need to be more educated about the health issues relevant to Down syndrome in order to better understand these patients.

World Down Syndrome Day

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**#HealthEquityforAll**



**For Nicolas, rugby is the highlight of the week**

**Exercise/Sports:** People with Down syndrome gain both physical and mental health benefits from being active and playing sports.

World Down Syndrome Day

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**#HealthEquityforAll**



**Vanessa having her health checkup**

**General health:** All children and young people with Down syndrome should be under the care of a paediatrician. Regular health surveillance could prevent avoidable health issues.

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**#HealthEquityforAll**



**Tamar discussing heart-matters with her cardiologist**

**Cardiology:** Approximately half of newborns with Down syndrome have a congenital heart defect. Close surveillance and active management optimise quality of life long term.

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**#HealthEquityforAll**



**Léa, seeing the world through new eyes**

**Eyes and Vision:** Eye problems? An ophthalmologist has the diagnosis and knows the treatment. In most cases, well-fitting glasses are the solution - just like for everyone else.

World Down Syndrome Day

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**#HealthEquityforAll**



**Lukas overcomes leukaemia**

**Leukaemia:** Children with Down syndrome have a high risk of developing leukaemia. Early detection and treatment means fewer side effects and a better response.

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**#HealthEquityforAll**



**Alessio - no fear of injections**

**Immunisation:** Children with Down syndrome should be offered all the routine immunisations suggested by their local schedule.

World Down Syndrome Day

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**#HealthEquityforAll**



**David, fit again for running**

**Orthopaedics:** The ligament and joint laxity can cause misalignments in the hips, knees and feet. Regular musculoskeletal assessment is part of yearly health examination.

World Down Syndrome Day

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**#HealthEquityforAll**



**Beatrice, happy with a healthy heart**

**Cardiology:** Approximately half of newborns with Down syndrome have a congenital heart defect. Close surveillance and active management optimise quality of life long term.

World Down Syndrome Day

www.edsa.eu

## EUROPEAN ELECTIONS 2024



The next European elections will be held in June 2024.

All European citizens aged 18 years and older have the right to vote.....regardless of their disability.

For this reason, the European Parliament has prepared some Easy Reading materials to enable everyone to exercise their right to vote in an informed manner. The materials are translated into many languages of the countries of the EU.

Links to the materials in easy reading <https://elections.europa.eu/en/easy-to-read/>

Link to the European Commission's website dedicated to the European elections <https://elections.europa.eu/en/>

## EU OPPORTUNITIES

*Here an opportunity for european youngster! The article is taken from the Youth European Portal of the European Union.*

### DISCOVEREU



**Are you 18 years old and a resident of one of the EU Member States or third countries associated to Erasmus+? Get ready to explore Europe!**

**This April 2024, the European Youth Week celebrates young Europeans! Taking place 2 months ahead of the European elections, it gives you the chance to 'Voice your Vision' for the future. Check out the [map](#) to find activities near you!**

#### **When is the next round?**

It will take place between **16 April 2024 at 12:00:00 (midday Brussels time) and 30 April 2024 at 12:00:00 (midday Brussels time)**. An 'Apply Now' button will appear on [this page](#) on D-Day!

#### **What is DiscoverEU?**

DiscoverEU is an action of the Erasmus+ programme that offers you the opportunity to explore Europe's diversity, learn about its cultural heritage and history, and connect with people from all over the continent.

You will be offered a travel pass and travel predominantly by rail. Check out the rules for people living on islands or in remote areas.

As a selected traveller, you will receive a DiscoverEU European Youth Card for a wealth of discounts on cultural visits, learning activities, sports, local transportation, accommodation, and food.

#### **How does it work?**

To be eligible, you need to:

- be born **between 1 July 2005 (included) and 30 June 2006 (included)**;
- complete the correct identity card (ID), passport or residence card number on the online application form;
- be citizen or resident\* of one of the following countries:
  - one of the Member States of the European Union including Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs), or
  - one of the third countries associated to the Erasmus+ programme: Iceland, Liechtenstein, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia, and Türkiye.

*\* For more information see the Rules section "2. Eligible applicants"*

Then you will need to participate in a quiz (unless you apply as a group member).

If you are selected, you can travel for a period of **minimum 1 day and up to 30 days between 1 July 2024 and 30 September 2025**.

If you have a disability or a health problem that makes your travel challenging, you will receive assistance and support. Check our [FAQ](#) C.13 to know more.

### **Can I travel with my friends?**

Yes, you can! You can go solo or add up to 4 friends in your group provided they meet the eligibility conditions above. They will use your application code to submit their own application. Check out our [FAQs](#) B.5 to B.11 to know more.

## 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!

### CONTACTS

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