



PRESS RELEASE

The Portuguese Down Syndrome Association (APPT21) organized the second meeting of the VIRTUAL DS project on 23 and 24 March 2018 in Lisbon.

The VIRTUAL DS project will promote, through an integrated and innovative approach, the inclusion of people with Down Syndrome, increasing their employment opportunities. It aims to improve the access, participation and learning performance of students with learning difficulties (people with Down Syndrome), with regard to employment skills, reducing disparities in learning outcomes.

Led by FUNDACIÓN ASINDOWN (Spain), this European project will focus on the training of people with low skills, including the promotion of learning at work, providing efficient and integrated guidance services.

During the project, to be executed from September 2017 to September 2019, the Consortium will develop open and innovative practices, in a digital era, aimed at the exploitation of ICT tools for people with Down's Syndrome, developing didactic materials and adapted tools, as well as actions that support its effective use. About 20 people with Down Syndrome, their trainers and representatives of companies in each participating country will participate in the validation of the results of the project, creating a strong and direct impact.

At this meeting, each partner had the opportunity to share the state of art about the employability of young people in their country. The absence of employment statistics for this population is common to all partners and that the employability of people with intellectual disturbance takes various forms, one more formal through hiring and the other more informal, as an occupation and without salary.

An important point at this meeting was the sharing of the co-creation sessions that have been held so far, and doubts have also been raised about the use of the exercises created for the demonstration of co-creation sessions.

The partners also agreed on the profiles, modules and tasks to be included in the training methodology, as well as the materials for the trainees and for the companies. Tasks were defined that will be carried out during the functions, as well as contents about social and behavioral skills, communication, conflict and teamwork.

It is important once again to remember that the Consortium is formed by other entities that work in the field of support for people with Down Syndrome, such as DRUŠTVO DOWNOV SINDROM SLOVENIJA, DDSS (Slovenia), PORTUGUESE ASSOCIATION OF CARRIERS OF TRISSOMIA 21, APPT21 (Portugal) , ALDO-CET (Romania). Also participating in this consortium are STATUS EMPLOYMENT, a non-governmental organization with great experience in Supported Employment, and IMAGINA RV, a private company specializing in the development of training content in Virtual Reality.

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