

# ECCE Link

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## Content

1. **ECCE General Meeting 2015 together with the 6<sup>th</sup> European Congress "Living in the Encounter" in Brussels**
2. **News about other congresses for Persons with Special Needs and Extra Talents**
3. **From the Spanish-Portuguese Federation of curative education and social therapy (this article is also available in Spanish language)**
4. **An Italian–Austrian friendship**
5. **EASPD presented its Alternative (Shadow) Report to the UN**

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1. **ECCE General meeting May 2015 together with the 6<sup>th</sup> European Congress "Living in the Encounter" in Brussels**

The ECCE annual **General meeting 2015** is approaching. As already announced to you the **content part** of this ECCE General Meeting will be the Congress "**Creating social art**", **Living in the encounter**.

This very special event will take place between 6 and 9 of May 2015 in the wonderful art centre Bozar, the Palace of Fine Arts, in the heart of Brussels.

Nearly 600 participants from different European countries and also from further regions are expected. The preparation work is on its peak just now and everybody is looking forward to meet each other.

**All ECCE members are kindly invited to attend this congress.**



The ECCE committee would be very glad to welcome all our members in Brussels. The organisational part of the ECCE annual **General meeting**, after the congress, **Sunday morning May 10, 9.30 – 12.30 am** will be held in the Centre for Anthroposophy in Brussels, Rue du Trône 194.

During that Sunday meeting ECCE will offer a **special program** for your family members (if necessary) **from 9.30 – 12.30 am**.

**Saturday May 9<sup>th</sup>, in the afternoon** will be the **inclusive General Meeting**, with the topic "**building bridges**", where your son/daughter may accompany you.

**Social evening** with family members (in a Restaurant), **Saturday May 9<sup>th</sup>**, exact time and place will be published in the invitation letter for the General meeting.

For the organization of all those meetings it would be helpful to receive the notification about your participation in the ECCE General Meeting **as soon as possible**. Please announce to [renate.chwatal@gmx.at](mailto:renate.chwatal@gmx.at) .

For further information and registration for the congress please have a look at [www.ontmoetenisleven.be](http://www.ontmoetenisleven.be). ECCE members may ask for a reduction of the participation fee, if necessary. Please address to Mr. Bart Vanmechelen, [info@ontmoetenisleven.be](mailto:info@ontmoetenisleven.be) .

More detailed information and the corresponding papers for the General Meeting will be sent to our members by e-mail as soon as available.

## **2. News about other congresses for Persons with Special Needs**

The **2<sup>nd</sup> Caucasian Congress** will take place from 1 to 3 of October 2015 in the Armenian Capital Yerevan. In 2014 the first day center "Mayri" for young people with severe disabilities has been opened there. Participants from all over Europe are invited to visit this wonderful place.

### **First World Congress for Person with disabilities in Russia**

It's time to have a first global congress. After two very successful congresses in Moscow 2010 and Yekaterinburg in 2012 and two years of hard work on the project it was decided to organize a first global congress in Russia in September 2017.

After meetings with different ministries and NGO's from the whole region of the middle Ural an organization team has been formed which already took up the preparation work.

The local authorities actively support this project, which has the same importance like the Football Championship in 2018 for them. Nowhere else in the world the support of the government and the ministries had such an effect like in Russia. This shows already now remarkable positive impacts for people with disabilities. ECCE will help that this first world congress at the threshold between Europe and Asia will be a success for people in need of special care all over the globe. Further information you will find on:

[www.in-der-begegnung-leben.eu](http://www.in-der-begegnung-leben.eu)

Thomas Kraus (Initiator of International Congresses and Secretary of ECCE)

## **3. From the Spanish-Portuguese Federation of curative education and social therapy**

With the slogan "MAKE YOUR LIFE A DREAM AND THAT DREAM A REALITY", the first conference of the Spanish-Portuguese Federation was held in



Tenerife from 26 to 30 May 2014. We intend to hold this conference regularly every two years, providing all of society with a visible presence of, and a demonstration of the possibility of self-determination, for persons in need of special care, their families and coworkers. The conference theme concerned the coming together in fraternal encounter.

Our time together during those days was accompanied by sharing personal and collective histories and experiences full of ethnographic components that stimulated the approach to local daily reality and the sharing of artistic experiences as balm for the hearts. The island of Tenerife, like a small continent, offered us sublime corners full of beauty and wonderfulness, where the forces of nature merged into a shared soul experience. One-hundred-fifty participants joined in this opportunity, many coming from the Iberian Peninsula. Members of other friendly institutes from the island also joined us. The next regional congress on the horizon will be in 2016, this time in Portugal, and will coincide with the 35th anniversary of Casa de Santa Isabel. Casa de Santa Isabel, together with ASTA, Tobias Association and Association San Juan, is co-founder of the Spanish-Portuguese Federation of Curative Education and Social Therapy (FPCS). Through this effort toward self-determination we should like, with shared responsibility, to move toward being active not *for* but side by side with those in need of special care, who through their sacrifice daily show us their love. And to seek for that which can be awakened in us, so that we may continue optimally with the central issues of our federative activities.



***"By publicly accepting the creation of the Federation and combining our strengths, we also feel indebted to the strengths of our friends in need of special care who act jointly with us. We do this for them, it must be sincere, ... we must all follow the same path, have the same commitment. We help our partners in need of special care, but they nevertheless help us more than we help them. Without them it is impossible to advance on the evolutionary path, they are our teachers. The centers for Curative Education and Social Therapy in the Iberian Peninsula and the Canaries constitute an image, a connection between different points. The federation is like a constellation of stars: if one disappears the constellation becomes meaningless and will disappear as well".***

Fidel Ortega Dueñas, President of the FPCS

#### **4. An Italian–Austrian friendship**

Trieste is an Italian city known for its port. Until 1918 the city used to be Austria-Hungary's main port and has been a symbol for the Austrian-Italian relation ever since: not only in political or economical terms, but also regarding friendship, mutual inspiration and cross-cultural encounter.

On the occasion of an ECCE meeting Elisabetta Zorn invited me to visit "I Girasoli" in Trieste and I accepted the invitation with pleasure. The warm welcome and hospitality of the residents and their carers in this anthroposophical institution has provided two Austrian friends and me a great time. After that week it was clear that our friends from Trieste would like to come to Vienna, to visit the Christmas market at "Dorfgemeinschaft Breitenfurt" in wintertime. This trip was an interesting experience for them and so a continuous exchange and partnership started.

The following year I was again invited to Trieste, at that time together with my son Alexander, who works and lives in "Dorfgemeinschaft Breitenfurt". I was very glad to go to Trieste again, but I was in doubt if these vacations would be pleasant and restful for my son and for me, thus my younger son offered to accompany us.



After a 5-hour drive we were welcomed by our friends. We were shown around in the different workshops and my son Alexander was offered by Elisabetta and her team to join the ceramic group. To my surprise Alex showed interest to stay there for some hours. Christoph, my younger son and I were "sent" off to the beach.

When we returned to "I Girasoli" in the late afternoon, Alex was beaming with joy and pride. All together we enjoyed a marvelous meal with the residents. Cheerfully Christoph and I visited the historic castles of Miramare and Duino the following morning. That afternoon we met Alex and his new friends in the Gelateria eating a big cup of ice cream. Even though he did not understand any Italian he seemed to have a good time; friendship does not need a common language, we thought. The days passed quickly and after a week we had to say good-bye; Of course not without making new appointments!  
Renate Chwatal

## **5. EASPD presented its Alternative (Shadow) Report to the UN**

As we told you in ECCE Link nr 10, July 2014, ECCE contributed to the Alternative (Shadow) report of EASPD, as a reaction on the EU report on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) by the European Union

The contribution of ECCE to the shadow report is directed to 5 main issues:

- Ethics
- Persons with complex dependency needs
- Living independently and being included in the community
- Work and cultural activities as a way to self-realization
- Education and training

Also other members of EASPD contributed to this report.

The main objective of EASPD's report is to assess the role the EU has taken in regard to its obligations, focusing on articles that are specifically relevant for the support services sector.

The report first stresses the recent, important shift experienced by the sector throughout Europe, which witnessed a refocusing towards the implementation of person-centred and individualised services in line with the UN Convention. The report nonetheless indicates there is still much to be achieved if the sector is to fully accomplish this culture change. Responding to this need represents the main challenge for the service provision of tomorrow. The report highlights how the latest austerity measures and budgetary cuts to public expenditure have impacted the quality of service provision in most European countries, resulting in a tendency towards re-institutionalisation, lack of access to the labour market and to mainstream education. Social support services should be considered as an instrument for the UN CRPD's implementation. The European Disability Strategy (EDS) fails to convey this message, as it neglects to structurally integrate the role of individualised support services. Consequently, EU policy lacks a service provision perspective. There is insufficient reference within the EDS to persons with intellectual and mental disabilities in particular, despite complex and high support needs associated with their service requirements. This is a missed opportunity and contributes to the detriment of these persons.

***The ECCE contribution as well as the EASPD Alternative Report can be asked for at Bernard Heldt, [b.heldt@ecce.eu](mailto:b.heldt@ecce.eu)***

**The Committee of ECCE looks forward to meet you all in Brussels!**