



Family-centred  
Early Childhood Intervention:  
How to make it work

# EMBRACE: Fostering Inclusion Of Children With Intellectual Disabilities In Early Childhood Education And Care

Veronica Hadjipanayi & Maria Ioannou



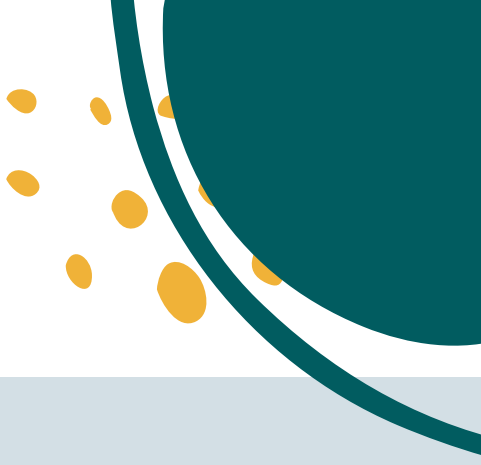
**Emphasys**  
CENTRE

Education & ICT Training | Research | Software Development

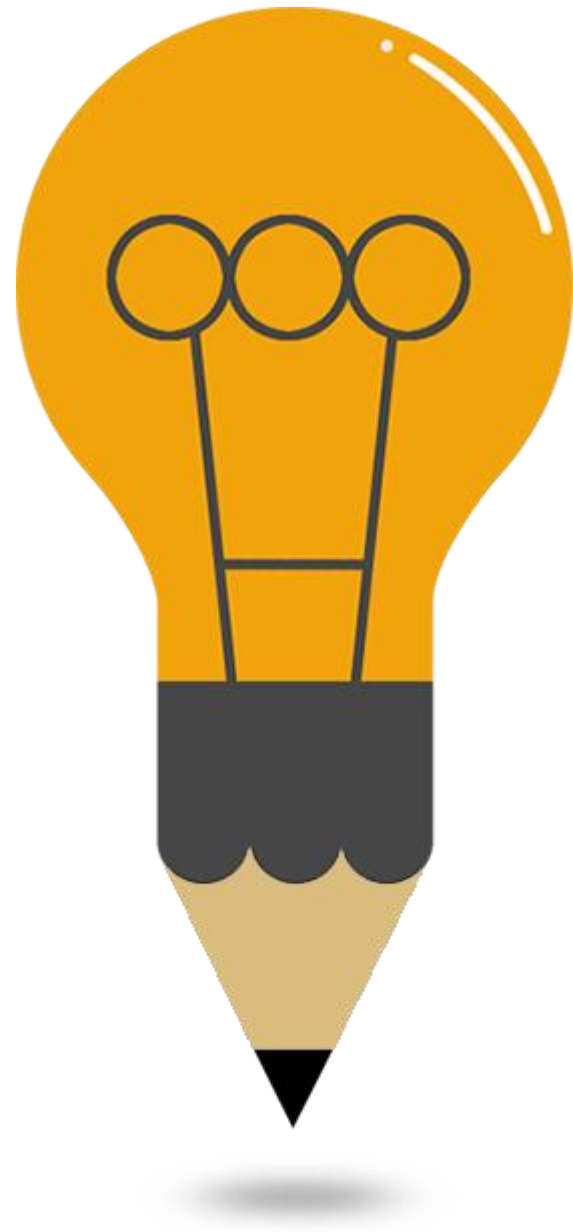


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# Let's introduce ourselves!

## Dr Veronica Hadjipanayi



- ✓ BSc Psychology
- ✓ PhD Cognitive Psychology
- ✓ Project Manager at the Strategic Research Planning Unit
- ✓ Involved in proposal preparation for EU grants e.g. Erasmus+, AMIF, CERV, etc.
- ✓ Peer-reviewed publications in scientific journals related to mental health and cognitive disabilities
- ✓ Volunteer at Association of Preventions and Handling of Domestic Abuse (SPAVO) in Cyprus



# Let's introduce ourselves!

## Maria Ioannou

- ✓ BSc Human Rights and Creative Writing
- ✓ MSc Political Science: International Relations
- ✓ Professional Experience as an ABA Tutor for Children with Autism and Special Needs Tutor for Adults with Disabilities
- ✓ Project Manager - Writer focusing on topics of disabilities, school education and employment
- ✓ Proposal Preparation for EU grants e.g. Erasmus+, AAL, AMIF, CERV and National Programmes
- ✓ Professional Experience in Policy and Research for NGOs including Transparency International

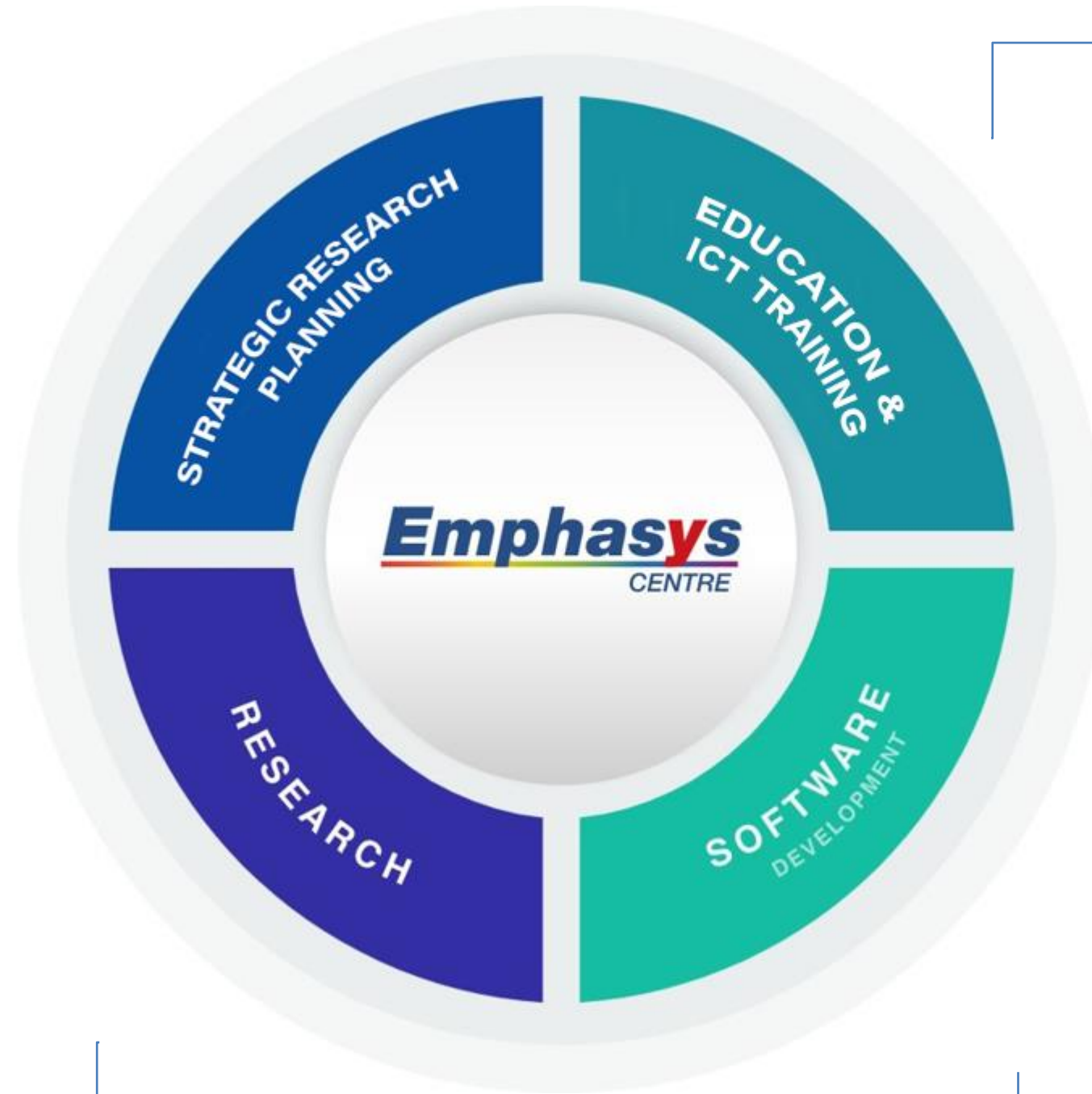




# Emphasys Centre comprises of four main departments:



SCAN ME





1

# Research Department

Implementation, management, coordination and evaluation of EU/National funded research projects in various programmes, on different topics and targeting various groups



## Target Groups:

- People with Disabilities
- Educators
- Teachers & Trainers
- Youth Workers
- Social Workers
- Volunteers
- Professionals
- Adults
- Students
- Young People
- Senior Citizens
- Migrants/Refugees



**50+**  
Completed projects

**75+**  
Current projects

**6**  
Good Practice Awards

**280+**  
Project Partners

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2

## Education and ICT Training Department

Offers validated courses at the National and EU level for professional development to educators, trainers, teachers, youth and social workers etc., as well as, learners of all ages (children youth, adults, seniors, migrants, SEN etc.).

**Erasmus+ KA1  
Courses Cyprus**

Combine learning with training and culture!  
Acquire new skills while you explore Cyprus  
with our exciting Erasmus plus KA1 Learning  
Mobility Courses.

[Our courses →](#) [Discover Cyprus →](#)

### Key Action 1 – Learning Mobility Courses

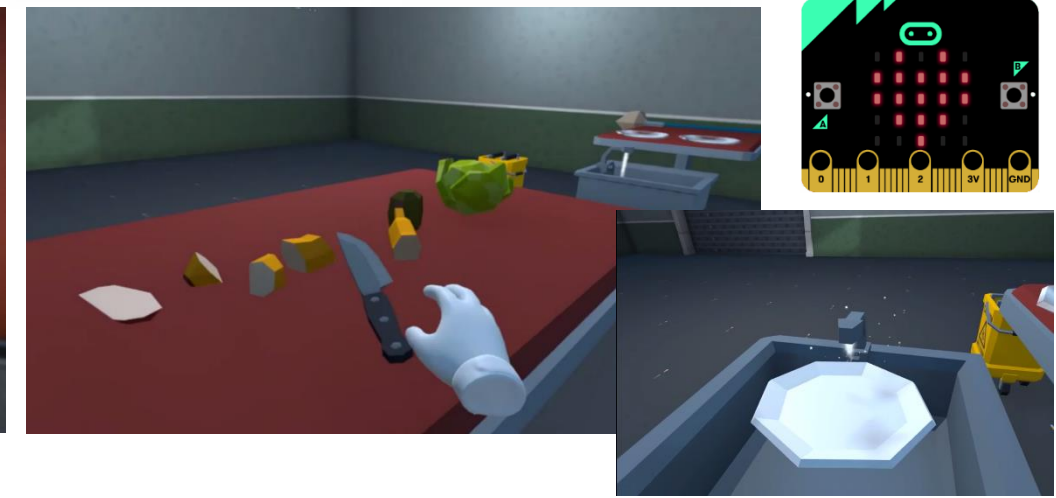
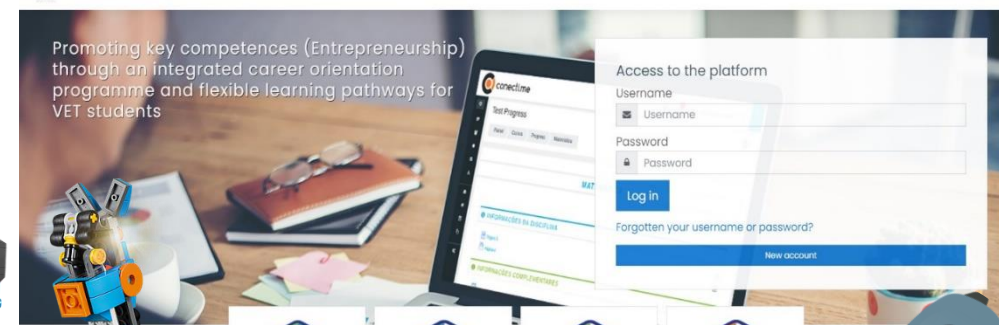
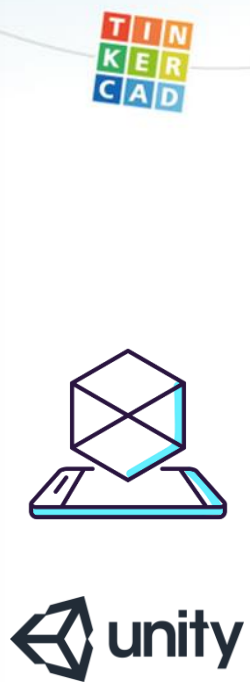
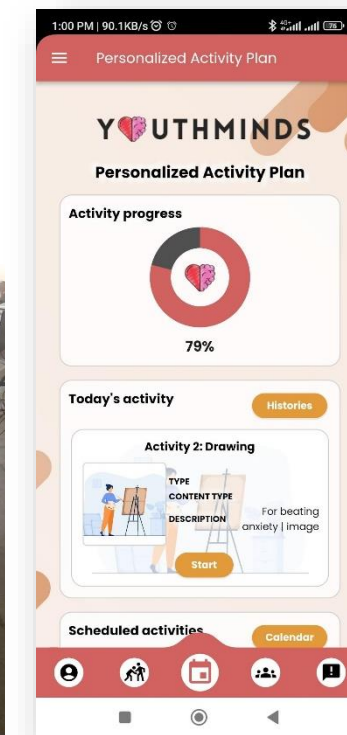
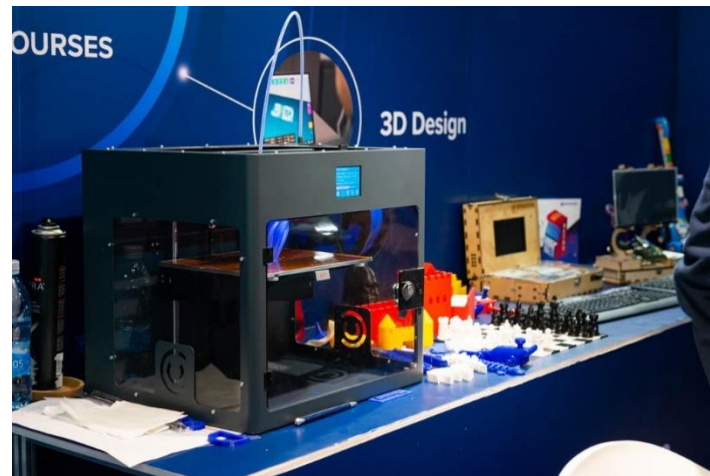
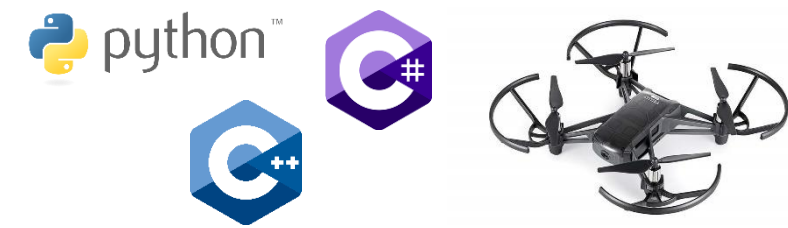

For more info, visit our website: [erasmuscoursescyprus.com](https://erasmuscoursescyprus.com)

**TOPICS: STEAM, Robotics, AR, VR, 3D Design and 3D printing, Gamification, Cyberbullying, Dyslexia, Creativity, Entrepreneurship, Languages, Media, Green and many more.**



# 3 Software Development Department

Research, design, development, pilot-testing and evaluation of Serious Games with VR, AR-features, e-learning platforms, portals, Mobile Applications and assessment portals etc., Artificial Intelligence tools, Internet of Things (IoT)







4

# Strategic Research Planning Department

Preparation of proposals, networking, policy-advocacy, external quality evaluation and consultancy services to NGOs, public bodies, private organization etc. for funding opportunities

## OUR NETWORK



**EASPD**  
Active Member  
[easpd.eu](http://easpd.eu)



**EUROPEAN DIGITAL LEARNING NETWORK**  
Active member  
[dlearn.eu](http://dlearn.eu)



**CONNECT INTERNATIONAL**  
Active Member  
[connect-international.org](http://connect-international.org)



**CRES – CENTRE FOR RESEARCH AND EUROPEAN STUDIES**  
Active Member  
[asscres.eu](http://asscres.eu)



**PACT FOR SKILLS**  
Active member





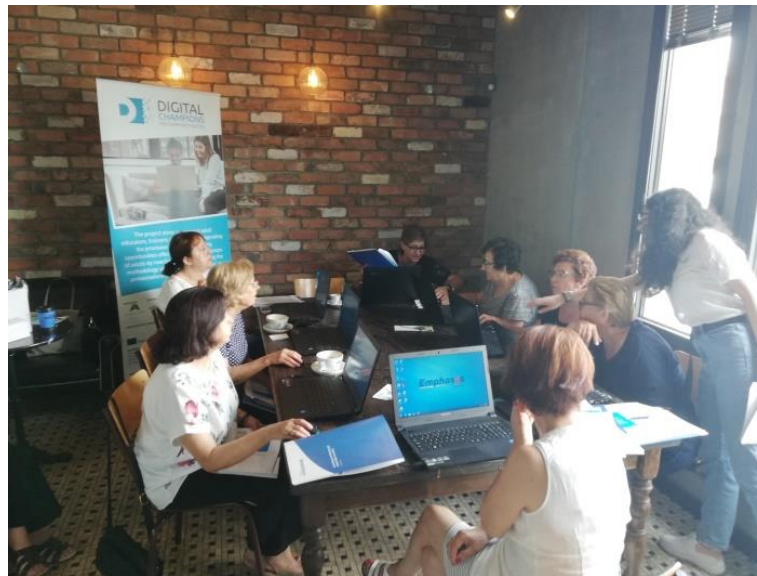
# Initiatives



An innovative initiative in collaboration with the **CitizensACT** which aims to provide **FREE LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES** to groups of people with fewer opportunities in order to promote social inclusion, access and participation in the digital economy for sustainable development.



e-Café for Seniors  
inhouse and in public  
places



ONE STOP SUPPORT  
CENTRE



# RELEVANT WORK



**AIM:** Ensuring access and engagement of students with disabilities (deaf or with hearing impairment) to the digital world of coding and robotics (2019-1-PL01-KA201-065123)

## PRINCIPAL RESULTS:

- ✓ **TRAINING PACK** for teaching and assessing coding and robotics skills to school children with deafness or hearing impairments
- ✓ Inclusive **E-LEARNING PLATFORM** and **MOBILE APPLICATION**.
- ✓ Digital **ACTION PLAN** for all: an a to z guide for setting up the **robotics4deaf clubs**.

<https://robotics4deaf.eu/>



# RELEVANT WORK

## JOB S 4 ALL



**AIM:** Strengthening the employability and key competences of young people with disabilities through the digital transformation and modernization of youth work (2021-2-EL02-KA220-YOU-000049207)

### PRINCIPAL RESULTS:

- ✓ JOBS4ALL **DUAL CAPACITY TRAINING** for youth workers and businesses/employers
- ✓ JOBS4ALL **VR-SIMULATION GAME, PLATFORM** and **EMPLOYMENT NETWORK**
- ✓ **POLICY ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN**



# RELEVANT WORK



**AIM:** Promoting teachers' professional development and inclusion through the integration of emerging technologies in the teaching of children with autism (2022-1-PL01-KA220-SCH-000086733)



## PRINCIPAL RESULTS:

- ✓ **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COURSE FOR EDUCATORS** to equip them with skills, knowledge and resources for teaching children with autism
- ✓ **BE-AUSOME TRIPLE PACK:** Game Scenarios and educational material for teachers and children
- ✓ **BE-AUSOME VR GAME** and **e-LEARNING PLATFORM** for children

<https://beausome.eu/>

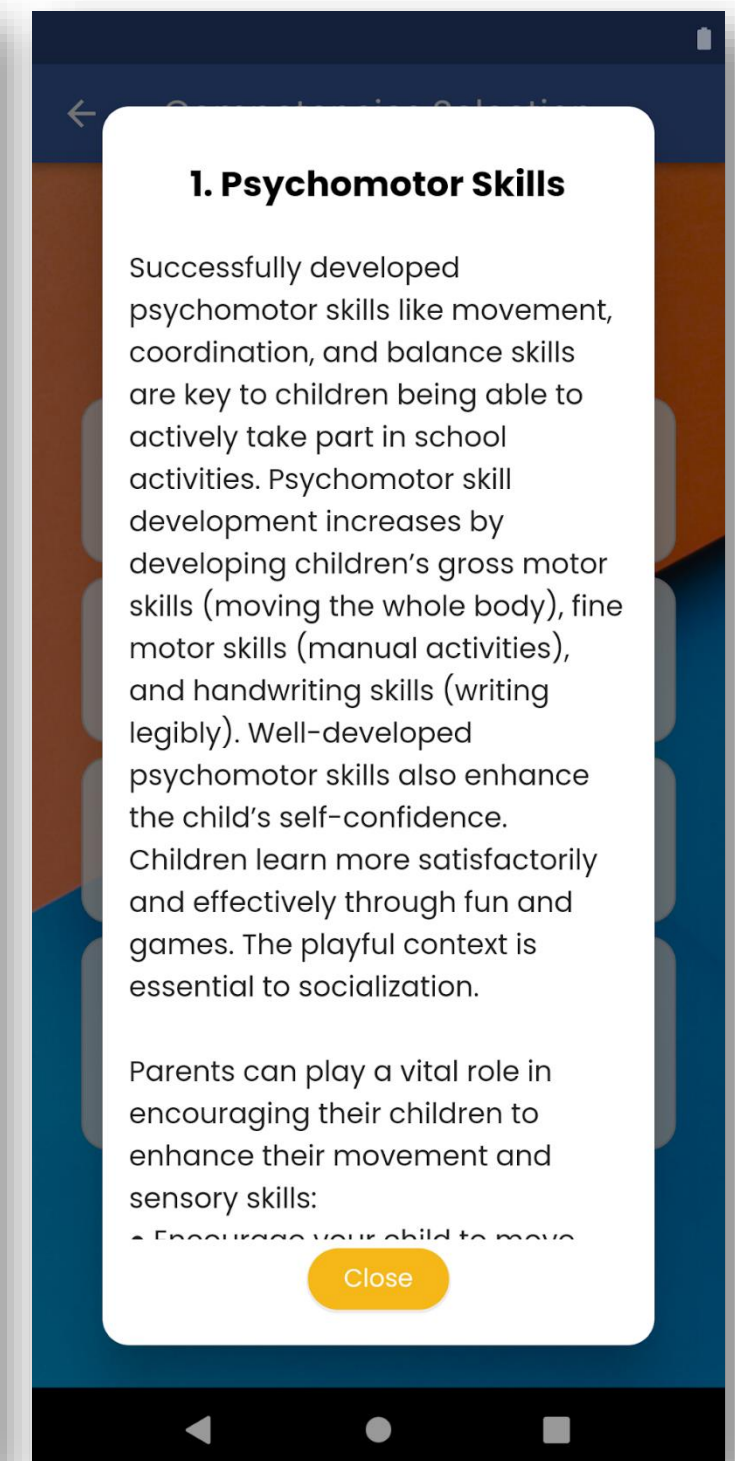


# RELEVANT WORK



**CARE2LEARN:** Supporting the Transition from Early Childhood Education and Care to Primary School (2021-1-HR01-KA220-SCH-000034443)

The CARE2LEARN Mobile Application aims to **support parents** and **teachers** in the **assessment** of **competence-development** of pre-school and primary school children to ensure a smoother transition from ECEC to primary school.



<https://care2learn.eu/>

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# EMBRACE

**Fostering inclusion of children with Intellectual Disabilities (ID) in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC)**

Erasmus+ KA2 Strategic Partnership in Cooperation | School Sector



# EMBRACE: Fostering inclusion of children with Intellectual Disabilities (ID) in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC)



Duration:  
24 Months



Start:  
01/01/2022



End:  
31/12/2023



# CONSORTIUM

-  **5 European Countries**
-  **6 partners**



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Poland



Cyprus



Greece



Belgium



Greece



The North Republic  
of North Macedonia



# TARGET GROUPS

## Direct target groups:

- ECEC educators
- Care staff & auxiliary staff, assistants
- Leaders & Heads of ECEC settings



## Indirect target groups:

- Pre-school children aged 3-7 years old with intellectual disabilities, such as Autism, Down's syndrome, Fragile X Syndrome, Williams Syndrome, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.



# PROJECT'S OBJECTIVES - RATIONALE

- ✓ Develop **inclusive values** and **strengthen** the **knowledge of ECEC staff** for supporting children with IDs.
- ✓ **Foster a culture of inclusion** by promoting collaboration among ECEC staff, children, parents and community members.
- ✓ **Raise awareness** on the importance of **inclusion** of children with IDs in ECEC.
- ✓ **Increase** the **visibility** of children with IDs by **deconstructing stereotypes** and **discrimination** and overcome barriers of early education.





# PROJECT RESULTS



**PR1 - Transnational Report**



**PR2 - e-Learning Course**



**PR3 - Inclusion Handbook** (in progress)



**PR4 - Awareness Raising Toolkit** (in progress)





# PR1: Mapping The Terrain: Initial And Continuous Training Opportunities For Early Childhood Education And Care Staff

## Deliverables:

### 1. Desk Research-National Report

- ✓ National Policy Analysis
- ✓ Interviews with ECEC educators

### 2. Transnational report

- ✓ Findings Analysis
- ✓ Policy Recommendations





# PR1: Mapping The Terrain: Initial And Continuous Training Opportunities For Early Childhood Education And Care Staff

## 1. Desk Research-National Report

- **Belgium:** Includes a **split-sector ECEC system** and is transitioning towards inclusive education.
- **Cyprus:** Relies on **private institutions for ECEC** and aims to **strengthen connections** between **regular** and **special schools**.
- **Greece:** **Low participation rates** in ECEC, but efforts are being made to **promote inclusion** of children with disabilities in mainstream schools.
- **North Macedonia:** Withholds **limited strategies for inclusive ECEC**, but is working with organizations to improve inclusion.
- **Poland:** **Implements inclusive education**, but faces **challenges** in **integrating** children with severe disabilities.





# PR1: Mapping The Terrain: Initial And Continuous Training Opportunities For Early Childhood Education And Care Staff

## 2. Transnational Report- Recommendations (1/2)

1. Provide **seminars** and **continuous professional** development for ECEC staff on various ID
2. **Foster collaboration** between **families, communities,** and **ECEC settings** through **parent-teacher conferences.**
3. **Promote** an **inclusive ECEC** through integration programs and sharing of good practices.
4. **Strengthen special needs education training** for **teachers** and eliminate barriers.
5. **Establish clear laws, allocate funds,** and support children with ID and their families.





# PR1: Mapping The Terrain: Initial And Continuous Training Opportunities For Early Childhood Education And Care Staff

## 2. Transnational Report (2/2)

The [TRANSNATIONAL REPORT](https://project-embrace.eu/) can be found on <https://project-embrace.eu/> in English, Polish, Macedonian and Greek.



2

Author: kmop

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## PR2: e-LEARNING COURSE

### Deliverables:

#### 1. Learning Material

- ✓ Power-Point Presentations

#### 2. e-LEARNING PLATFORM

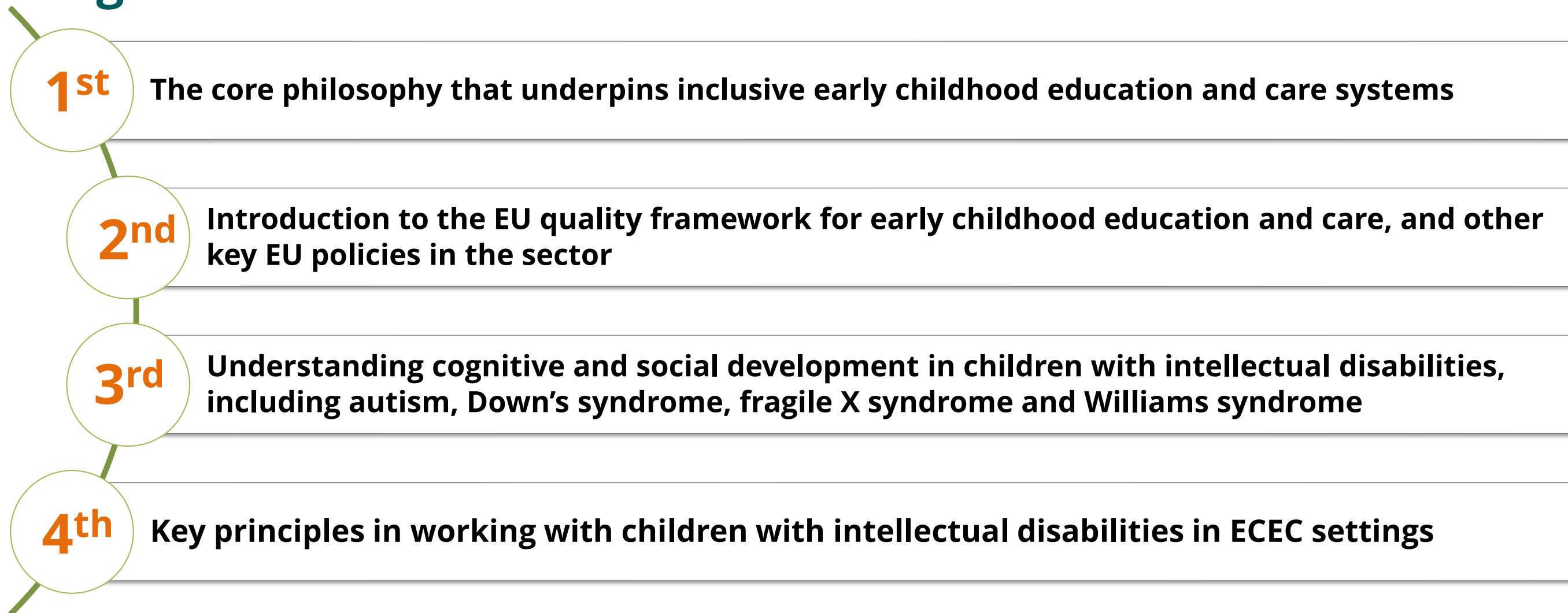
- ✓ e-learning course
- ✓ User Manual





# PR2: e-LEARNING COURSE

## 1. Learning Material- Modules





# PR2: e-LEARNING PLATFORM

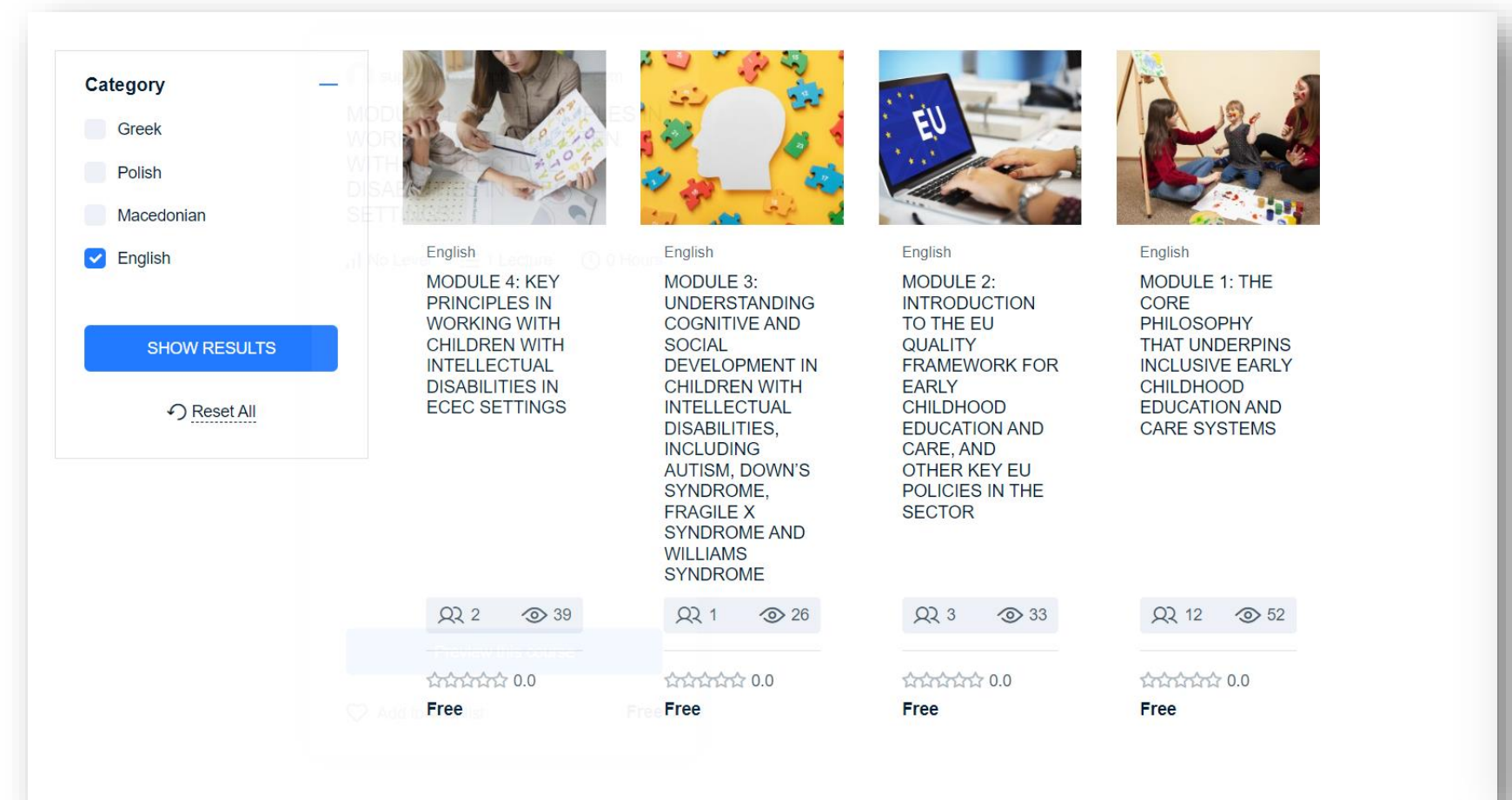
## 2. e-LEARNING PLATFORM- e-learning Course

- ✓ e-Learning Course Material
- ✓ USER MANUAL



Link to the Project's e-Learning Platform:

<https://project-embrace.eu>





# PR3: FOSTERING A CULTURE OF INCLUSION HANDBOOK

## Deliverables:

### 1. The Fostering a Culture of Inclusion Handbook

- ✓ Collection of Best practices in each country and in the EU

### 2. Evaluation of the Practices

- ✓ Pilot-testing activity in nurseries and kindergartens
- ✓ Summative Evaluation





## PR3: FOSTERING A CULTURE OF INCLUSION HANDBOOK

### The Fostering a Culture of Inclusion Handbook (1/4)

#### AIMS:

- To collect existing programmes, projects and methodologies fostering inclusion of children with intellectual disabilities in ECEC settings
- To identify specific strategies and actions that nurseries and kindergartens can take to increase the engagement of the key stakeholders
  - ✓ **96 practices, strategies and actions**
  - ✓ **4 per country and chapter**





# PR3: FOSTERING A CULTURE OF INCLUSION HANDBOOK

## The Fostering a Culture of Inclusion Handbook/ CHAPTERS (2/4)



### 1- ENGAGING CHILDREN

- Activities for nursery schools to ensure children's inclusion



### 2- ENGAGING PARENTS

- Approaches and strategies through Initiatives that enrich home-learning environment and promote family support



### 3- ENGAGING STAFF

- Initiatives, approaches and strategies to encourage open debate, acquire of skills, and discussion in workplace



### 4- ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

- Initiatives that bring together businesses, community-based organisations, HEIs etc. to support ECEC inclusion of children with IDs.





## PR3: FOSTERING A CULTURE OF INCLUSION HANDBOOK

### The Fostering a Culture of Inclusion Handbook/ **ACTIVITY (3/4)**

#### Chapter 1: Engaging children

**Title of the practice:** *The colourful flower field (Belgium)*

#### **Description:**

- Teachers read a story about diversity with a focus on the “field with daises” “by Phyllio Nikoloudi - A poppy grows in this field, which upsets the daisies and the story begins
- Children with Intellectual Disabilities visit the mainstream school
- Children will collaborate to construct a colourful field with flowers, on 2-3 meters of paper, by painting children’s palms with gouache and leaving their handprint on the paper. Each child’s palm forms the flower and then the children will add the stem, leaves and anything else they want.





## PR3: FOSTERING A CULTURE OF INCLUSION HANDBOOK

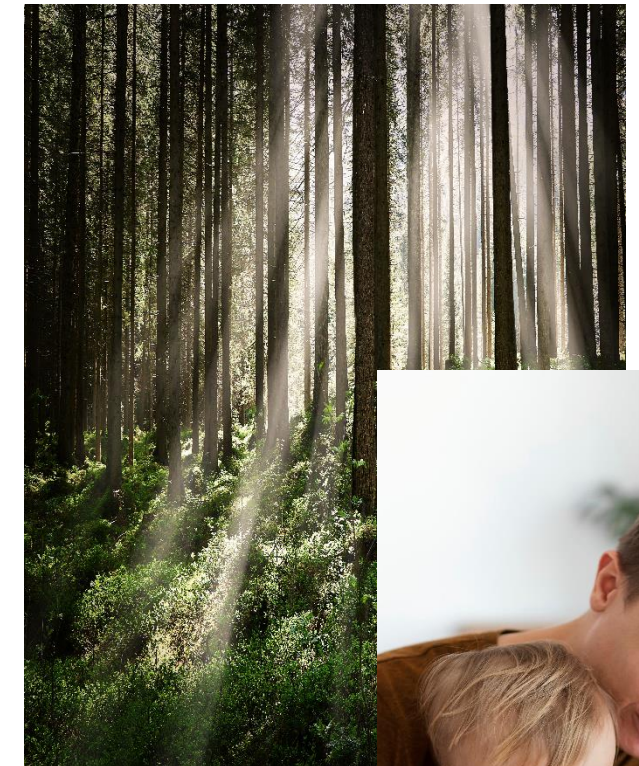
### The Fostering a Culture of Inclusion Handbook/ **ACTIVITY** (4/4)

#### Chapter 2: Engaging parents

**Title of the practice:** *Your Own Forest (Greece)*

**Description:**

- The ECEC educator will organize a workshop where parents will engage in individual and group-activities that are related to a specific fairy tale.
- Each parent will write a short text about their child as a forest, including special features and draw their vision
- Draw a picture of the forest
- Parents will share their work with other parents and create a collective artwork.







# PR4: Awareness-raising Toolkit: Inclusion of children with intellectual disabilities in early childhood education and care

## Deliverables:

### Awareness-raising Toolkit

- ✓ Tools for children at pre-school age (both with and without intellectual disabilities)
- ✓ Tools for Adults (parents, teachers, professionals and other community members)





# PR4: Awareness-raising Toolkit: Inclusion of children with intellectual disabilities in early childhood education and care

## Awareness-raising Toolkit (1/4)

### AIMS:

- ✓ Provide ECEC institutions with useful and effective resources for raising awareness of the importance of inclusion of children with intellectual disabilities in ECEC.

### Tools for Nurseries:

- ✓ Posters
- ✓ Leaflets
- ✓ Short Videos





# PR4: Awareness-raising Toolkit: Inclusion of children with intellectual disabilities in early childhood education and care

Learn more about the EMBRACE project!

## Contact Information

For more information about the EMBRACE project you can visit our:

- [www.embrace.project.eu](http://www.embrace.project.eu)
- [@embraceeuproject](https://www.facebook.com/embraceeuproject)
- [@embrace\\_erasmus](https://www.instagram.com/embrace_erasmus)



*"The training and education of ECEC staff is central to the quality of ECEC provision"*

*"Many children with intellectual disabilities still lack ECEC practitioners who are adequately trained and equipped to meet their needs"*




**Fostering inclusion of children with Intellectual Disabilities in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC)**

[Title of the section]

## Why is it important?

Inserta picture related to the topic

[Title of the section]

## QUOTE FROM THE TEXT

Inserta picture related to the topic

[Title of the section]

## What Can E

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What did we learn?

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Inserta picture related to the topic





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## EMBRACE

FOSTERING INCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE (ECEC)

**[Title of the topic]**

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Figure 1. [Title of the theme] Source: [name of the source]

**[Title of the topic]**

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**[Title of the topic]**

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## EMBRACE

FOSTERING INCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE (ECEC)



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THE CONSORTIUM:







# EMBRACE PROJECT WEBSITE



<https://project-embrace.eu>





# ANY QUESTIONS?





# THANK YOU!

Don't hesitate to contact us for further information!

## EMBRACE Project:

 [EMBRACE website](#)

 [@embraceeuproject](#)

 [@embrace\\_erasmus](#)

## Emphasys Centre:

 [www.emphasyscentre.com](http://www.emphasyscentre.com)

 <https://erasmuscoursescyprus.com/>

Contact:  
[info@emphasyscentre.com](mailto:info@emphasyscentre.com)



SCAN ME

