

# Special Newsletter

## Early Childhood Intervention



In order to build an effective inclusive society, persons with disabilities have to be included in every step of their lives. From the very early stages of life, we must build on the capabilities, skills and resources of the person and their family, not their deficits.

### What is early childhood intervention?

ECI programmes and services are designed to support young children who are at risk or have been identified as having developmental delay or disabilities during the most intensive period of their lives and critical stage of human development, from prenatal period to eight years of age; as well as to support their families.

[Read more here](#)

### Moldova Conference

EASPD organised a conference in April 2016 in Moldova which explored the development of national strategies needed to set up quality community-based ECI services both in Western and Central and Eastern European countries. More than 200 delegates from Moldova and across Europe attended. The conference embarked from a strong belief: a child needs a nurturing environment to thrive. [Read more here](#)

### Existing legal framework

There are two international legal and policy frameworks that recognise the rights of all children and children with disabilities in particular: The [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) and the [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) (article 7). Both conventions provide a common framework with key human rights instruments for all States parties and for the European Union.

## EASPD Statement on early childhood intervention



In April 2016, the European Association of Service providers for Persons with Disabilities organised in Chisinau, Moldova, its annual cross-sectorial conference “Growing Together: from grassroots initiatives to national strategies in early childhood intervention”. It was organised with the following partners: Alliance of Organisations for People with Disabilities from Moldova (AOPD), EurllyAid, Zero Project, the Austrian Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, Unicef Moldova, SOIR Moldova and Inclusion Europe. Over 200 delegates shared their views on the situation of Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) services in Europe. In addition, the Zero Project Analysis research was officially launched presenting 8 innovative practices on ECI services.

The statement on early childhood intervention which includes recommendations was subsequently adopted. *ECI programmes need to be designed with the understanding that all learning occurs in the context of healthy relationships between infants and children and those who live with and love them.* It is only through the inclusion and support of children from the youngest age in their family and community that they will be able to participate in society, be included at school, enter the open labour market, and enjoy the full range of their human rights. [Read more here.](#)

## EASPD Interest Group on early childhood intervention

EASPD has set up an interest group on early childhood intervention in order to develop activities with its members in that very important field. Mrs Vasilka Dimoska, Chair of the group has expressed the following: *“As a crucial developmental stage of each person, infancy should be supported with a nurturing and loving environment in the family as well as within the community. Services should include and support children from the youngest age and facilitate the achievement of the competences enabling children to meaningfully participate in their environment and build relationships with the key people in their lives. Effective and timely collaboration between professionals and parents are essential for the creation of realistic individual working plans for the child and the child’s well-being”.* [Read more here.](#)



### New-York workshop

EASPD's delegation took part to the 9th session of the conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in New York from the 14th to 16th June 2016. We co-organised the first side event "[Leaving no one behind from early age: Innovative Practices on Early Childhood Intervention](#)" with the Zero Project.

### Interview with EurlyAid

EurlyAid is the European Association on Early Childhood Intervention which is a participative association of persons, interested in issues of early childhood intervention. They gave an interview to EASPD and underlined the importance of early childhood intervention. The needs and challenges in the sector were as well discussed and investigated.

[TO READ THE INTERVIEW  
CLICK HERE](#)

## Best Practices – Zero Project

EASPD and Zero Project joined forces to develop research and exchange knowledge and published the first edition of the Zero Project Analysis covers eight outstanding Innovative Practices on Early Childhood Intervention, with a focus on Central and Eastern European countries.

- ❖ [Armenia: Save the Children International](#): Access to ECD centres in rural communities
- ❖ [Bulgaria: For Our Children Foundation](#) – Supporting families to focus on abilities and not deficits
- ❖ [Bulgaria: Karin Dom Foundation](#) – Early assessment coupled with early intervention
- ❖ [Croatia: Mali Dom](#) – How parents learn to raise their children at home
- ❖ [Greece: Theotokos Foundation](#) – Step by step into inclusive kindergarten and school
- ❖ [Ireland: National Federation of Voluntary Bodies](#) – Informing families sensitively about their child's disability
- ❖ [Moldova: Lumos Foundation](#) – Reducing infant mortality in Europe's poorest country
- ❖ [Slovakia: SOCIA](#) – Social Reform Foundation – A growing network of private support centres.

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