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## NEWS FROM EDSA MEMBERS

### SLOVAKIAN DOWN SYNDROME ASSOCIATION CELEBRATED ITS 25TH ANNIVERSARY



The Slovakian Down Syndrome Association celebrated its 25th anniversary on 28th April 2018 on the Castle of Trencin in central Slovakia. It was a big family-get-together with a lot of activities especial for the children with Down-Syndrome and their brothers and sisters. The beautiful weather and the wonderful location, high up on the castle with wide views over the country, made it to a very special event.

The opening-speech was held by Robert Lezo, the president of the Association. Prof. Maria Sustrova, who was the founder of the Ass. gave an overview of what has been done and changed during those 25 years.

#### Guests from abroad

Invited was a team from the Czech DS Association from Prague: president Prof. Dagmar Dzurova and the board members among them Isidro Moyano (who is also in the EDSA board). Cora Halder was invited as EDSA representative. Family Engels from the Netherlands, who has contact to both the Czech and the Slovakian DS associations were also present.

The Slovakian DS Association was one of the first members of EDSA. Especially Prof. Maria Sustrova, as a physician and scientist has been an active supporter in the early EDSA years. Prof. Sustrova (Clinical Immunology and Allergology) is an expert in the DS-health-field. Since nearly 30 years she leads a DS-Ambulance at the Slovakian Medical University in Bratislava and has seen and treated hundreds of children and adults with Down Syndrome from Slovakia as well as from the Czech Republik, and Austria. Photos of the anniversary can be viewed here: <https://downovsyndrom.sk/v16/node/401>

## NEW OPPORTUNITIES FROM THE WEB

### IBM'S TECHNOLOGY SIMPLIFIES CONTENT FOR PEOPLE WITH COGNITIVE DISABILITIES

IBM has announced the HYPERLINK "<http://contentclarifier.mybluemix.net/>" IBM AbilityLab™ Content Clarifier, which is designed to help simplify, summarize, and enhance content in order to increase comprehension for people with cognitive disabilities, the aging population, or those learning English as a second language.

Content Clarifier, an Application Programming Interface (API) built using HYPERLINK "<https://www.ibm.com/watson/>" IBM Watson services and the HYPERLINK "<https://www.ibm.com/cloud-computing/bluemix/>" IBM Bluemix cloud development platform, works by leveraging natural language processing and cognitive computing to analyze and condense content into a simplified form so people have an easier time consuming and comprehending the most important concepts. It replaces complex words with easier to understand alternatives, reorders or rephrases sentences, and provides additional context about pertinent concepts, such as phonetic pronunciations, images, maps, or links to web references. It is designed to be integrated into any mobile, web-based, or desktop application to allow users to increase the understanding of content more efficiently.

Content Clarifier represents an advancement in machine learning and natural language processing by instantly taking a long and complicated body of content, filtering out unnecessary information, replacing complex and recurring words, and converting it something more understandable.

It also takes HYPERLINK "<http://www.ibm.com/able>" accessibility to the next level by delivering highly customized and personalized content, especially for someone with a cognitive disability, such as autism. This tool could be a way to help connect those with autism with words and speech and help them communicate and relate to the world around them.

Content Clarifier can be used in many different scenarios, including helping condense news articles or videos into a format that conveys the keys concepts; or, as an educational tool that supplements the original content to provide additional context and insight.

A demo of the service is available at this HYPERLINK "<https://youtu.be/OXkriBN5T4E>" link or you can try the service by signing up for HYPERLINK "<http://contentclarifier.mybluemix.net/>" IBM Bluemix.

(Article from ILO GLOBAL - Business and Disability Network)

## WDSD 2018

### BREATHTAKING PORTRAITS SHED A DIFFERENT LIGHT ON PEOPLE WITH DOWN SYNDROME



To celebrate the World Down Syndrome Day the Finnish photographer Veikko Kähkönen teamed up with FAIDD (The Finnish Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities) to produce extraordinary pictures of people with Down syndrome.

The aim of the campaign was to inspire, raise awareness, and shed a different light on Down syndrome. People with Down syndrome are seldom represented in the media as powerful, strong, and confident. This was something these images wanted to change.

The models were asked to tell the photographer how they would like to be portrayed in a picture, and the results turned out to be full of emotion and strength. An inspiring video was made of the whole project, watch it with English subtitles below.

<https://www.boredpanda.com/breathtaking-portraits-shed-a-different-light-on-people-with-down-syndrome/>

## NEWS FROM EU PROGRAMMES

### 2018, European year of the Cultural Heritage



Throughout 2018, diverse cultural heritage will be celebrated across Europe, at EU, National, Regional and local level. The aim of the European Year of the Cultural Heritage is to encourage more people to discover and engage with Europe's cultural heritage, and to reinforce a sense belonging to a common European space. The slogan for the year is: Our heritage: where the past meets the future.

The year will see a series of initiatives and events across Europe to enable people to become closer to and more involved with their cultural heritage. Cultural heritage shapes our identities and everyday lives. It surrounds us in Europe's towns and cities, natural landscapes and archaeological sites. It is not only found in literature, art and objects, but also in the crafts we learn from our ancestors, the stories we tell to our children, the food we enjoy in company and the films we watch and recognise ourselves in.

#### **Why Cultural Heritage?**

Cultural heritage has a universal value for us as individuals, communities and societies. It is important to preserve and pass on to future generations. You may think of heritage as being 'from the past' or static, but it actually evolves through our engagement with it. What is more, our heritage has a big role to play in building the future of Europe. That is one reason why we want to reach out to young people in particular during the European Year.

Cultural heritage comes in many shapes and forms.

**tangible** – for example buildings, monuments, artefacts, clothing, artwork, books, machines, historic towns, archaeological sites.

**intangible** – practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills - and the associated instruments, objects and cultural spaces - that people value. This includes language and oral traditions, performing arts, social practices and traditional craftsmanship.

**natural** – landscapes, flora and fauna.

**digital** – resources that were created in digital form (for example digital art or animation) or that have been digitalised as a way to preserve them (including text, images, video, records).

Through cherishing our cultural heritage, we can discover our diversity and start an inter-cultural conversation about what we have in common. So what better way to enrich our lives than by interacting with something so central to who we are?

Cultural heritage should not be left to decay, deterioration or destruction. This is why in 2018, we search for ways to celebrate and preserve it.

### **What is happening in 2018?**

The year belongs to all to experience, appreciate, and enjoy cultural heritage. Everyone is invited to join the thousands of activities taking place across Europe to involve people more closely with cultural heritage.

Each Member State has appointed a National Coordinator to implement the year and coordinate events and projects at local, regional and national level.

Key Stakeholders from the cultural sector as well as civil society organisations are closely involved in the year's activities.

At European level, all EU institutions are committed to making the year a success. European Commission, European Parliament and Council of the European Union, as well as the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee will organise events to celebrate the year and launch activities focusing on cultural heritage. In addition, the EU will fund projects supporting cultural heritage. A dedicated call for cooperation projects relating to the year has been launched under the Creative Europe programme. A wealth additional opportunities will be available Erasmus+, Europe for Citizens, Horizon 2020, and other EU programmes.

To make sure our efforts leave an imprint beyond 2018, the Commission, in collaboration with the Council of Europe, UNESCO, and other partners, will be running ten long-term impact projects. These will include activities with schools, research on innovative solutions for re-using heritage buildings or the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural goods. The objective is to help trigger real change in the way we enjoy, protect and promote heritage, making sure that the European Year benefits citizens in the longer term.

### **The European year in your country**

Events big and small are taking place all around Europe. Visit the website of the year in your country to find out what's happening near you.

[https://europa.eu/cultural-heritage/country-links\\_en](https://europa.eu/cultural-heritage/country-links_en)



## 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!

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