

TRASE Project Press Release

May 22 2017

For Immediate release

Innovative approaches to sex education for persons with disabilities on show in Brussels

- **On the 31 May 2017, Brussels-based NGO Autism-Europe is welcoming participants to a conference on sex education for persons with disabilities, in the framework of the TRASE project funded by the European Commission's Erasmus+ programme.**
- **The conference explores the often overlooked importance of sex education for the wellbeing of persons with learning disabilities, and provides a practical insight into how to ensure effective learning for people with all types of learning requirements.**
- **The conference is taking place at the Passage 44 venue in Brussels from 9:00 to 17:00.**

The TRASE project, which started in January 2016, came about as a response to a distinct lack of trained professionals offering much needed sex education classes to persons with learning disabilities. As such, not only does the project develop a training programme to fill this void, it also produced a range of adapted, free and ready-to-use learning tools, activities and games to facilitate sex education teaching for people with a range of learning requirements.

As well as being able to participate in a number of workshops to test the new learning tools developed within the project, and to discuss the topic of sex education for persons with learning disabilities, participants will be greeted by two keynote speakers. The first is Professor Michel Mercier from the University of Namur, a leader in studies into sex education and disability, as well as an experienced trainer and designer of a number of key tools for teaching sex education, who is currently in the process of establishing a reference center in Belgium on sexuality and disability. The second keynote speaker will be Izabela Fornalik, an experienced and well-known sex education practitioner and writer from Poland who travels all around her home country delivering training to parents and professionals.

The event comes at a very poignant time, during a year in which the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#), to which the EU and 27 of its Member States are States Parties, marks its ten-year anniversary. Although the Convention makes specific reference to disabled people's rights to "found a family", "freely decide on the number and spacing of children" and "retain their fertility on an equal basis with others", as well as to "free and informed consent" when providing healthcare, including reproductive health, throughout Europe forced sterilisation and coerced abortions are nevertheless too often considered an acceptable way of dealing with the lack of available sex education for people with learning disabilities.¹



¹ European Disability Forum, (2010). *EDF input to the general discussion of the CESCR on sexual and reproductive rights*. Available at: <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/CESCR/Discussions/2010/EuropeanDisabilityForum.pdf> (accessed 08/02/2016)



NOTES FOR EDITORS

About the TRASE project

The TRASE began in January 2016. The main aim is the development of a number of adapted learning tools, games and activities to provide engaging and effective sex education sessions for persons with learning disabilities. It has also involved the creation of a comprehensive seven-day training course for adult educators, carers, professionals, teachers and parents on how best to maximise the engagement and understanding of persons with learning difficulties when explaining sex and relationships. This ultimate objective of the project is thus to empower persons with learning disabilities by giving them access to essential information about sex, sexuality and relationships.

The project benefits from the expertise of partners from seven different European countries: Belgium, Luxemburg, UK, Germany, Austria, Portugal and Lithuania.

You can find out more information about the project by visiting the TRASE website:

<http://www.traseproject.com/>

You can also discover more about the learning tools developed by clicking here:

<http://www.traseproject.com/tools>

About Erasmus+

Erasmus+ is the European Union programme for education, training, youth and sport for 2014-2020, with an overall budget of €14.7 billion to increase the quality and relevance of qualifications and skills. Erasmus+ provides funding for organisations to offer opportunities to students, teachers, apprentices, volunteers, youth leaders and people working in grassroots' sport. It also provides funding for partnerships between organisations such as educational institutions, youth organisations, enterprises, local and regional authorities and NGOs, as well as support for reforms in Member States to modernise education and training and to promote innovation, entrepreneurship and employability.

[More information](#)

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