



**11TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF  
EDUCATION,  
RESEARCH AND  
INNOVATION**

The title 'CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS' is written in a large, bold, white, sans-serif font with a black outline. It is set against a background of a complex, repeating geometric pattern of yellow and white triangles, with a blue sky and white clouds visible on the right side.

**CONFERENCE  
PROCEEDINGS**

**SEVILLE (SPAIN)  
12-14 NOVEMBER 2018**



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# PILOT STUDY OF A NEW TRAINING FOR PROFESSIONALS WORKING ON AUTISM FROM A TRANSNATIONAL APPROACH: IPA+ PROJECT

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About 1 in 59 children has been identified with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) according to estimates from the Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Network at the Centre for Disease Control (CDC). Moreover, the increasing number of adults and people becoming elder with ASD highlights the need of new specific care, approaches, interventions and competences for both specialized and non-specialized health and social care staff.

Working with people with ASD requires specific and specialized competences and skills that, currently, are obtained through the experience at care centres for people with ASD or even through occasional courses that professionals find outside their discipline or field of work. Moreover, most of the training initiatives and contents are very focused on children with ASD and they are also the age group population receiving more efforts and services especially for educative inclusion.

Therefore, it is necessary a new educational strategy able to qualify professionals giving an answer to the over-the-life needs of a person with ASD in the different contexts and spheres of life. The experiences that have shown higher levels of development in people with ASD are in general associated to organisations or care centres with specialized services that demonstrate the positive relationship between training, specialization of professionals and a better outcome for the future for the person with ASD and his/her family.

The project entitled "Inclusion of people with autism in Europe. Towards a specialized training model for professionals, IPA+", funded under the Erasmus+ Programme from the European Commission (ref. 2016-1-ES01-KA204-025061) aims at strengthening skills of professionals working (currently or expected in the future) with people with autism through the development of a course at European level that will be based on basic and specific and real curricular needs. Through this transnational project entities working in ASD from Spain, Belgium, Portugal and Serbia have developed a sound research on the training needs of professionals



working with people with ASD. On the basis of these findings a curriculum of contents was designed and validated by consulting an international and multidisciplinary panel of experts. The validated IPA+ curriculum was further developed into two courses with different complexity levels and their corresponding learning modules and syllabuses. The first course (Level I) offers an introductory approach to ASD and the second one (Level II) has a deeper approach.

These two courses have been implemented in a pilot study performed in Burgos (Spain), Lisbon (Portugal) and Belgrade (Serbia) with a starting sample of 127 professionals. Courses have been deployed by a blended format through the organization of some face-to-face sessions and the support of MOODLE platform for eLearning activities. The pilot experience running IPA+ courses have been evaluated through several questionnaires developed on the basis of the Kirkpatrick's Model.

Preliminary data are based on the evaluation performed before the start of the training in which participants mainly expected to gain and update knowledge and skills to work with people with ASD with the main purpose to improve their current or future performance at work. In the following months a complete evaluation with conclusions of the effectiveness and usefulness of the IPA+ courses will be drawn and duly presented.

**keywords: autism, training, professionals, pilot, transnational, erasmus+.**