

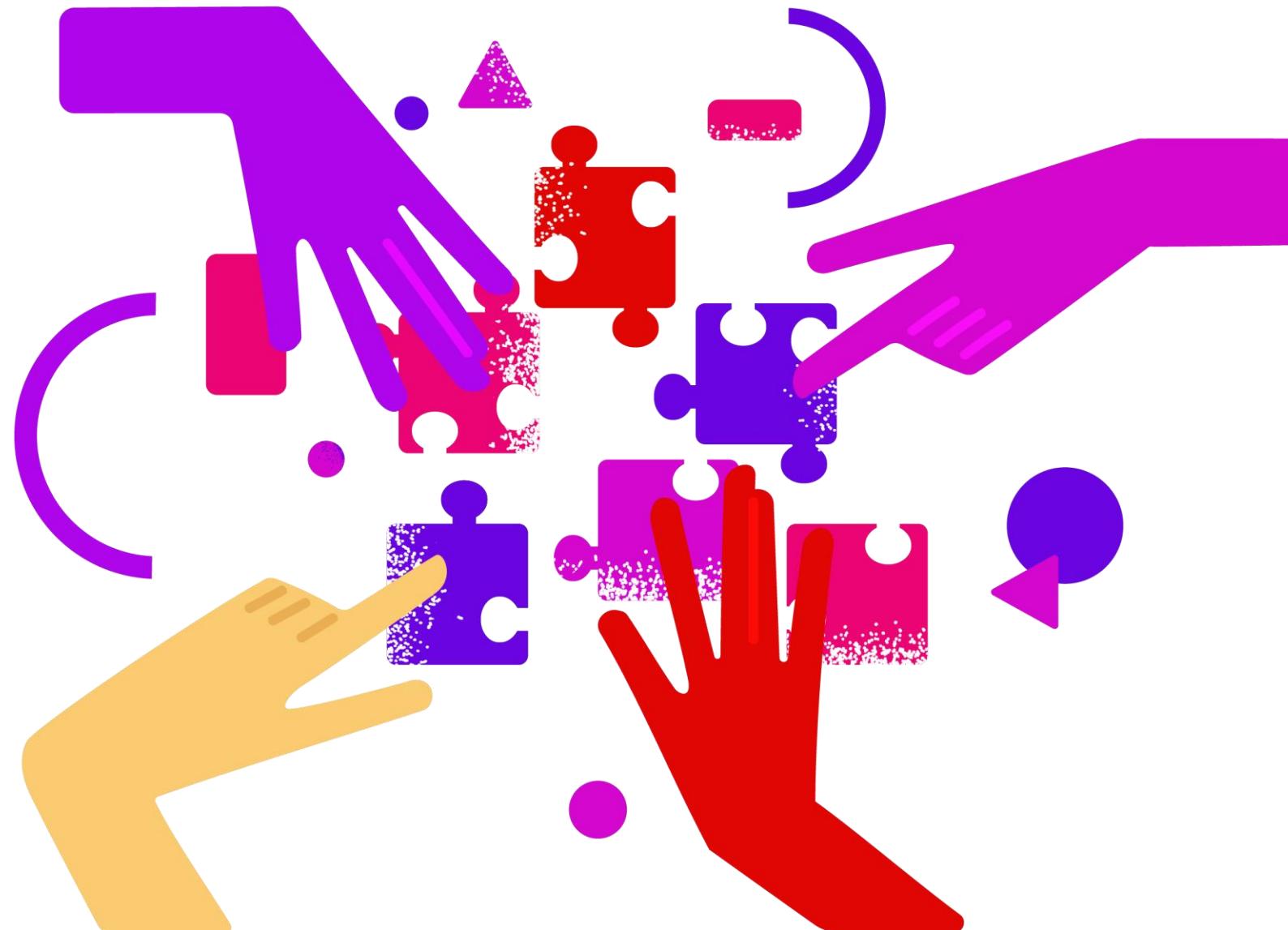


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Module _ Session Plan





Session Plan

Name of course: TUA Training

Module: Art as a driver of social participation		Trainer:
Session nº: 5	Duration: 2h	Date:
Aims:		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To introduce the concepts of social participation and social exclusion and their relevance to young people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Down Syndrome (DS).• To emphasise the significance and impact of social participation and social exclusion on young people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Down Syndrome (DS).• To address the challenges that young people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Down Syndrome (DS) face regarding social participation.• To highlight the benefits of art and how it can promote social participation among young people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Down Syndrome (DS).• To showcase success stories and provide case examples.
Learning outcomes:		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Define social participation and understand its importance for young people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Down Syndrome (DS).• Define social exclusion and understand its impact on young people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Down Syndrome (DS).• Identify and understand the challenges of young people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Down Syndrome (DS) regarding social participation.• Recognise the benefits of art and its role as a driver for social participation• Recognise case examples and success stories
Methods:		Expositive, Active and Interrogative
Contents:		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction to the Module «Art as a driver of social participation»



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Defining social participation and social exclusion• Challenges in social participation for young people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Down Syndrome (DS)• Understanding the impact of social exclusion and the importance of social participation• Benefits of Art• How can art drive social participation? Promoting social engagement• Recognising the work of young people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Down Syndrome (DS): Success Stories and Case Examples• Final Remarks
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Time allocation	Activities:	Materials:
5 min	<p>Introduction to the Module «Art as a driver of social participation»</p> <p>To be included and participate in society, by being employed and working, by being in education, or by participating in leisure activities, helps us define who we are and where we belong. People with special needs, such as young people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or Down Syndrome (DS) have the right to participate equally in society, as much as any other person. However, most of the time, society is not inclusive towards people with ASD or DS due to physical, communicative and social barriers.</p> <p>This module addresses the importance of social participation and social change through art, fostering equality, tolerance, communication and empathy.</p>	•
	<p>Defining social participation and social exclusion</p> <p>One of the given definitions is that social participation is “organized patterns of behaviour that are characteristic and</p>	•



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10 min	<p>expected of an individual or a given position within a social system" (Gillen, 2016).</p> <p>Participation and engagement result from the development of real-life ties, such as getting together with friends, attending social functions and participating in occupational or social roles. Through opportunities for engagement, one can experience meaningful social roles. In turn, these roles provide a sense of value, belonging, and attachment.</p> <p>Lack of participation in society is at the heart of nearly all definitions put forth in regard to "social exclusion".</p> <p>Social exclusion describes a state in which individuals are unable to participate fully in economic, social, political and cultural life, as well as the process leading to and sustaining such a state.</p> <p>Over time, in nearly all countries and to varying degrees, age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, religion, migration status, socioeconomic status, place of residence, sexual orientation and gender identity have been reasons for social exclusion.</p>	
	<p>Challenges in social participation for young people with ASD/DS</p> <p>Over the past decade, the societal participation of persons with disabilities, which refers to participation of persons in a societal context has grown in importance within disability policy. It is no longer merely viewed as a right but is also recognized as a means to combat social exclusion, economic hardship, and lower educational attainment, which often lead to poorer health outcomes (as noted by WHO in 2011). For instance, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Article 3 e) emphasizes the need for "complete and effective participation and inclusion in society" (United Nations, 2006). Despite efforts and legal initiatives aimed at promoting societal participation and reducing exclusion and discrimination against individuals with disabilities, numerous obstacles hinder full societal involvement. These barriers include</p>	



10 min	<p>prejudiced attitudes, a lack of information, and inaccessible environments. Consequently, various types of facilitators, such as investments in accessible infrastructure and the provision of services and other forms of support from society, are necessary to realize participation and inclusion.</p> <p>More specifically according to the European Commission (EC), there are approximately 87 million people in the EU living with some form of disability. Among them, individuals with disabilities, including those with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Down Syndrome (DS), often encounter distinct challenges that limit their opportunities for full social participation. These challenges encompass:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A striking 28.4% of persons with disabilities are at risk of poverty or social exclusion, in contrast to 17.8% of individuals without disabilities.• A significant 52% of persons with disabilities report experiencing discrimination.• Merely half of individuals with disabilities are employed, while the employment rate for those without disabilities stands at 3 in 4. <p>Young people with ASD frequently encounter difficulties in social interaction, and communication, and may exhibit repetitive behaviors. On the other hand, young people with DS confront cognitive and physical challenges that influence their ability to navigate the world and establish a sense of self-identity and self-esteem.</p> <p>Social stigma and discrimination are common experiences for young people with Down Syndrome, which can profoundly impact their self-esteem and social development. Meanwhile, individuals on the autism spectrum often struggle with social interaction,</p>	
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	interpreting others' behaviour, and knowing how to appropriately engage with others in social situations.	
10 + 20 min	<p>Understanding the impact of social exclusion and the importance of social participation</p> <p>So how do the challenges that young people with ASD/DS face in social participation affect them? The impact of exclusion can be profound and lifelong. Studies with young people with autism have shown that those socially excluded were still emotionally affected, leaving them with a sense of injustice and anger. Being excluded had impacted their later successes or they had to work even harder to catch up.</p> <p>Focusing on equal participation, however, can effectively protect people with disabilities from any form of discrimination and violence, and help ensure equal opportunities in and access to justice, education, culture, sport and tourism, but also equal access to all health services.</p> <p>Additionally, it is widely recognized that social relationships have powerful effects on physical and mental health. Specifically, studies suggest that social engagement is critical in maintaining cognitive ability and reducing mortality.</p> <p>Activity 1 – Group discussion: Social Participation and Social Exclusion</p> <p><i>Instruct the group to share and exchange their own personal experiences or observations of examples of both social participation and social exclusion.</i></p> <p>For more guidelines see Activity 1.</p>	•
	Benefits of Art	•



10 min	<p>Art has an immense power to represent one's thoughts. Through art, one can express their thoughts and feelings with greater intensity than may be possible in words. It helps us to cope better with feelings, to bounce back from adversity, and to show tolerance and compassion for others.</p> <p>The arts can boost self-esteem and self-image, instil pride, help develop real-life skills, increase opportunities for self-expression, and increase an individual's sense of belonging in a community.</p> <p>Furthermore, the following benefits of art can be observed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Art is good for the brain: it can access parts of our brain, feelings, sensations and memories that talk therapy often could not.• Stress relief and mindfulness: There is great therapeutic value in the process of creating. It can also provide a sense of freedom and relief.• Encourages self-exploration and esteem-building• Alleviates symptoms of anxiety and depression: creating and engaging in the arts releases the chemical dopamine, the "feel-good" neurotransmitter.• Promotes post-traumatic growth: Art can be a space where you can share your story of trauma and resilience. Your art can be the method in which a story is told, a way that a person can feel seen and heard. Through art, one can inspire others, as well as find growth and meaning.	
	<p>How can art drive social participation? Promoting social engagement</p> <p>During research connected to the COVID-19 pandemic, the arts were engagement to be linked with feelings of social connectedness. Art and cultural engagement were perceived to facilitate social connectedness through four overarching themes that were also identified pre-pandemic: social opportunities, sharing, feelings of commonality and belonging and collective</p>	



20 min	<p>understanding. The research shed light on specific ways that once can use the arts, as was done during the pandemic, to connect with others: as a catalyst for conversations, to maintain, reinstate or strengthen relationships and to facilitate social interactions; to bring people together through shared experiences and sharing of art; to elicit feelings of direct and indirect proximity to others, to connect people with common interests, to feel a sense of belonging to something and to feel part of a collective; and to learn from and about other people and to relate to others.</p> <p>In regards to young people with ASD, the expression of emotions through art offers a valuable avenue to navigate and cope with negative emotions, such as stress, anxiety, and depression. Research has shown that individuals with ASD are more vulnerable to experiencing these emotions than their typically developing peers. Art activities, however, can provide a healthy and impactful way to address these emotional challenges. For young people with ASD, who may usually struggle with verbal communication of emotions, art becomes a non-verbal creative outlet to explore and communicate their feelings. By engaging in art, they can regulate their sensory input and express their emotions and thoughts in a way that transcends traditional verbal or written means of communication. Having the opportunity for artistic expression and exploration is crucial to support their emotional well-being and overall development. It is important to enable young people with ASD to identify and express their emotions through art, as it can foster flexibility, self-esteem, and social communicative behaviour. Through art, individuals with ASD can find a safe and expressive space to navigate their emotions, cultivating personal growth, and enhancing their social and emotional well-being.</p> <p>Regarding young people with DS, supporting their self-expression is crucial to their development and well-being as it enables them to develop their own voice, establish their identity, build relationships, and cope with emotional difficulties. As all people, they have a need to communicate their thoughts, feelings, and ideas effectively and meaningfully, as well as express themselves creatively. Thus, it is important to promote confidence in oral</p>	
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	<p>communication and provide diverse and alternative methods for communication to accommodate their unique abilities and perspectives. Additionally, self-expression plays a significant role in fostering stronger social connections and relationships. Therefore, it is essential to create a safe and inclusive environment that encourages and facilitates their creative and social expression. Creative expression through art has particular significance for individuals with DS due to the challenges they may face in expressing themselves through spoken language. While verbal communication may be difficult, the arts provide a powerful medium to eloquently convey their emotions, for example through dance, movement, or painting. Moreover, creative arts serve as a "voice" for many individuals who struggle to express their feelings through words and allow them to tap into their empathic nature and effectively express emotions in forms such as dance and drama.</p>	
10+25 min	<p>Recognising the work of young people with ASD/DS: Success Stories and Case Examples</p> <p>There are many real-life examples of how art can drive social participation, from several children, young people and adults with ASD or DS. Some of these success stories are highlighted in this Module.</p> <p>Jon Adams Jon is a contemporary artist and researcher working with many different media, including sound, drawing and performance, though which he often makes references to his autism, synaesthesia and dyslexia, as well as to history, science, time and his past experiences. He studied geology at Kings College London becoming a geological book illustrator, later branching out into history and conceptual artwork. He does not shy away from creating socially challenging and covert artwork. He has been commissioned by universities, arts and science organisations, he has shown locally and in galleries such as Tate Modern and spoken at festivals and conferences.</p>	

<p>In her early days, Iris Grace was withdrawn, not speaking, avoiding all social and eye contact, and not developing language. She was highly sensitive to noise and other stimuli. However, when she was in front of her painting table, her ability to focus shone. And so, Iris has produced art which has moved a wide audience, having a positive impact on people's lives. From the point of struggling to communicate, she reached the point of inspiring others. Her art decorated hospitals and people bought her work, raising awareness on autism worldwide. Her art and prints are available for purchase at https://irisgracepainting.com/paintings/.</p> <p>Christian Royal is a young man with Down syndrome who since he was a teenager has shown an interest in, and aptitude for, working with clay. Christian wasn't able to attend and participate in school as other students did and he began making pottery as part of his homeschooling program. Since his first lesson, pottery has increasingly become the focus of his life. Over the years, professional potters offered to teach Christian the methods and techniques they had developed and instructed Christian. Within 6 months of being taught, Christian was invited to sell his pottery and exhibit it at galleries. The public heartily embraced the pottery and purchased thousands of pieces. As such, a simple beginning has developed into a vocation which daily animates Christian's life with purpose, camaraderie, and identity in society. His pottery is available for purchase at: https://www.christianroyalpottery.com/collections/all</p> <p>Activity 2 – Case Study: Watch the video below, “Meet the teen artist living with down syndrome who is inspiring other young creatives” and discuss in the group the success story of Emmet Kyoshi: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XIBwE3Coy58&t=1</p> <p>You can also have a look at Emmet's website: https://emmettkyoshiart.com/</p> <p>For more guidelines see Activity 2.</p>	
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	<p>Final Remarks</p> <p>German playwright Bertolt Brecht said that "Art is not a mirror with which to reflect reality but a hammer with which to shape it".</p> <p>Art allows young people with Autism Spectrum Disorder or Down Syndrome to express themselves in unique ways that may not always be possible through the traditional forms of communication. It gives them a voice and a means to share and express their thoughts, feelings, and experiences with the world. In this sense, art transforms into a "hammer" that empowers them to shape their own narratives and communicate their perspectives, as well as to break down the barriers and stereotypes imposed by society by challenging preconceived notions and fostering understanding and empathy. Young people with Autism Spectrum Disorder or Down Syndrome who are encouraged and empowered to create and share their art can gain a sense of achievement and recognition, which can contribute to their overall well-being and self-worth. This newfound confidence can spill over into other areas of their lives, further promoting their inclusion in society. When people see the creativity and talent of these young individuals through their artwork, it can lead to a shift in perception and attitudes.</p>	
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Evaluation:	Competencies and Knowledge Assessment Ex-ante and Ex-post Feedback Session on the last session Satisfaction Questionnaire Impact Evaluation Feedback from a guest expert
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