

Recommendation on potential certification bodies



EASY



Education and Culture DG - Lifelong Learning Programme
Leonardo da Vinci



EasyICT

ICT skills of youngsters with intellectual disabilities

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Dr. Manfred Pretis
Lerchengasse 4c, A-8054 Graz
Österreich
Tel/Fax +43-316/251699
Mobile +43-699-10800174

**S.I.N.N Sozial INNOvatives Netz Unternehmensberatung,
Psychologie, Integrationspädagogik**
e-mail m.pretis@utanet.at
www.sinn-evaluation.at



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0. Preliminary Remarks

This teacher handbook is a guide through the process of certifying the ICT-skills of young people with intellectual disabilities.

It contains

- administrative information (how to start as a tutor/assessor)
- technical information (how to navigate through the instrument, how to use help files, how to print certificates)
- content information (how to assess the answers of the learner)

If you have any problems, you can contact your national project partner to obtain further support for Austria: office@sinn-evaluation.at

for Belgium

for Italy

for Poland

for Turkey

A current analysis of the project group regarding the certification processes for persons with disabilities highlights the need of a highly individual and person-centred approach. It is not the goal of this certification process to test the personal limits of persons with disabilities or whether certain cut offs are reached. In terms of a holistic approach, the concrete abilities and skills of persons with disabilities are described. With this strategy two goals are reached:

- a. skills and abilities are described in a positive way, avoiding a possible negative experience regarding cut offs,
- b. for possible users of this certificate, e.g. professionals on the labour market, this list provides a detailed description of abilities in order to assess skills in terms of future labour market training or inclusion processes.

Looking at existing certification processes, this individual person-centred approach represents an innovative structure in the field of ICT as most of the ICT certification processes (e.g. the ECDL) test personal limits and clearly provide cut-off scores (whether the candidate reaches them or not).

This innovative form of certification therefore focuses on participation in terms of activities which the person with a disability is able to do **and not describing activities which he/she is not able to do.**

On the other hand, it should be highlighted that the testing also provides the possibility of a personal developmental plan in terms of a list of stimulating and supporting materials and activities which is based on the individual assessment of the learner's skills. This personal development plan can be printed and serves as a basis for the future learning processes of the learner within the learning context, i.e. a school or a service or training programme.



1. Introduction

1.1 What is EasyICT?

EasyICT is a computer skills certification programme from the EasyICT partnership consisting of five partners:

- Academy Of Management (społeczna wyższa szkoła przedsiębiorczości i zarządzania)
- The Association Accademia Psicologia Applicata (A.P.A.)
- Katholieke Hogeschool Kempen (KH Kempen)
- Social Innovative Network (S.I.N.N.)
- Kutahya Local Education Directorate (Kutahya Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü)

EasyICT is co-funded by the EU Leonardo programme.

The programme is designed to assess the ICT skills of young people with intellectual disabilities, referring to young people encountering problems with: perception and processing, memory, problem solving, attention, reading and writing.

EasyICT was developed with input from the ECDL Foundation. The ECDL Foundation is the global governing body of the world's leading end-user computer skills certification programme, the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL), which is known as the International Computer Driving Licence (ICDL) outside of Europe.

EasyICT uses concepts for testing ICT skills inspired by the ECDL. EasyICT can be a first step for people with intellectual disabilities to attain ECDL Foundation certifications like EqualSkills or e-Citizen.

EasyICT supports and encourages young people with cognitive disabilities to become part of the e-community. EasyICT provides a tool for teachers and coaches to assess the skills of the young people and to establish a personal development plan that supports them in reaching the objectives defined in the syllabus. The objectives can be differentiated to match the personal abilities of the candidate.

In general, the learning objectives for candidates can be defined as follows.

The candidates:

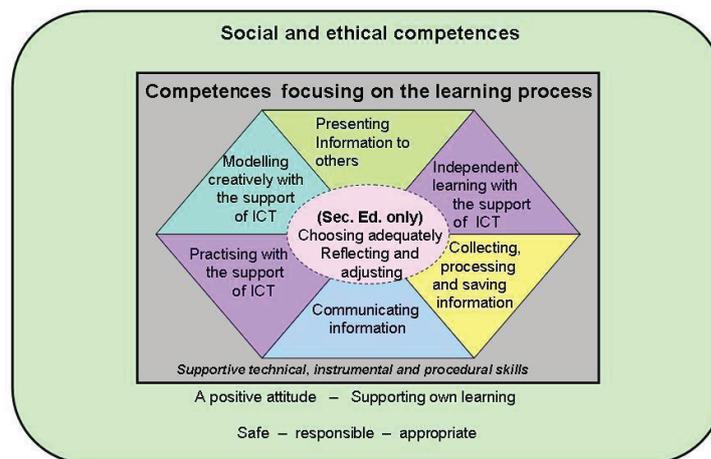
1. have a positive attitude towards ICT and are willing to use ICT in support of their learning;
2. **use ICT in a safe, sensible and appropriate way;**
3. **are able to practise independently in an ICT supported learning environment;**
4. **are able to study independently in an ICT supported learning environment;**
5. **are able to use ICT to express their own ideas in a creative way;**
6. can retrieve, process and save digital information that is appropriate for them, by means of ICT;
7. are able to use ICT in presenting information to others;
8. **are able to use ICT to communicate in a safe, sensible and appropriate way.**



The skills required to meet these objectives are presented in the ICT-diamant.

1.2 General principles for the EasyICT testing.

The ICT-DIAMANT



The Easy ICT Syllabus **primarily supports the technical, instrumental and procedural skills** that are required to attain skills 2, 3, 4, 5, and 8. These skills were perceived as being the most important by a group of representatives from special education in different EU-countries.

Three target groups are defined:

- Young people (aged 6 to 18) with intellectual disabilities, acquiring the skills as described above, without assistance from a coach: The young person can perform simple tasks on a computer in an independent way, performing tasks that he/she has learned and will only need assistance when unexpected events occur.
- Young people (aged 6 to 18) with intellectual disabilities, acquiring the skills as described above, with occasional assistance from a coach. The coach will monitor the young person and help out when requested. One coach can monitor a group of young people at the same time.
- Young people (aged 6 to 18) with intellectual disabilities, acquiring the skills as described above, with permanent assistance from a coach. The coach is permanently present and will help in a one-on-one relationship.

The environments in which these skills are performed can be very different for different candidates. A local and personalised set of hardware and software tools can be put in place to perform the



activities.

The EasyICT skills are considered to enable the candidate to start up the computer and perform basic functions, go on the Internet and send an e-mail. The assumption is made that a coach or assistant is always available in order to provide help when requested. The coach or assistant will constantly monitor the safety issues concerning the use of ICT.

1.3 The test items

The skills are categorised into four main groups:

Group 1: Managing the computer

The candidate can start up and turn off the computer, ask for help if required, use the essential functions of the mouse and keyboard, understand and execute simple text messages on the screen and manage windows on the screen.

Group 1: Manage the computer		
1.1	Basic computer operations	
	1.1.1	Identify the computer screen.
	1.1.2	Identify the mouse (or alternative input device for the mouse).
	1.1.3	Identify the computer.
	1.1.4	Identify the keyboard.
	1.1.5	Identify the CD/DVD drive.
	1.1.6	Identify the printer.
	1.1.7	Turn on the computer.
	1.1.8	Shut down the computer correctly.
	1.1.9	Recognise the Internet browser icon on the desktop or recognise the Internet browser menu item and start up the browser.
	1.1.10	Recognise the text editor icon on the desktop or recognise the text editor menu item and start up the text editor.
	1.1.11	Recognise the trash icon on the desktop.
	1.1.12	Ask a coach for help if the computer does not start up.
1.2	Use the mouse	
	1.2.1	Hold the mouse steady.
	1.2.2	Move the mouse within the entire screen area.
	1.2.3	Move the mouse between two points.
	1.2.4	Click the mouse once.
	1.2.5	Double click the mouse.
	1.2.6	Use the scroll wheel.
	1.2.7	Click the right mouse button and return to the left mouse click.



	1.2.8	Point the mouse at an object.
	1.2.9	Select a specific object with the mouse.
	1.2.10	Double click a specific large object.
	1.2.11	Select, drag and drop an object anywhere
	1.2.12	Select an object, drag and drop it at a location.
1.3	Use the keyboard	
	1.3.1	Recognise different keys on the keyboard.
	1.3.2	Use the Enter and/or Return key when required.
	1.3.3	Activate and deactivate the Caps Lock key.
	1.3.4	Use the Arrow-keys.
	1.3.5	Use the @-key.
	1.3.6	Use the Space Bar.
	1.3.7	Use the Shift key.
	1.3.8	Use the Delete key (if available).
	1.3.9	Type a simple word.
	1.3.10	Type a simple number.
1.4	Read a simple text on the screen	
	1.4.1	Recognise a text on the screen.
	1.4.2	Read a simple text on the screen.
	1.4.3	Understand simple text messages on the screen.
	1.4.4	Execute simple text commands, as required.
1.5	Write a simple text on the screen	
	1.5.1	Recognise text areas.
	1.5.2	Recognise the cursor position.
	1.5.3	Identify the function of the cursor.
	1.5.4	Position the cursor in a text area.
	1.5.5	Type a simple text in a text area.
	1.5.6	Select a text with the mouse.
	1.5.7	Save a text document.
	1.5.8	Print a document with the standard printer.
1.6	Manage windows on the screen	
	1.6.1	Hide (minimise) a window.
	1.6.2	Unhide a hidden window.
	1.6.3	Close a window.
	1.6.4	Maximize a window.
	1.6.5	Resize a window.
1.7	Ask for help if required	
	1.7.1	Identify when help is needed with the mouse, keyboard or screen.

Group 2: Browsing the Internet

The candidate can use the essential functions in a browser, manage browser windows and browse



specified pages.

Group 2: Browse the World Wide Web		
2.1	Work in a web browser that was already open	
	2.1.1	Identify features of web browsing.
	2.1.2	Click on a linked image.
	2.1.3	Click on a text link.
	2.1.4	Use the "Go Back" button (previous page).
	2.1.5	Use the "Go Next" button (next page).
2.2	Manage browser windows	
	2.2.1	Open a web browser.
	2.2.2	Close the web browser.
	2.2.3	Open a new window in a browser.
	2.2.4	Close one browser window while keeping another window open.
	2.2.5	Resize a browser window.
	2.2.6	Switch between two browser windows.
2.3	Browse specified pages	
	2.3.1	Go to a specific web page by browsing a specific link.
	2.3.2	Go to a specific web page, by typing the URL.
	2.3.3	Display a bookmarked page.
	2.3.4	Bookmark a web page.
	2.3.5	Go to the home page.
2.4	Use browser scroll bars	
	2.4.1	Use the horizontal scroll bar.
	2.4.2	Use the vertical scroll bar.

Group 3: Using e-mail

The candidate can start up an e-mail application, write and receive an e-mail.

Group 3: Communication		
3.1	E-Mail	
	3.1.1	Understand what e-mail is.
	3.1.2	Understand what an e-mail address is.
	3.1.3	Open an e-mail application.
	3.1.4	Create a new e-mail.
	3.1.5	Write an e-mail message (body of the message).
	3.1.6	Fill in the To:-field.
	3.1.7	Fill in the Subject:-field.
	3.1.8	Send the e-mail.
	3.1.9	Open the Inbox.
	3.1.10	Open an e-mail in the Inbox.



	3.1.11	Handle multiple windows in the mail client.
	3.1.12	Reply to an e-mail.
	3.1.13	Forward an e-mail.
	3.1.14	Open a file attached to an e-mail.
	3.1.15	Delete an e-mail.
	3.1.16	Be aware of security risks in particular with opening certain file attachments in an e-mail.

Group 4: Using ICT to communicate in a safe, sensible and appropriate way.

The candidate can use the hardware in an appropriate way and is aware of viruses, possible misuse of personal information and basic ergonomic aspects. The candidate can call for help of an assistant whenever needed.

Group 4: Use ICT in an safe, sensible, and appropriate way		
4.1	Safe	
	4.1.1	Know that viruses can harm your computer.
	4.1.2	Call for the help of an assistant whenever suspicious messages or actions appear on the screen.
	4.1.3	Understand the term "personal information".
	4.1.4	Never give personal information, unless approved by an assistant.
	4.1.5	Keep an appropriate distance and sitting position when working at the computer.
4.2	Sensible and appropriate	
	4.2.1	Use hardware in an appropriate manner: do not damage the materials.
	4.2.2	Be aware of possible addiction problems related to ICT.
	4.2.3	Be aware of inappropriate and offensive content.

2 EASY ICT testing requirements

2.1 General Requirements

Easy ICT is an instrument **to assess the individual ICT skills of children and adolescents with intellectual disabilities**. Within this context the issue of possible **assistance** has to be highlighted. Even though children and adolescents with mild intellectual disabilities might be able to perform most of the parts of the assessment by themselves, they might need assistance regarding the log-in and registering process or they will need assistance regarding the assessment of the appropriateness of the items.

Information 1: Provide assistance, if required by

- explaining the context,
- by giving prompts,
- in specific cases (e.g. children with severe motor disabilities by hands-on activities).



The terms tutor/assessor are used frequently in a parallel way, as during the phases of the exercises the teacher/assistant might see himself/herself as a tutor. In the phases of the examination the same person might see himself/herself much more as an assessor

In the context of schools, the role of a tutor/assessor will be mainly played by the teacher. In the context of services for persons with disabilities, an assistant might play this role.

The presence of a tutor/assessor is necessary because:

- a) he/she has to open an account for the learner to assure formal procedures in terms of registering and logging in (administrative function),
- b) he/she has to assess the answers given by the learner (assessing function),
- c) he/she has to finalise the exam (certification function).

Info 2: The Assessment and certification within EASY ICT requires the presence of a tutor/assessor

The optimal testing requirement therefore is a computer workplace with the necessary technical tools for the child or adolescent with a disability to perform ICT-based skills. An Internet connection is necessary, as the whole procedure is web-based.

Info 3: To run the EASY ICT assessment/certification procedure, an Internet connection is necessary.

As the personal relationship plays a key role within the whole process, the tutor/assessor should be known by the learner. The tutor/assessor should be able to sit beside the learner on the one hand assisting the learner to perform the different tasks, on the other hand to assess the appropriateness of the reactions.

Each session of the exercise/assessment or test should not exceed 1 hour, as the concentration of the learner could be limited. The tutor/assessor can re-enter the exercise/test-situation whenever he or she wants.

Info 4: The tutor/assessor can re-enter the exercise/test situation by using the individual password and login of the learner.

Group forms of exercise or assessments might be possible (if the necessary technical infrastructure is available). We generally advise the tutor/assessor to create an individual personal assessment situation. The learner should feel comfortable and should be informed by the tutor/assessor about the procedure.

Info 5: The tutor/assessor individually might choose the number of exercise/training session before finalising the certification process with the learner.



The tutor/assessor is free to choose as many exercise/training sessions as possible before initiating the final “assessment” (which – together with the history of the training – is part of the certificate).

After each exercise/training session the tutor/assessor can give general feedback about the present results. Within these situations the tutor/assessor might give positive reinforcement, e.g. about visual concentration or if the learner addresses some questions to the tutor/assessor.

The whole assessment situation itself should be primarily seen as a learning situation and not as an exam situation. The main goal of the whole assessment situation is that the learner enjoys using ICT and is able to show and explain his or her personal abilities.

2.3 Coaching requirements

To coach learners through the process of assessment and certification, the tutor/assessor should show

- a. good knowledge and skills about the instrument itself, and
- b. good communication skills in terms of supportive communication with the learner.

Ad a. Good knowledge about the instrument

It is recommended by the project group that the tutor/assessor first performs the test himself or herself in order to experience possible problems and to be prepared regarding possible questions of the learner. Furthermore, the tutor/assessor is provided with online help documents or can print out a version of the questions where he/she can immediately seek help if needed.

Ad b. Communication skills

In terms of reducing the distress of the learner, it is recommended that the tutor/assessor is known by the learner. An unknown person might activate feelings of distress and anxiety and therefore might reduce the performance level of the learner. A tutor/assessor should carefully watch the reactions of the learner and carefully assess when help is needed and when the learner can complete the task independently.

There is a tendency of tutors/assessors to react too quickly and therefore give assistance in situations where the learner can perform the task himself or herself if there is enough time. Regarding the time structure, this assessment **is not a speed test**, meaning that the learner has enough time (individually chosen) to go through the items. It is also possible that in terms of reduced concentration the learner might split the test and continue at another time.

3. Specific issues

3.1 How a test is run

Again it is highlighted that the Easy ICT certification procedure is a **highly individual** and **person-centred procedure** with the aim of systematically describing all the skills and abilities of young



people with intellectual disabilities.

The tutor/assessor therefore opens a test area (e.g. a new item), instructs the learner verbally about the test item and then waits for the reaction of the learner. If the learner does not show any reaction the tutor/assessor might offer assistance in terms of

- a. visual concentration (look once more, be careful),
- b. verbal understanding (do you know what you have to do),
- c. behaviour prompting (I show it to you and you might copy my behaviour), or
- d. hands-on especially for children with severe disabilities implement actions.

In all cases the reaction of the learner will, if correct, stimulate **reinforcement** in the form of flash animations or verbal reaction by the tutor/assessor.

The tutor/assessor then assesses the appropriateness of the answer. This might be in some cases an issue of **interpretation**.

Therefore, for each syllabus item a detailed description of response possibilities is given so that the tutor, based on this document, which is also available online, is able to assess whether a task was performed

- a) **successfully**, or
- b) **whether assistance was needed and in which form it was needed**, or
- c) if there should be further training and stimulation to perform a certain task in the future.

It has to be highlighted that to a great extent it is the tutor/assessor's responsibility to assess if an item is correctly answered (unless the system itself assesses the answer and gives feedback by means of flash animations).

If learners should show increased difficulty in answering items, it is generally recommended to change the item area (e.g. from how to use the computer correctly) to other areas, if three items are answered unsuccessfully.

3.2 Interruption of the test

If the learner shows symptoms of distress, tiredness or lack of motivation, the tutor/assessor is able to interrupt the procedure and continue later. When a learner logs in again, the instrument will identify those items which have already been performed. In this way, the tutor/assessor can continue with items which at the moment of interruption have just been finished.

If the learner performs a full assessment procedure in one sitting, the tutor/assessor will be able to print a preliminary list of the abilities of the learner. The tutor/assessor also will receive ideas regarding stimulating material which allows training periods between different test situations.

If the tutor/assessor assesses a task as "not successful or "the learner needs more training", it



should be assessed if the learner is

- a) motivated to perform some in-depth exercises, or
- b) if there is a realistic expectation that – due to exercises certain skills can be improved.

In this context “stimulating material” is provided online. Furthermore, a list of stimulating material is provided after the end of the session and can be printed.

3.3. How to coach a candidate during testing

The goal of the instrument is the certification of the **status quo situation of ICT skills of children and adolescents with intellectual disabilities**. Therefore, at a certain point in the training process the learner and the tutor/assessor should **decide to finalise the test**, to allow the finalisation of the certification.

If the tutor/assessor, together with the learner, finalises the test, this means that the answers of the learner are

- a) compiled
- and

- b) a **certificate** can be printed which describes individual skills regarding ICT usage for children and adolescents with intellectual disabilities in detail.

This certificate should be given to the learner. In terms of increasing self-efficacy and self-esteem, it can be recommended that the handing out of the certification could be a **formal** process, e.g. during group sessions or with the headmaster of the school.

It should be highlighted that Easy ICT provides a basis regarding further steps of certification processes (e.g. towards the ECDL). In this context, Easy ICT could be seen as a preliminary basic step towards the future certification of the individual skills of persons with disabilities towards the challenges of the labour market.

Coaching a candidate during the finalisation or testing situation can be regarded as a **sensitive period of the relationship between the (now) assessor and the learner**. The learner should be informed about that at a certain moment within the training and assessment process.

In this situation, a slight reaction of distress could be observed as the learners normally know that this is a testing and exam situation. However, the behaviour of the (now) assessor should not significantly differ from other situations when he/she was working with the learner.

Verbal prompting, e.g. regarding former activities in prior tests, could help the learner to overcome a distressing situation. It is important to inform the learner that he/she will obtain a certificate after finalising the test.

This certificate will contain his/her **name, his/her log in and password** to ensure that in the future the student might continue with training sessions and assessments in this area with another tutor/assessor.



Furthermore, this certificate contains a detailed list of his/her abilities within the field of ICT. The learner should also be informed that there are symbols and stamps on the certificate representing the European project and explaining to him or her the function of this certificate.

4. Recommendation on potential certification bodies

4.1 Certifying sectors

Two sectors can be identified which could be interested in certifying the ICT skills of pupils with intellectual disabilities.

- a. school sector, especially schools for pupils with special needs or schools with an integrative setting,
- b. service providers in terms occupational therapies, labour market integration, etc.

The two sectors show two different pathways. On the one hand there is the school administrative pathway in terms of teachers who at the same time are the tutors within the training programme. On the other hand, there is the pathway of service providers in the field of disability.

The concrete procedure has already been described in Chapters 1, 2 and 3.

4.2. Prerequisites of certifying bodies

- a. Own preparation in terms of participation in train-the-trainer seminars provided by the national project partner: This step is necessary to assure comparable approaches towards certification.
- b. Informed consent by the parents or legal guardians especially when schools are working with pupils.
- c. Availability of an adequate setting regarding the certification.
- d. Availability of an adequate setting for the learners to receive their certificates.
- e. Necessary data protection procedures to avoid data abuse.

4.3 Further remarks

Even though parents play a key role in the certification process of pupils with intellectual disabilities in terms of informed consent, the project partnership does not recommend that the parents themselves or a parent association perform the certification. However, in exceptional cases if parent associations show adequate professional support, they might be considered a possible certifying body.

4.4. Concrete procedure regarding train-the-trainer seminars and becoming a certifying body

Please contact the national project partners.

Academy of Management (Poland) – Coordinator





The Academy of Management is a private university situated in the second largest city in Poland, Lodz. It was established by the Association of Polish Educators in January 1995. The Academy offers BA, MA studies and post-graduate courses in the following areas: Management and Marketing, International Relations, Banking, Philology, and Computer Science. The Academy of Management is the centre of IT studies, since it offers a programme in Computer Science and organises a number of ICT courses for different target groups (women, unemployed, etc). The programme in IT offers the following specialisations: Programming Engineering, Computer Networks and Systems, and Teleinformatics. The student environment is animated by a number of IT experts who teach in enlisted specialisations. Since the Academy is implementing an internationalisation strategy, a number of international activities are held in the institution such as: student and teaching staff exchange, cooperation with foreign academic centres, organising international conferences, seminars, etc. Dealing with the international dimension on the institutional level is facilitated by qualified staff and also by specially developed administrative entities like the International Relation Office or the International Project Department.

Katholieke Hogeschool Kempen (Belgium)



KHKempen is a university which offers bachelor and master degrees in de Kempen, a region in Flanders (Belgium). KHKempen has several research and development projects in the area of easy-to-read language and web site accessibility for people with mental disabilities. As a coordinator and partner KHKempen was involved in several EU-projects. KHKempen can rely on a multidisciplinary team of experts in its 10 departments and has a research group with ICT and Inclusion as its primary focus. Within this research group (www.k-point.be) several projects related to the subject are currently running.

Social Innovative Network Dr. Pretis (Austria)



S.I.N.N. is an internationally active research, counselling and training enterprise, registered in Graz, Austria. S.I.N.N. primarily deals with quality management, dissemination and certification in the field of disability, furthermore regarding needs assessment (including market research), and evaluation and training for professionals working with disadvantaged groups (children with disabilities, frontline workers assisting PwD). S.I.N.N. coordinated a Leonardo da Vinci pilot project (www.eqm-pd.com) aiming to increase the quality of professional assistance for PwD and initiating certification processes (via an online assessment instrument) for services supporting PwD. S.I.N.N. pays attention to the full participation of PwD and aims to include PwD at every stage of the project. Both within the eqm-pd and ebiff projects S.I.N.N. dealt with certification processes



and recognition of the (prior) learning processes of professionals. Therefore, implementing VET systems is the next logical step in the development of S.I.N.N. S.I.N.N. understands evaluation and certification as dialogue processes, based on transparency and respect towards the partner. S.I.N.N. primarily focuses its activities on Eastern European countries.

Kutahya Local Education Directorate (Turkey)



Kutahya Local Education Directorate is a public organisation whose workspaces are providing the sustainability and the efficiency of education. It makes necessary arrangements and audits the schools, the teachers, the process and the quality of education. In the Kutahya province there are ten schools for mentally disabled students (three of them are public and seven of them are private education centres). In total, there are 85 schools which are located in the Kutahya province. The teachers at the mentally disabled schools attend ICT courses and in-service training sessions, which are organised by computer teacher trainers in the Kutahya Local Education Directorate.

Applied Psychology Academy (Italy)



The Applied Psychology Academy (Accademia Psicologia Applicata – A.P.A.) is an association formed by psychologists with good competence and experience in the fields of the psychology, psychotherapy, training and research. The association has a team composed of 40 trainers who are specialised psychologists. They implement more than 100 training opportunities for the schools. The association is involved in a lot of training courses since they are specialists in awareness and prevention of psychological disorders in children and adults, as well as health promotion. Its mission is to create a place that can be a point of reference for the personal and professional training and development, to dedicate personal and professional experience to promote the cultural integration and health of every man, coherently with the World Health Organisation methodology, to work with schools and young people (an area that A.P.A. is specifically equipped for), to be an “Info Point” for youth about the EU and youth policies (an area that A.P.A. is specifically equipped for). A.P.A. is also referent of a net of associations and private societies by the manifold competences and sectors of intervention (ICT services, research and development, e-learning, web solution: It area net. Accredited Training Organizations: IDEA; formAzione Europea; Cooperativa Nuovi Orizzonti; Panormus; Acas; Isfordd; Agency for Tourist Development: Go Sicily; publicity agency: ADDUMA).