

**A challenging EU project on dyslexia:
DYPATEC – “Dyslexia – Parents’ and Teachers’ Collaboration”**

In August 2003 ten institutions from six different European countries started a two-years-project on dyslexia which is not only intercultural but also an interdisciplinary challenge. Specialists from the field of medicine, psychology, pedagogics and linguistics discussed various aspects of dyslexia among each other and with parents. The aim is a parents’ guide in several languages (see box below).

The project included a symposium carrying the title “Dyslexia – Parents and Teachers Working Together”. The symposium took place from the 27th till the 29th of October 2005 in Graz, Austria and was promoted and supported by the European Commission as a Grundtvig 3 course. The official patron was Dr. Heinz Fischer, the Federal President of Austria; Among the Hnorary Presidium was the Austrian Minister for Education as well as the Austrian Minister for Health and other local politicians and school authorities who expressed their concern about equity in education for all.

The symposium got very positive feedback, which reflects the positive results of the event:

- Participants were encouraged to give feedback on the chapter drafts of the parents guide, which will be used for raising the quality of the final product of the project.
- Symposium participants from European countries other than in the project showed deep interest in building up a network with the project partners.
- Contacts were made among the symposium participants which promises further cooperation between European countries and new ideas for projects in the field of dyslexia.
- International participants (e.g. from Canada, Australia and Pakistan) showed interest in cooperating with the project team.

Further success can be stated from a subgroup of the symposium participants that was invited to present the project at the “3rd International Multilingualism and Dyslexia Conference – Multilingual & Crosscultural Perspectives on Dyslexia” in July 2005 in Cyprus. Specialists, teachers and parents from other European countries showed interest in the project DYPATEC and in future cooperation. Due to the contacts made during the symposium and the conference in Cyprus it is planned to extend the project for another year.

In Austria the project has risen the awareness on dyslexia and fostered the cooperation between school authorities, teachers and parents as well as between educational institutions and politicians. Further work needs to be done in order to fulfill the right for adequate education of dyslexic children in all European countries.

Overview of the project:

Countries involved: Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Luxembourg, Poland and the UK.

Coordinating institution: Pädagogische Akademie des Bundes in der Steiermark, Graz, Austria (coordinator: Mag. Hermine Posch)

Aim of the project: A parents’ guide on dyslexia not only useful for parents but also a support for specialists advising parents. The guide is planned to appear in the following five languages: English, Czech, French, German, Polish (planned to be published in July 2006)

Website: http://dyslexia_projectinfo.phgraz.at