

NEWSLETTER # 2

January 2022

The IPAT Project

Individuals with Autism Spectrum disorders present difficulties concerning verbal and non-verbal social communication and interaction and restrictive/repetitive interests, behaviours or movements.

Parental training is one of the factors enabling the optimal adaptation of parents to their child's autism diagnosis, their ability to support the treatment and collaborate constructively with the respective professionals involved in the child's rehabilitation and special education programs. IPAT aims to increase awareness about the role and the importance of parental training in the global management of the needs of autistic people, to increase accessibility to effective training, to motivate parents to use a valid self-training approach at different stages of life, in order to advocate for the rights and social inclusion of autistic individuals and eliminating stigma.

IPAT aims to:

- train parents with an autistic child to decrease parental stress and improve their quality of life
- create an Integrative Parents' Autism Training-IPAT module and a digital self-training Tool-IPATT, to be used by professionals and parents.

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UPDATE ON IO1

The IPAT first Intellectual output- IO1 is now available online!

You can follow [this link](#) to have a read of the results of the research.

The IO1 consists of the Needs' Assessment Resource document including two parts: the Literature Review and the Focus groups' Global report. The results of the Literature Review provide answers to the questions: What is the impact of raising a child with autism on his/her parents' emotional well-being and quality of life? What are the training needs of the parents and how have they been studied?

Given the scarcity of qualitative research identified in the field, as well as the advantages acknowledged with this methodology, we organized 4 focus groups, one in each partner country, in order to identify the training needs of the parents, as described and conceived by themselves.

The voice of the parents in real-time, before designing the IPAT Training module, is integrated into the joint results of the focus groups, as presented in the Focus groups' Global report.

The partners are working so as to document the results of the Needs Assessment and share them with the broader scientific community: the preparation of the manuscript to be submitted in a peer-reviewed journal is currently in progress.



**Needs Assessment Resource document - Literature Review
and Parents' Focus**

THE IPAT MODULE

We are now in the process of finalizing the training material of the IPAT Training Module, to be used in the IPAT Training activity.

The IPAT Module consists of 30 short PowerPoint presentations and approximately 10-12 interactive activities, developed and structured on the basis of eight basic topics, as generated by the literature review and the needs expressed by the parents in the focus groups:

- 1. What is autism**
- 2. Therapeutic approach**
- 3. Legal and ethical issues and rights**
- 4. The lived experience of the family**
- 5. Parent's interaction with the child**
- 6. Social inclusion and autonomy**
- 7. Sexuality issues**
- 8. Management of behaviors of concern.**



The content of the IPAT Module is being developed taking into account the range of age and developmental stage, as well as of the functionality, of the children, from toddlers to adults.



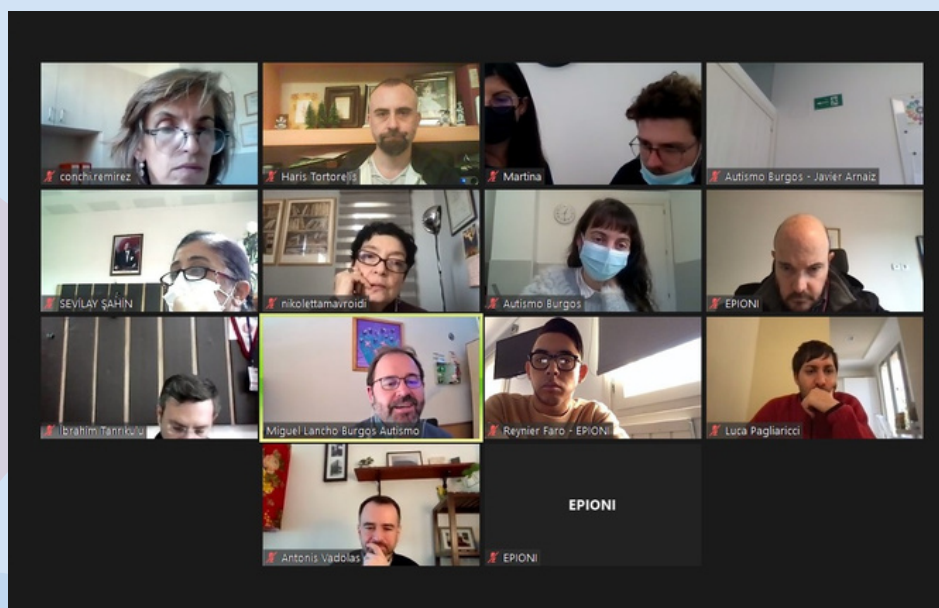
The IPAT Module material is being developed in English and will be available on the project website upon its finalization. The Training material will be translated into the 4 languages of the partners' countries: greek, Spanish, Italian and Turkish.

The online TPM III in Spain

On the 16th and 17th of December 2021, the partners of the IPAT project met online for a two-day meeting, whose hosters were Autismo Burgos.

The first day of the online transnational meeting covered three core topics in terms of implementation of the IPAT project:

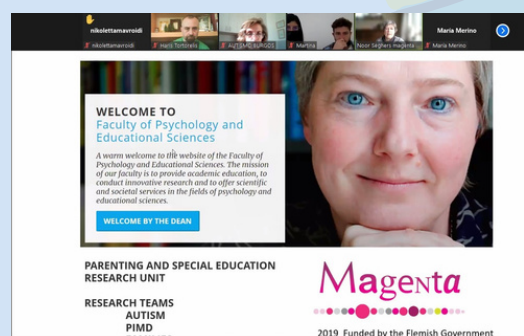
1. review of the material of the eight meetings that constitute the IPAT training, and the state of the art in the production of the material, led by Antonis Vadolas, education coordinator at CAC, Child and Adolescent's Center, coordinator of the project and of the second intellectual output IO2. Antonis presented the overall idea of the module, highlighting the relevance of providing the parents who will attend the training not only with background knowledge but also with practical and experiential tools and activities that can engage them.
2. the Guidelines for moderators and the recruitment of parents, led by Autismo Burgos in collaboration with Controvento. This topic opened a fruitful discussion between the partners, ending in some common points, that is, the lack of parents' previous experience in similar training and high motivation and commitment as main characteristics that should be present in parents for recruitment. As for the moderators, they need to have a minimum of 5 years of clinical experience with individuals with ASD and their parents and strong background knowledge in the field of autism.
3. the introduction to the third intellectual output IO3- IPAT self-training digital tool, led by Miguel Lancho, Coordinator of the I.T. and social network department in Autismo Burgos, who presented the preliminary outline and concept of the digital tool IPATT, the platform Moodle that will serve parents as digital self- training.



The online TPM III in Spain

The second day was divided into two main sessions: the workshop on best practices in working with parents, and the Steering committee meeting: Autismo Burgos started the session by presenting Miradas Program, aimed at the early screening and identification of autistic children, and two strategies of early intervention implemented IMPACT and PACT.

Following the workshop delivered by the Spanish partners, an international guest took the stage, Noor Seghers, from the University of Leuven, who introduced to the partners a best practice in working with parents of autistic children she is currently coordinating: the Magenta Project. The project has produced a very practical and useful toolbox aimed at supporting parents in dealing with difficulties, that Noor offered to share with the project goals.



The second part of day 2 of the online meeting was devoted to the Steering Committee meeting and the internal management of the IPAT project, covering the procedures, the risk assessment and management plan, the communication plan and finally the planning of the activities for the following months.

Parents' training in 2022

The IPAT Training Activity will be delivered in each partner country, between the end of February 2022 to the beginning of June, with 24 hours total duration. The activity will run in 8 meetings of 3 hours each; at least 1,5 hours per meeting will be dedicated to the discussion and interactive activities.

Two moderators, with extensive experience in autistic spectrum disorder, will be in charge of facilitating and coordinating the Training activity in each partner country. A common training of the moderators will be organized beforehand, in order to homogenize the delivery of the Training activity across partner countries.

Sixteen parents per country, 64 in total, of children with Autistic spectrum disorder will be the beneficiaries of the parents' training. They are being selected according to the criteria, as defined by the partners: parents are expected to be motivated, willing, and available to participate in and complete the Training Activity and without any previous exposure to a parental training program.

The parental stress and self-perceived quality of life will be assessed before and after the delivery of the Training. A satisfaction survey will be conducted at the end of the training activity in order to assess the participants' satisfaction with the Training activity and to identify potential remaining needs as well as points for improvement and modification.



What's next?

After studying the design of the IPAT Module which has been completed by the partners, parents who will participate in the IPAT Training will be selected according to the selection criteria set by the partners in the last transnational project meeting (TPM).

Moderators who are responsible for the implementation of IPAT Module, are now undergoing the selection process according to the criteria defined by the partnership.

In addition, the development of the Integrative Parents' Autism Self-Training Digital Tool "IPATT" (IO3) will run during the next months of 2022, followed by the piloting and testing of the tool after its translation into the 4 languages of the partner countries. The structure and content of the IPAT module will be adjusted so to become suitable for the digital channel. The Consortium, led on IO3 by Autismo Burgos, is now designing the digital platform that will host IPATT and will allow parents to self-train.



Follow the IPAT project on our online channels!

