

EPR Study Visit to Fundación SASM

Independent Living via Good Practices in Disability Inclusion, Community Support and Social Innovation

22 - 23 October 2026 (one day and a half)

Valencia, Spain
Fundación SASM

Objectives of the meeting

The aim of this study visit is to raise awareness of the European Strategy for the Rights of persons with Disabilities, learn from each other's good practices, discuss success factors and challenges and develop recommendations to address them. This study visit will focus on how disability inclusion, community support and social innovation practices can foster independent living for persons with disabilities and relevance of actions planned in the European Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as well as other EPR activities on the topic.

Fundación SASM

Since its establishment, Fundación SASM has worked to improve care for the recovery of people with functional diversity. To this end, it has made significant efforts to defend and develop resources dedicated to supporting individuals with functional diversity and mental health conditions, with the aim of facilitating their inclusion in society, promoting autonomy, and improving their quality of life.

With the opening in 2004 of specific resources for people with severe mental disorders—namely, the CEEM (a residential facility for people with mental health conditions) and a Day Center (a daytime support service for individuals with mental health needs)—the Foundation began to build a support network designed to address the diverse care needs of the people it serves, which were not fully covered by the existing network of resources at the time.

In December 2006, the General Directorate of SERVEF approved the Foundation to deliver six occupational training specialties. Since 2012, the CEEM facilities have been accredited to provide the following training programmes:

- Social and healthcare assistance for people at home
- Social and healthcare assistance for dependent persons in institutions
- Specialized care for people with Alzheimer's disease

Fundación SASM has remained aware that a comprehensive support network is needed not only for individuals with severe mental disorders, but also for those experiencing other forms of functional diversity that result in dependency.

In addition to planning the creation in the town of Sueca of a new residence with 20 places and three supported housing units (with four and seven places, respectively) for people with severe mental disorders, the Foundation decided in 2019 to expand its services to another population group requiring specialized, high-quality care due to dependency linked to functional diversity. Consequently, it submitted a proposal for the management of the Residence and Day Center for people with disabilities in Sueca.

Since October 2019, the SASM Foundation has been managing these services for people with disabilities in collaboration with the City Council of Sueca through a formal partnership arrangement.

All resources managed by the SASM Foundation operate as part of a coordinated network, with the aim of providing the community support necessary to ensure that care is as effective and functional as possible. This network is complemented by strong social and healthcare coordination between the Foundation and local public services, enabling the implementation of a community-based care model focused on recovery and full social inclusion. This approach helps ensure the protection of rights and promotes real and effective participation for people with functional diversity and mental health conditions.

Discover SASM's Services in the Study Visit

CEEM SASM (Cendroses) is a specialised residential facility providing comprehensive support for adults with severe mental health conditions who require medium- to long-term accommodation and rehabilitation. The centre promotes recovery-oriented, person-centred care, fostering autonomy, community participation, and social inclusion through multidisciplinary support, individualized rehabilitation plans, and meaningful daily activities. Its approach is based on respect for human rights, dignity, and the active involvement of each person in their own recovery process.

Galatea and Atenea are community-based supported housing services operated by SASM for people with severe mental health conditions. These homes provide individualized support in a normalized community environment, enabling residents to develop independent living skills while maintaining active participation in community life. Through person-centred planning and recovery-oriented practice, the services promote self-determination, social inclusion, and a gradual transition towards greater autonomy, offering the necessary support to help individuals live as independently as possible.

The **Functional Diversity Service** at SASM supports people with intellectual disabilities and other functional diversity needs through individualized interventions that promote autonomy, personal development, and social inclusion. The service offers tailored support in daily living, vocational activities, community participation, and skill development, with a strong focus on empowering individuals to achieve their personal goals and maximize their independence within their communities.

Background

The European Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030 (ESRPD, also referred to as the “European Disability Strategy”) is a key initiative launched by the European Commission in March 2021 to improve the lives of persons with disabilities and ensure the full enjoyment of their rights across the European Union. Published as a follow-up to the European Disability Strategy 2010–2020, it builds on the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and sets out a comprehensive framework of actions for the decade 2021–2030 aimed at promoting accessibility, Enjoying EU Rights, decent quality of life and independent living, equal access and non-discrimination, and promoting the rights of persons with disabilities globally. The Strategy is part of the EU's broader Union of Equality agenda and seeks to support the inclusion of persons with disabilities across all areas of life. It serves as a policy framework that encourages coordinated action and shared responsibility among EU institutions, Member States, and relevant stakeholders to advance disability rights and inclusion throughout Europe.

Services play a key role in the success of the European Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2021-2030). Several of the Strategy's priorities depend on the availability of accessible, affordable, and person-centred services that enable persons with disabilities to live independently, participate in their communities, access education and employment, and exercise their rights on an equal basis with others. The Strategy places particular emphasis on community-based support services, accessibility, and independent living, recognising that rights can only be fully realised when appropriate

services are available in practice. Service providers therefore have a key responsibility not only in delivering support but also in promoting inclusion, equality, and the full participation of persons with disabilities in society.

On 6 May 2026, the European Commission adopted the Communication “**Enhancing the Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities up to 2030**”, marking the mid-term review of the EU’s Disability Strategy 2021–2030. Building on progress achieved since 2021, the Communication aims to accelerate implementation and strengthen the impact of disability rights policies across the European Union. It identifies new priorities and flagship actions to address persistent barriers facing persons with disabilities, with a particular focus on accessibility, independent living, employment, participation in democratic life, and the use of emerging technologies.

Programme

Thursday, 22 October

Session 1: 11:00 - 17:15 CEST (Spanish Time)

Meeting location: Fundación SASM, Carrer de Terrateig, 5 Campanar 46015 Valencia

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 11:00 – 11:15 | Welcome and Opening Session <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome to participants• Introduction to the Study Visit <p><i>Vicente González, Founder of the Foundation, Representative of the Regional Directorate General for Disability</i>
<i>Alicia Gómez Campos, Secretary General of the European Platform for Rehabilitation</i></p> |
| 11:15 – 11:45 | Fundación SASM: Mission, Services and Access Pathways <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentation of the organisation and its support model <p><i>Susana Ortega, Mental Health Support Worker and European Rehabilitation Liaison & Cristina Cebolla, Social Worker.</i></p> |
| 11:45 – 12:00 | From Idea to Object: Creativity, Innovation and User Participation <p><i>Mara Ases, Mental Health Support Worker and Head of Arts & Crafts workshop “De la Idea al Objeto”.</i></p> |
| 12:00 – 12:30 | Esportsa: Promoting Inclusion through Sport <p><i>Noé Ases, Mental Health Support Worker</i>
<i>Arcadio Marín, Mental Health Support Worker and Peer to Peer Worker</i></p> |
| 12:30 – 13:30 | <i>Networking Lunch – Hosted by Inclucatering</i> |
| 13:30 – 14:00 | Inclucatering: Inclusive Employment and Social Enterprise <p><i>Laura Moreno, Psychologist</i></p> |
| 14:00 – 14:45 | ITI: Innovation and Technology for Social Impact <p><i>Patricia Pons, Human Computer Interaction Investigator</i></p> |

- 14:45 – 15:15 **AVATAC: Accessible Technologies and Innovative Support Solutions**
Cristina Cebolla, Social Worker
- 15:15 – 15:45 **Volunteering as a Tool for Social Inclusion**
Silvia De la Cruz, Psychologist
- 15:45 – 16:15 *Coffee break – Hosted by Inclucatering*
- 16:15 – 16:30 **European Commission presentation on new Independent Living initiatives in the Enhanced European Disability Strategy**
Olga Martinez de Briones, Policy Officer at Disability Unit of Directorate General of Justice and Consumers, European Commission (tbc)
- 16:30 – 17:15 **Exchange among participants and presentation of projects and good practices on Disability Inclusion, Community Support and Social Innovation.**
- 19:15 – 20:15 *Start of Guided Tour of Valencia. Meeting point tbc.*
- 20:30 *Informal dinner, at restaurant to be confirmed, at address to be confirmed.*

Friday, 23 October

Session 2: 8:30 - 14:30 CEST (Spanish time)

Meeting location: Fundación SASM facilities, Sueca, Valencia, Spain.

- 08:30 **Participant pick-up** – at entrance of Hotel Turia Valencia - Av/ Menéndez Pidal, 15 46009 Valencia.
- 9:20 – 12:20 **Study Visits to Fundación SASM Services**
Participants will visit a range of community-based services and initiatives developed by Fundación SASM, including:
- **Collaboration projects with the local municipality**
 - **CEEM SASM (Cendroses)**
 - **Galatea & Atenea**
 - **Functional Diversity Services**
- The visit will provide insights into person-centred support, community inclusion, employment pathways and independent living initiatives.
- 12:30 – 14:30 **Farewell Lunch** – Restaurant *La Granja* – Camí Vell de Cullera, 40 46410 Sueca, Valencia.
- 14:30 *Official closing of the study visit*

Practicalities

EPR can offer a subsidy to support members joining this study visit. The subsidies are one unit per member organisation. They are a limited number and are given on a first-come, first-served basis. Please indicate if you wish to take the subsidy in the registration form and contact Alicia Gómez Campos for further information.

To attend, please register [here](#) by 25 September. For more information, please contact Alicia Gómez Campos, agomezcampos@epr.eu, or Clara Beser Ramada, cbeser@epr.eu.

Hotel information: For those joining the study visit, **EPR will support their participation by covering accommodation costs at [Hotel Turia Valencia](#) for 2 nights during the study visit.** Please note that EPR has booked a limited number of rooms and they will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis considering the moment of registration to the study visit through the registration form.

For more information about the European Pillar of Social Rights and the Disability Strategy:

- [European Commission Communication “Enhancing the strategy for the rights of persons with disabilities up to 2030” \(2026\)](#)
- [EPR Study on Support for Independent Living of Persons with Disabilities \(2025\)](#)
- [EPR Briefing – Guidance on Independent Living: one year after publication \(2025\)](#)
- [EPR Publication – Pathways to Independent Living \(2024\)](#)
- [EPR Briefing – Building Quality Services: Improving Support for People with Disabilities in Europe \(2024\)](#)
- [Summary of EPR Key Inputs to the European Commission’s Study on Alternative Models of Employment for Persons with Disabilities \(2024\)](#)
- [EPR Short Briefing on the EU Disability Employment Package \(2023\)](#)
- [EPR Short Briefing on the EU Disability Strategy \(2022\)](#)
- [UNCRPD Committee - Guidelines on deinstitutionalization, including in emergencies \(2022\)](#)
- [European Commission website on the European Pillar of Social rights Action Plan \(2021\)](#)
- [European Commission Communication “Union of Equality: Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030” \(2021\)](#)
- [EPR Analytical Paper – the European Pillar of Social Rights and service delivery for persons with disabilities \(2017\)](#)