

World Down Syndrome Day celebration 2026

TOGETHER AGAINST LONELINESS

Wednesday, 25th March

9:30 or 12:00 Accreditation of participants. **Please bring the ID card or passport used for registration.**
Location: Europe Station, Place du Luxembourg.

9:30 – 13:00 **PART I I: COFFEE INITIATIVE by Quaestor Miriam LEXMANN MEP**
Beneficiaries of Vivre & Grandir Asbl will join in service the EP cafeterias staff with President of the European Parliament Roberta Metsola in attendance.
Location: Forum Bar (VoxBox bar) and Hemicycle bar (Mickey Mouse)

13:30 – 15:00 **PART II: FORMAL CONFERENCE co-hosted by MEPs Rosa Estaràs and Alex Agius Saliba**
Location: SPINELLI 5E3

13:30 – 14:00 | Opening Session

- 13:30 – 13:35 **Dinka Vukovic**, President of EDSA
- 13:35 – 13:50 Opening remarks by **MEP Rosa Estaràs (EPP)** and **MEP Alex Agius Saliba (S&D)**.
- 13:50– 14:00 **Video presentation.** Loneliness & 20th Anniversary Milestone of UNCRPD by **Jérôme Trillard**, self-advocate from France.

14:00 – 14:30 | Session I: Loneliness & Belonging

- 14:00 – 14:20 **Self-advocates: Lived experiences on loneliness**
 - **Ana Paula Kovacevic**, Self-advocate from Croatia; EDSA
 - **Maria James**, Self-advocate from Malta; EU for Trisomy 21
- 14:20 – 14:30 **Loneliness of people with intellectual disabilities and their families**
 - **Esther Volleberg** – Self-advocate; Inclusion Europe
 - **Inge Volleberg** – Researcher; Inclusion Europe

14:30 – 14:45 | Session II: Data & Findings

The impact of loneliness among people with Down syndrome and their families

- **José Gutiérrez**, Vice President of EDSA

14:45– 15:00 | Closing Session

- Closing remarks by **MEP Alex Agius (S&D)**
- Q&A