

Results

Many years of experience in realizing the work engagement and employment program have demonstrated numerous effects on various groups within society: people with intellectual disabilities, their families, the business sector and society at large.

The effects are:

- Increased personal, social and work skills and more productive lives for our beneficiaries. Increased quality of life for the beneficiaries and their families.
- Contributed to the business sector's growing commitment to social corporate responsibility, where success is not measured only by good business results but also by the businesses' responsibility to the community and its citizens. Companies are increasingly recognizing that through work engagement they have mobilized a new group of motivated, responsible, efficient and sociable workers.
- Citizens have gained positive opinions about our beneficiaries through contact with them in their workplaces. This has resulted in changes of opinions from the general population and greater acceptance of people with intellectual and mental disabilities in society.



Idea and Realization

Creative and Educational Center (KEC) is a citizens' association, established in 2002, devoted to people with intellectual disabilities. Our mission is to establish partnerships with the community and to help each person realize their potential, talents and assist them to contribute to the community.

KEC's goals and tasks are: to improve the quality of life of our beneficiaries, to prepare them for independent living, to encourage social inclusion through work engagement and employment and help the general population overcome its prejudices. KEC has developed in three directions: day center and respite care, work engagement and employment program and a social enterprise.



Day Center

The day center is held daily in a space that was given to the organization by the City of Belgrade and renovated by the US Embassy in Belgrade. KEC's professional team, in cooperation with parents and guardians, organizes a wide variety of creative, educational and recreational activities. Through these programs the beneficiaries are constantly building their life and work skills. One form of help and assistance that is offered to the beneficiaries and their families is respite care. This temporary care for the beneficiaries provides relief for their usual caregivers and also contributes to increasing the beneficiaries' level of independence and the better functioning of the family unit.



Work Engagement and Employment

Since 2004 KEC has put a special accent on the social inclusion of our users through work training, work engagement and employment on the open labor market. More than 160 people have participated in this program over the past 10 years. They have worked in more than 30 different companies, institutions, establishments and firms throughout Belgrade. Work engagement in public places is a successful form of rehabilitation and therapy and also an effective means of achieving social integration. Through work and contact with the people each individual finds meaning in his/her life. KEC's beneficiaries have the need to realize their basic human and civil right to work, to express themselves, prove themselves, use their knowledge, talents, energy and abilities for the general good of the society in which they live. Through work each person can contribute to the advancement of society and to realize equality with others in the community.



Social Enterprise

KEC developed the social enterprise, within its work-occupation therapy, in order to create new work places for its users and to ensure the organization's sustainability. The organization experimented with a variety of products including, pet snacks, medicinal plants and most recently the fruit roll in 2013. Fruit rolls are 100% natural product made from dried fruit, without any added sugar, additives or preservatives. In 2014 KEC established, Gardenika d.o.o. for the production and sale of the fruit rolls. This business employs and gives work engagement to disabled and other marginalized citizens.

