

Transition from sheltered employment to the general labour market: current training and counselling practice

Implementation, results and implications from focus group interviews in
Belgium, Cyprus, Germany and Slovenia

WP3 / Activity 1 Focus groups and report

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1 Introduction

This report discusses the outcomes of focus groups held in Belgium, Cyprus, Germany, and Slovenia as part of the Include³ project. Include³ focuses on the transitions of individuals with cognitive disabilities from sheltered employment to the broader spectrum of the general labour market. The aim of the Include³ project is to develop a method (Include³ method) and a curriculum for training staff in sheltered workshops and counselling practitioners who prepare the individuals with cognitive disabilities for the transition and often accompany them during the transition period. The Include³ project has already conducted desk research (cf. Keller, Körtek & Schulz, 2023) and formulated policy documents.

This Report was conducted for the needs of the Include³ Work Package 3. The overall aim of Work Package 3, is to conduct preliminary desk and field research, identify the needs and gaps in all participating countries in order to draft the guidelines for the development of the Include³ method. The method aims to facilitate the alignment of the strengths of individuals with cognitive disabilities in workshops with the demands of the labour market through counselling and vocational training. The guidelines for the method should also define principles and standards against which the process must be measured, as well as expected outcomes. The overarching question of work package 3 is therefore:

- How should the Include³ method / a curriculum for guidance practitioners be designed?

Within the third work package, the focus group interviews conducted (work package 3, activity 1) had a pivotal role, as their results serve as the main basis for the development of the guidelines. All partners meticulously adhered to the collectively agreed-upon guidelines for conducting effective focus groups. To ensure consistency in methods, key elements, and the information sought, the consortium developed specific questions addressing the overarching issue. The answers to these questions served as the foundation for the formulation of comprehensive guidelines.

The derived questions are:

- What instructions and materials are needed to integrate people with disabilities from the workshops into the labour market (focus on counselling)?
- What can guidance on adapting vocational education and training to prepare for the labour market (focus on vocational education and training) look like?
- What should the network work look like?

The focus groups were conducted in four European countries, to gain insights into current education and guidance practices and the wishes of all those involved in the transition process. The focus groups took place in Cyprus, Slovenia, Belgium and Germany. The Focus Group are considered a part of the activities included in the third work package (Activity 1) in the Include³ project.

A special feature of the focus groups is the inclusive and co-productive approach. In the focus groups, the experiences and wishes of people with cognitive disabilities in sheltered employment are the main focus and the consortium's priority. Therefore, In the initial focus groups (Focus Group A), only experts in their respective fields were interviewed. Subsequently, in the second round of focus groups (Focus Group B), the findings were enhanced by incorporating insights from additional experts representing employers, sheltered vocational training, and inclusion perspectives. This focus group report has the status of a transnational working paper that provides valuable insights for the development of guidelines.

Structure of this report:

Chapter 2 describes the structure of the focus groups A and B by generally pointing out the methodology (chapter 2.1), selection of participants (chapter 2.2), data collection (chapter 2.3) and conditions of implementation (chapter 2.4). Chapter 2.4 puts emphasis on the analysis of collected data. Chapter 2.6 describes participants and special features of focus group A. Chapter 2.7 gives deeper insights in participants and special features of focus group B.

Chapter 3 analyses and summarizes the results of focus group A (people with disabilities). Chapter 3.1 presents the results of guidance on labour market integration. Chapter 3.2 deals with vocational training and preparation for the general labour market. Chapter 3.3 describes which work materials are used in an international context and chapter 3.4 describes networks for integration into the general labour market. The evaluation of the developed materials "explanatory video and podcast" from the workpackage 2 is presented in chapter 3.5. A final summary of the results from focus group A can be found in 3.6.

Following the same concept, the results of focus groups B are shown in chapter 4.

In chapter 5, the results of focus groups A and B on the three key questions raised at the beginning, which are of high relevance for the development of the Include³ method, are answered across countries (chapters 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3). Chapter 5.4 presents further findings.

In chapter 6, implications for the Include³ method are derived from the key research questions on counselling, vocational training and networks that were answered in Chapter 5 based on the results of focus groups A and B from the four countries.

The report concludes with a final appreciative summary in Chapter 7.

2 Description of the focus groups

A total of 59 different people were interviewed across both focus groups in all countries (a minimum number of 45 people was specified in the application). In focus group A, a total of 25 people with intellectual disabilities were interviewed in all countries (the application specified a minimum number of 15 people for focus group A). In focus groups B, a total of 46 people were interviewed in all countries (the application specified a minimum number of 36 people for focus groups B). 12 people took part in both focus group A and focus group B and can therefore only be counted once (the application specified a minimum number of 12 people from focus group A in focus group B).

Table 1. Number of participants in focus group A, B and in total

Feature	Belgium	Cyprus	Germany	Slovenia	Total
Participants in focus group A	7	7	4	7	25
Participants in focus group B	11	12	13	10	46
Participants from focus group A in focus group B	3	7	2	0	12
Different participants in total	15	12	15	21	59

2.1 Methodology

Focus groups are a qualitative approach. They are used to gain a deeper understanding of selected topics or problems with a group of people (cf. Kitzinger, 1994, p. 103; Nyumba, Wilson, Derrick & Mukherjee, 2018, p. 20) by discussing topics and issues.

Focus groups can also be used in participatory research and strengthen the empowerment and ownership of those involved in participatory research (see Minkler, 2005, p. ii7, cited in Bär, Kasberg, Geers & Clar, 2020, p. 208; Unger, 2014, p. 44 ff., cited in Bär et al., 2020, p. 208). Another advantage of focus groups is the ability to capture different opinions with limited resources. Focus groups also encourage discussion and dialogue between participants (cf. Rädiker & Kuckartz, 2019, p. 217). Kitzinger (1994, p. 104) attributes an important role in the research process to this interaction between the participants.

2.2 Selection of participants

The selection of participants depends on the selection criteria previously defined by the researchers, which in turn have an influence on the group composition (cf. Lamnek & Krell, 2016, p. 409). When selecting participants, homogeneous, artificial groups can be created or heterogeneous, natural groups can be selected or put together. In homogeneous groups, the people are similar in one or more relevant characteristics (cf. Lamnek & Krell, 2016, p. 410). Heterogeneous groups contain participants who differ from one another. Natural groups also form a group structure outside the focus group (cf. Lamnek & Krell, 2016, p. 407). Artificial groups were put together specifically for the focus group (cf. Lamnek & Krell, 2016, p. 410). Nevertheless, natural individual groups can also occur within artificial overall groups if, for example, the focus group participants are determined according to different criteria.

Bär et al. (2020, p. 217) state that prior knowledge is required to select the participants.

The literature contains varying information on the optimum group size. On the one hand, the group must not be too small so as not to diminish the knowledge gained. At the same time, if the group is too large, there is a risk that some participants will hide behind others and not speak up. Lamnek and Krell (2016, p. 408) recommend an optimal group size of five to twelve participants.

We decided on a group size of at least five people in focus group A (criterion: people with intellectual disabilities in workshops as experts on their own behalf) and at least twelve people in focus group B (criterion: experts on their own behalf, employers, inclusion experts, experts in vocational education and training).

2.3 Data collection

For data collection, previously defined questions (cf. Nyumba et al., 2018, p.) are used in the form of a guideline (cf. Rädicker & Kuckartz, 2019, p. 218). Bär et al. (2020, p. 216) describe that in participatory projects, the guidelines can also be developed directly by the participatory researchers or participants.

We used a guideline that was created based on our overarching project research questions.

For the implementation of focus groups A and B, the project consortium agreed upon some common ground - conditions, which were set as the general instruction guidelines for the effective and efficient implementation of the focus groups. In line with the project application, the instruction guidelines stipulated that focus groups A and B were to be conducted in Cyprus, Slovenia and jointly in Germany/Belgium. The focus groups in Germany and Belgium were conducted independently to produce a more comprehensive dataset and mitigate potential challenges associated with a hybrid approach in Germany/Belgium. This approach aimed to minimize potential cautious responses from participants, ensuring a more candid and insightful exploration of the subject matter.

A semi-standardized guideline (see Appendix I for the guideline for focus group A and Appendix II for the guideline for focus group B) ensured that all topics were addressed and that a natural flow of discussion could develop as flexibly as possible. The instruction guidelines included an introduction of all present interviewees and addressed specific research questions formulated at the outset. In addition to introductions, the discussions covered four key areas: (1) guidance and materials for the integration of individuals with disabilities into the general labour market, (2) recommendations for adapting vocational training to align with the demands of the general labour market, (3) networks for facilitating integration into the general labour market, and (4) evaluation of the quality and usability of materials from work package 2.

The following questions were used for focus group A:

Anonymous short description:

- Age?
- How long in a sheltered workshop?
- Have you had any experience in the general labour market?
- Was the integration process based on the general labour market?
- Industry?

Guidance and materials needed to integrate people with disabilities from workshops into the labour market:

- How were you prepared for the general labour market (actual-state-analysis)?
- What kind of wish do you have, when someone talks to you about your future on the general labour market (target analysis)?
- What materials did you use to inform yourself about the general labour market (actual state analysis)?
- Which materials would you like to have (e.g. worksheets/checklist CV, checklist "My first day at work") (target analysis)?

Guidance on adapting vocational education and training to prepare for the labour market:

- How will you be prepared for the general labour market (internship/field jobs) (actual state analysis)?
- What kind of preparation do you want for your workplace outside the sheltered workshop? (target analysis, in reference to the answers in question part 1)?

Networking for integration into the general labour market:

- With which persons and organizations (with whom) do you have contact for your internship (actual state analysis)?
- What would you like to see when different organizations talk to you (target analysis)?

Quality and usability of the products from WP2 of the Include³ project:

- How do you like the video?
- How do you like the podcast?

The following questions were used in focus group B:

Anonymous short description (questions for employers, inclusion experts and experts in the vocational training in sheltered workshops):

- Which organization?
- Exact job title?
- How long already employed in the field of inclusion?

Guidance and materials needed to integrate people with disabilities from workshops into the labour market:**Questions for employers:**

- How were you counselled on hiring your new employee from the sheltered workshop (ACTUAL state analysis)?
- What would you like to see (TARGET analysis)?
- Which information materials did you use before hiring your new employee from the sheltered workshop (ACTUAL state analysis)?
- What would you like to see (TARGET analysis)?

Questions for inclusion experts and experts in the vocational training in sheltered workshops:

- What counselling concept/instructions exist to integrate people from the workshops into the general labour market (ACTUAL state analysis)?
- What would you like to see (target analysis)?
- What materials (e.g. checklists, worksheets, diagrams) are available to integrate people with disabilities into the labour market (ACTUAL state analysis)?
- Which materials would you like to see (target analysis)?

Questions for participants from focus group A:

- What is your opinion about the statement of...?
- What is your experience?

Guidance on adapting vocational education and training to prepare for the labour market:**Questions for employers:**

- What is your assessment of how the persons were prepared for the workplace with you (ACTUAL state analysis)?
- Do you have any suggestions on how the preparation should be in general and individually (TARGET analysis)?

Questions for inclusion experts and experts in the vocational training in sheltered workshops:

- Is there a vocational training concept to prepare for the general labour market (ACTUAL state analysis)?
- What else would you like to see (TARGET analysis)?

Questions for participants from focus group A:

- What is your opinion about the statement of...?
- What is your experience?

Networking for integration into the general labour market:

Questions for employers:

- Which actors are involved when you hire a person from a sheltered workshop? (actual state)
- How should the cooperation between the actors look like from your point of view? (target)

Questions for inclusion experts and experts in the vocational training in sheltered workshops:

- Which actors are involved in integration into the general labour market (actual state analysis)?
- What ideas do you have for the networking of the various actors (TARGET analysis)?

Questions for participants from focus group A:

- What is your opinion about the statement of...?
- What is your experience?

Quality and usability of the products from WP2 of the Include³ project:

Questions for employers, inclusion experts and experts in the vocational training in sheltered workshops:

- How do you evaluate the materials (ACTUAL state analysis)?

Questions for participants from focus group A:

- What is your opinion about the statement of...?
- What is your experience?

The project consortium provided evaluation guidelines and an evaluation table for the evaluation of the focus group interview results. These materials can be found in appendix III.

2.4 Conditions of implementation

Nyumba et al. (2018, p. 23) describe (depending on the number of questions and participants) an ideal duration of approx. 1-2 hours per focus group, as a longer duration can lead to discussion exhaustion among the participants.

One or two moderators lead the focus groups (cf. Rädiker & Kuckartz, 2019, p. 218).

All focus groups (with the exception of focus group B in Belgium) took place on the premises of a sheltered workshop or a foundation and therefore in the familiar surroundings of the people with disabilities interviewed. Focus groups A and B were conducted one after the other. In all countries (except Germany), the time between focus groups A and B was between one week (Cyprus) and 4.5 months (Belgium). In all countries (except Cyprus), focus group A took place first.

All focus group interviews were accompanied by two moderators from the respective project partner. One person asked the questions, moderated the discussion and ensured that all participants had their say. The other person ensured the documentation and checked that all question areas were addressed.

The focus groups themselves took place in a disruption-free environment.

Prior to the focus groups, all participants were informed about the project and asked for their consent to the data collection and recording. The main data collection was ensured by notes taken by the moderator. Germany also recorded focus group B with the transcription of MS Teams. The Slovenian moderators also informed the interviewees about different employment systems for people with disabilities before the start of the discussion. Throughout the interview, the moderators showcased specific work results through podcasts and explanatory videos from the Include³ project. This presentation aimed to gather the respondents' opinions on the materials afterward.

After the focus groups, certificates of participation were handed out and attendance lists were signed.

2.5 Analysis

Rädiker and Kuckartz (2019, p. 226) propose various levels of analysis for the analysis of focus groups. These are "the level of the topics, the level of the individual participants, the level of the group interactions and the level of the moderators' approach" (Rädiker & Kuckartz, 2019, p. 226). They also describe that different evaluation methods can be used (cf. Rädiker & Kuckartz, 2019, p. 218).

In the evaluation, we focussed exclusively on the level of topics in order to be able to derive conclusions for the Include³ curriculum from the results. We used a simple form of qualitative content analysis as the method of analysis. We went through the material and assigned relevant text passages to corresponding categories in a category system.

The results were analysed in two steps. Each partner country conducted focus group interviews A and B as already explained, analysed the results, and prepared an internal national focus group report. These national reports form the basis of this international secondary analysis and this overall report. The qualitative structured content analysis method was applied to each report during the analysis and a comparative presentation was then drawn up.

2.6 Participants and special features of focus group A

A total of four focus groups A took place in Belgium, Cyprus, Germany and Slovenia. The focus groups comprised a total of 25 people with intellectual disabilities and consisted of women and men. The interviewees in focus group A covered a broad spectrum between the ages of 21 and 56. Their range of experience also varied. They were in contact with workshops for people with disabilities. Their experiences ranged from being assigned to the vocational training area of a sheltered workshop with internships in companies in the general labour market (Germany) to subsidized employment in companies in the general labour market as a rehabilitated adult (Cyprus). The respondents from the Belgian focus groups A, were working in the workshops for disabled people of two inclusion companies and the respondents from the Slovenian focus groups A were participating in a social inclusion program in a workshop for people with disabilities.

Table 2. Expert group in focus group A

Expert group in focus group A	Belgium	Cyprus	Germany	Slovenia	Total
People with intellectual disabilities	7	7	4	7	25

Table 3. Characteristics of participants in focus group A

Characteristics of participants in focus group A	Belgium	Cyprus	Germany	Slovenia
Age range	23-43 years	Approx. 29-59 years	21-26 years	24-56 years
Gender	5 men and 2 women	Men and women	1 man, 3 women	Men and women
Current status	Employees in the workshops for people with disabilities of two inclusive companies	Rehabilitated adults in the support of a foundation	Participants in the vocational training area of a workshop for people with disabilities	Participants in the social inclusion program in a workshop for people with disabilities
Professional experience spectrum	Some previous experience on the primary labour market, then transfer to the sheltered workshop or from the special school directly to the workshop and internships; professional experience in the following sectors: Animal care, painting, public administration, container service	Participants are employed in various positions and areas such as booking agencies, supermarkets, church offices, bakeries, pharmaceutical companies and fast food restaurants on the primary labour market through a support program of the workshop for people with disabilities	Only experience through internships on the primary labour market, e.g. in sales, in a dog salon and in horticulture	Before the program, short-term jobs in the primary labour market, e.g. in environmental management, the textile industry, car cleaning, bookbinding
Date of the focus group	25.05.2023	25.09.2023	19.07.2023	07.06.2023

Characteristics of participants in focus group A	Belgium	Cyprus	Germany	Slovenia
Place of implementation	ADAPTA Eupen (sheltered workshop)	CSIFoundation Nicosia (Foundation)	Workshop for people with disabilities in Baden-Württemberg (sheltered workshop)	Ozara d.o.o. Maribor (sheltered workshop)

2.7 Participants and special features of focus group B

A total of four focus groups B took place in Belgium, Cyprus, Germany and Slovenia. The participants in focus group B consisted of inclusion experts, vocational training experts, employers and people with cognitive disabilities who had already been able to express their opinions on the topics in focus group A. A total of 46 people in all four countries took part in focus group B. A total of 15 people with intellectual disabilities, 16 inclusion experts, 8 employers and 7 vocational training experts were represented.

It was already noticeable in the introductory round of the focus groups that respondents could also be assigned to several areas. For example, inclusion experts were represented in Germany, but they also had interns with disabilities themselves and could therefore also be assigned to employers. Overall, the minimum number of participants specified in the application was met in all expert groups in focus group B, even though no vocational training experts took part in the focus groups in Belgium and Cyprus and no employers in Cyprus. The persons with disabilities in Slovenian focus group B did not participate in focus group A. Nevertheless, due to the large number of experts, it can be assumed that focus group B produced usable data material.

Table 4. Expert group of focus group B

Expert group of focus group B	Belgium	Cyprus	Germany	Slovenia	Total
People with intellectual disabilities	3	7	2	3	15
Inclusion experts	4	5	4	3	16
Employers	4	-	3	1	8
Experts in vocational education and training	-	-	4	3	7

Expert group of focus group B	Belgium	Cyprus	Germany	Slovenia	Total
Total	11	12	13	10	46

The interviewees had a wide range of professional experience in the field of inclusion. For example, people from social assistance, employment services, companies, coordination and as experts in their respective fields represented in the focus groups B. In Cyprus, psychologists, career counselors, inclusion experts and other professionals with relevant expertise took part. The interviewees from the German focus groups B came from vocational training, job coaching, integration services, inclusive projects, and companies, as well as as people with cognitive disabilities. Respondents in Slovenia brought expertise from inclusion activities, vocational training, social inclusion, the employment sector (employment services and companies for people with disabilities) and as members of the cognitively disabled community.

Table 5. Characteristics of participants in focus group B

Characteristics of participants in focus group B	Belgium	Cyprus	Germany	Slovenia
Professional experience spectrum	Social assistance, job placement, coordination, companies, experts on their own behalf	Psychologists, careers advisors, inclusion experts, experts in their own right	Vocational training, job coaching, specialist integration service, inclusive projects and companies, experts in their own right	Expertise from inclusion activities, vocational training, social inclusion, employment sector (job placement and companies for people with disabilities), professionals with relevant expertise
Date of the focus group	12.10.2023	19.09.2023	19.07.2023	06.06.2023
Place of implementation	Weser dam Eupen (conference room)	CSIFoundation Nicosia (Foundation)	Workshop for people with disabilities in Baden-Württemberg (sheltered workshop)	Ozara d.o.o. Murska Sobota (sheltered workshop)

3 Results of focus group A

The interview results from focus group A in Belgium, Cyprus, Germany and Slovenia are presented below. The participants of Focus Group A were exclusively individuals with cognitive impairments who served as experts in their respective fields. They possess professional expertise in their chosen career paths and were asked to share their experiences and preferences regarding integration into the labour market, particularly from the perspective of transitioning from sheltered workshops.

In Belgium, all seven interviewees (aged between 23 and 43) with cognitive impairments work in a workshop for people with disabilities. Two of them would like to work on the general labour market, two are severely impaired in their abilities. All seven interviewees with cognitive impairments (aged between 20 and 59) had between three to fourteen years of work experience in Cyprus in the fields of administration, sales, pharmacy, food retail and system catering. They received training, support and professional guidance through an integration program run by the foundation and continued to receive support once they had successfully integrated into the labour market. In Germany, all four interviewees with cognitive impairments had already completed an internship in the service sector or in the skilled trades, were between 21 and 26 years old and were undergoing vocational training in a sheltered workshop (n=3) or working in a workshop (n=1). Three out of four respondents would like to acquire a work placement at the general labour market. In Slovenia, the seven interviewees with cognitive impairments (aged between 24 and 56) are taking part in a social integration program with an individual retention period of one to 15 years.

The presentation of the results ends in chapter 3.6 with an appraising summary based on the available secondary data.

3.1 Counselling for integration in the general labour market

Belgium: In East Belgium, counselling services for people with disabilities are provided centrally by the Service for Independent Living (DSL). Young people who have completed special school contact the DSL on their own initiative. During a comprehensive survey spanning several hours, the ICF tool is employed to assess interests, workload, and abilities. The results point the way for their future career and are a central component of the counselling. All interviewees have completed the ICF tool. Depending on the degree of restriction, recommendations are made for attending a day care centre, employment in a sheltered workshop or the offer of an internship or training in the private sector.

Cyprus: In order to ensure successful integration, the interviewees received intensive support and counselling from the job coaches at the beginning of their employment. The interviewees expressed their proficiency in managing both the professional and social requirements of their workplaces. Additionally, job coaches were readily accessible to provide support in the rare event of a crisis, serving as intermediaries during discussions with the company and proposing collaborative solutions. After the induction period and in order to strengthen self-esteem, counselling and support services are provided as required in the spirit of empowerment, with the job counsellors also carrying out visits to their workplace to ensure that everything runs smoothly and offer their support in case it is needed. The content of the counselling service includes identifying skills and interests, career planning, motivation and application procedures.

Germany: Job coaching at the Sheltered workshop provides counselling on integration into the labour market. The counselling and work materials are related to the general requirements of the labour market, the individual internship position and context-related vocational training. The interviewees were intensively prepared for their internship. This included the preparation of application materials, practicing job interviews, exchanging information on dealing with superiors, etc. The interviewees emphasized that the counselling itself should be individual and without time pressure. It should also respond to wishes, fears and concerns and not create any pressure.

Slovenia: As part of the one-year preliminary rehabilitation program, individual counselling, career planning and support in the search for an apprenticeship or job are provided. The guidance consistently incorporates motivational elements. The figure "Counselling on integration into the labour market" shows the key messages:

Table 6. Counselling for integration in the general labour market

Criteria of comparison	Belgium	Cyprus	Germany	Slovenia
Counselling for integration in the general labour market	<p>Counselling from DSL</p> <p>All special needs students go through the ICF tool</p> <p>Desires and abilities are assessed using a questionnaire as a tool which lasts several hours.</p> <p>The result of the ICF tool is the basis for further professional careers</p>	<p>Close support from integration and career experts (job coaches) from a foundation</p> <p>Participants receive general and individual counselling, personal motivation and individual coaching</p> <p>Career planning for the general labour market</p> <p>Close contact with companies and offer conflict resolution</p> <p>Support after integration on request - Strengthening self-esteem and empowerment</p> <p>Carrying out company visits</p>	<p>Counselling from job coaches in the Sheltered workshop, possibly also others</p> <p>Counselling on the requirements of the job market, the internship position, the application process and relevant career knowledge</p> <p>Counselling should be individual and without time pressure</p> <p>Counselling should be person-centric and not create pressure</p>	<p>Counselling as part of the one-year rehabilitation process</p> <p>everyone receives individual counselling</p> <p>personal motivation, career planning,</p> <p>Support in the search for training and work</p>

3.2 Vocational education and training to prepare for the general labour market

Belgium: Internship opportunities in skilled trades are provided in special schools. Participation in school-based work placements enabled the individuals to identify personal preferences.

Cyprus: Before starting their careers, all interviewees received appropriate training and support to promote, develop and improve useful interpersonal skills and abilities. All interviewees noted that their unique characteristics, talents, skills, needs and desires were respected. This is particularly evident when looking for a suitable job that might suit them. Learning content on the job market included general requirements such as technical terms and work ethics. Equally helpful was the provision of relevant information and materials on the application process, such as creating CVs and practicing role plays for job interviews.

Germany: The interviewees stated that they were prepared for the labour market in a group or individual setting. This involved practical vocational and internship-related learning content. Their personal characteristics and interests were taken into account. Educational sessions or individual coaching are given on work virtues such as punctuality, reliability and dealing with colleagues and superiors.

Slovenia: The interviewees underwent a practical vocational and personal aptitude assessment during the rehabilitation process in preparation for work or employment on the labour market. The main focus was on developing social skills and abilities.

After participation, their work results were evaluated and their work performance was assessed, with this aspect accounting for around 30% of all respondents. Many are interested in working on the labour market. Based on the results, most of them would like to work in the general labour market once or twice a week or for a few hours a day. The main aim of the social inclusion program is to promote employment and ensure that the ability to work is maintained. The work assignments include simple production work, simple maintenance work and landscaping, as well as creative workshops (sewing, drawing, sculpture and others).

The key statements made by respondents can be found in the figure "Vocational education and training":

Table 6. Vocational education and training to prepare for the general labour market

Criteria of comparison	Belgium	Cyprus	Germany	Slovenia
Vocational education and training to prepare for the general labour market	<p>Special schools already offer internships in the skilled trades.</p> <p>Preferences can be determined through internships</p>	<p>Appropriate training is provided before employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of social skills and abilities Consideration of their individual characteristics 	<p>Preparation by the the discussion of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> personal characteristics and interests Work virtues, the performance of practical vocational activities and 	<p>Preparation for training and work as part of the rehabilitation process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of social skills and abilities Practical professional skills

Criteria of comparison	Belgium	Cyprus	Germany	Slovenia
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching of labour market-related learning content: general requirements, technical terms, application procedures 	vocational training	<p>After participation: evaluation of the work results and determination of work efficiency (here 30%)</p> <p>Interest in working on the labour market</p> <p>Social inclusion program with the main objective of employment and maintaining the ability to work</p>

3.3 Materials for preparation for the general labour market

Belgium: The ICF tool is used in Belgium. The associated materials are integrated accordingly. No other mentions were made by the respondents.

Cyprus: An especially designed and tailored assessment tool (questionnaire) is utilized, among with individual sessions where specialized attention, material and support is given to the individuals according to their own unique traits and desires.

Germany: The interviewees stated that the CV is prepared jointly. Everyone also received a work folder in which the work materials that were prepared in the preparatory lessons are to be filed. These include application documents and vocational materials.

Slovenia: In Slovenia, various materials are used to determine suitability as part of the assessment tool.

The core statements can be found in the "Materials" figure below.

Table 7. Materials for preparation for the general labour market

Criteria of comparison	Belgium	Cyprus	Germany	Slovenia
Materials for preparation for the general labour market	ICF tool and associated materials Otherwise no mention	Especially designed assessment tool and further Individualised tailored support and/or material	Joint creation of a CV Provision of a work folder in which all materials are stored.	Assessment tools for determining suitability and work efficiency

3.4 Networking for integration into the general labour market

Belgium: Contacts are bundled via the DSL.

Cyprus: The network work is essentially supported by the foundation. The interviewees are in close contact with the foundation's job coaches. In individual cases, networking is extended to informal caregivers, such as family members or the guardian. In the companies, the interviewees are in contact with their superiors and colleagues.

Germany: The job coach plays a central role in the integration into the internship. They take over the technical and interdisciplinary preparation for the job market in the workshop. A trusting relationship between the job coaches and the people with cognitive impairments plays a key role here. The interviewees would like to have a permanent contact person for the transition to the primary labour market.

Slovenia: The internship is initiated primarily via the social enterprise in which the rehabilitation program is carried out.

The figure "Networking" presents the country-specific findings in a pregnant manner:

Table 8. Networking

Criteria of comparison	Belgium	Cyprus	Germany	Slovenia
Networking	Bundling of contacts via the DSL	Close contact between the foundation's job coaches and the vocationally rehabilitated persons If required: informal caregivers, such as relatives or legal guardians, and in the company: Superiors, colleagues	the job coach has a central role. Makes contact with potential internship companies	Initiation of the internship primarily through the social organization

3.5 Quality and usability of the materials from work package 2

Belgium: The explanatory video shows the counselling and placement process in East Belgium in an informative and detailed way. It was very well received by the interviewees, and they did not mention any suggestions for improvement. All of them would also show the video to their friends and acquaintances. No mention was made of the podcast.

Cyprus: Respondents in Cyprus enthusiastically received and praised the video and podcast. They found the material user-friendly and the stories captivating. The content is both entertaining and provides valuable information.

Germany: The explanatory video was rated as clear by the German respondents. As the German-language video mainly presents the Belgian counselling system, they noted that it should be adapted to the specific country. The podcast was rated as good but "too long". It is very informative, so it will be of interest to those who want or need more in-depth information on the job coaching process.

Slovenia: The explanatory video describes the Slovenian rehabilitation program and the individual rehabilitation process using a fictitious case study. The interviewees rated the material as vivid and were able to see themselves in the process with their own experiences when watching it. The podcast was not mentioned.

The characteristics for "Usability and quality of materials AP2" are illustrated in the following figure:

Table 9. Quality and usability of materials of work package 2

Criteria of comparison	Belgium	Cyprus	Germany	Slovenia
Quality and usability of materials of work package 2	<p>Video was very well received</p> <p>All respondents would recommend it to others</p> <p>For podcast: no mention</p>	<p>The video and podcast were rated very highly.</p> <p>Material is user-friendly</p> <p>Stories are captivating</p> <p>Contents are very informative</p>	<p>Video is clear, should be adapted to the specific country</p> <p>Podcast: too long</p>	<p>Explanatory video clearly shows the entire rehabilitation process</p> <p>No mention of podcast</p>

3.6 Summary of results from focus groups A of all countries

Belgium: The career path that young people with cognitive impairments can and want to take after leaving special school in East Belgium is determined for the first time by the DSL as part of its counselling and support services by participating in the ICF diagnostic tool. The results of the diagnosis are followed by individual counselling and recommendations for the next steps. This can be attending a day centre for severely impaired people, working in a workshop or an internship or employment on the general labour market. Although a minimum wage is paid in the workshop for disabled people, some of the employees express a desire for a job on the general labour market.

The evaluation of the survey of focus group A also revealed that the fear of stress was a major obstacle to working in the general labour market for all respondents. The majority of the respondents therefore felt comfortable in a sheltered environment and feared that they would not be able to cope with the work pressure in the private sector. Specific support services would be useful here.

A recommendation was made regarding the materials: The visual representation of facts and processes offers an extremely effective way of imparting knowledge to people with support needs.

Cyprus: All respondents in focus group A had already been working in the primary labour market for a very long time. This generally indicates a high quality of counselling and support from the foundation's job coaches themselves as well as preparation for the labour market. All interviewees are very satisfied with their job, their tasks and their social contacts. Participation and acceptance play a key role in the counselling and support process. This leads to a better sense of well-being and a higher individual quality of life. The foundation and colleagues at the company are perceived by some as a second family.

Concerns were raised about salary distribution: salary and state support. If a certain number of hours is exceeded, this leads to financial disadvantages.

Germany: The guidance of focus group A was mainly provided by job coaches from the workshop for people with disabilities. The counselling content, as stated by the interviewees, was process-related, labour market-related or reflection-related. The material used consisted of a CV and a folder to document the results. Job coaches played an important role alongside future supervisors in the integration into an internship on the general labour market. The respondents were particularly positive about the explanatory videos from the Include³ project (work package 2, activity 2)

The interviewees expressed a desire for active participation and comprehensive explanations. During the internship phase, respondents would like intensive support from a permanent contact person. Materials such as explanatory videos and podcasts should be informative, appealing and country-specific. The recordings should not be too long.

Slovenia: Counselling and support for respondents is provided by staff as part of the rehabilitation process, which also includes an aptitude assessment. With a low work efficiency of 30%, people with cognitive impairments work in a social enterprise in various fields of work; this was also the case for the participants in focus group A. In addition to the answers, the dilemma of the legal regulation was mentioned. The decision to be unable to work is linked to obtaining disability status. The Slovenian labour market is also not open to this group of people and offers no or only temporary and therefore precarious employment. The Slovenian explanatory video was very well received.

The desire for permanent and sustainable job offers was expressed, as well as the desire for a social structure while working and the pace of work should be adapted to individual performance. Two worksheets have already been presented as examples for the counselling work.

4 Results from focus group B

To introduce the participants of focus group B, three individuals with cognitive impairments employed in sheltered workshops in Belgium, four inclusion experts, and four employers were involved in the discussion. Focus group B in Cyprus consisted of five professionals from the field of inclusion (psychologists, vocational counselors, inclusion experts) and seven people with cognitive impairments. In Germany, Focus Group B consisted of a total of 13 people, namely three people with intellectual disabilities, four inclusion experts, four vocational training experts and three employers. Finally, in Slovenia, focus group B consisted of three people with mild intellectual disabilities, three vocational training experts, three inclusion experts and one person in a managerial position in a company.

This part of the report presents the results of the interviews conducted with focus group B participants, which can be found in the reports from Belgium, Cyprus, Germany and Slovenia on the topics of "Counselling on integration into the general labour market", "Vocational training to prepare for the general labour market", "Materials to prepare for the general labour market", "Networks for integration into the general labour market" and "Quality and usability of materials from work package 2". The following is an analysis of secondary data. The presentation of the results is concluded with an appreciative summary, again based on the available secondary data.

4.1 Counselling on integration in the general labour market

Belgium

The basis for supporting the transition of people with cognitive impairments is the personal counselling. Attendance at a special school and the internships arranged there as well as internships in the private sector arranged by DSL serve as preparation for entering the job market. These opportunities are part of the personal counselling sessions.

The process begins with going through the ICF tool, at the end of which the person's ability is assessed. The sheltered workshops also determine the ability profile of the person concerned, which is adjusted every two years. This means that it is checked whether any changes have occurred. These changes can lead to a reclassification of the person concerned. The East Belgian organization DABEI VoG uses the so-called CliftonStrengths Talent Focus Test from the Gallup Institute (<https://www.gallup.com/cliftonstrengths/de/253595/Home.aspx>) to determine the ability profile. This test is particularly suitable for determining personal potential for the work situation.

Cyprus

The inclusion specialists, who work very closely with the Vocational Guidance Association, play an important role in the integration of people with disabilities. A separate "inclusion department" has been set up at the Vocational Guidance Association. Here, experts are informed and trained in working with people with disabilities. Concepts are also being developed to support people with disabilities and give them more autonomy in terms of employment and finances.

Inclusion specialists prepare and support suitable people for their integration into working life. They are not only the link between the individual and the employer, but also the family. Experience has shown that the family plays an important role in the integration process and must therefore be involved. The focus of the work of inclusion experts

is on the initial phase of integration, in which the respective individuals are supported. The inclusion experts are also available after the initial phase (after about a year) as a point of contact for all relevant questions from the rehabilitated person whose inclusion is at stake, as well as from the families or employees of the companies.

Various instruments are used in the search for a suitable job for the rehabilitated person, such as psychometric tests, vocational tests, reports from educators and other experts. Group and individual interviews are also important when it comes to identifying the skills, inclinations, personal characteristics and wishes of the person concerned.

Germany

In Germany, the inclusion process is accompanied by counselling. The counselling process, which includes the needs of the person concerned as well as the requirements of the labour market, consists of several steps. Firstly, there is a start-up and orientation phase, followed by a supervised trial in an internship and reflection on the trial. Job coaches play an important role in all phases. The job coach determines the abilities, strengths, weaknesses and other circumstances of the person with disabilities and supports the integration process by initiating a work placement. At the end of the entire process, a niche job is found.

The specialist integration service, which establishes a counselling relationship with the person with disabilities to be integrated as well as the employer, is a new network partner after the niche job has been found. The task of the specialist integration service is to explore funding opportunities so that the transition to the general labour market can take place. Finally, open communication and regular exchanges are important throughout the entire process.

Slovenia

Counselling and vocational training are considered to be interlinked and are not considered separately. These procedural steps in supporting people with disabilities are implemented on the basis of special and adapted programs. The counselling concepts used are addressed to integration specialists - as part of the social integration programs and social assistance in the Care Work Centres (VDC, but not exclusively, both concepts appear as well in social inclusion programmes.) - and primarily cover areas that are relevant to maintaining the greatest possible independence in coping with everyday life, i.e. not specifically aimed at integration into the labour market, such as maintaining interest in work and efficiency or maintaining stamina, working capacity and endurance as well as developing and enhancing social skills, supporting the development of personal adaptability, personal development, maintaining and promoting independence.

4.2 Vocational training to prepare for the general labour market

Belgium

Vocational training, e.g. in the form of courses, is not offered by the DSL.

In supporting the transition of people with cognitive impairments, the DSL initially focuses on personal counselling sessions. The work placements arranged by the DSL, also provide important support in preparing for the general job

market. The DSL accompanies the person with support needs during the first six months of the internship in the private sector. It is not only the person concerned who benefits from the weekly meetings, but also the employer. This ensures intervention in problematic cases. The DSL's regular support ends after this period. However, the DSL remains the point of contact for both the person concerned and the employer. As a rule, the person should be taken on as a permanent employee after this period. It is also possible for the person concerned to undergo subsidized training with regular support from the DSL before a permanent employment relationship is established.

The opportunity to complete an internship in a company arranged by the DSL is only available to people with support needs who have completed the ICF tool with a good performance rating and it is therefore certain that the person concerned has mastered a certain percentage of the skills tested in the tool. Otherwise, the person concerned is transferred to a sheltered workshop. In the sheltered workshops, on the other hand, only internships are offered. These internships include the teaching of practical life skills through appropriate training. These work placements are also intended to personally train the person concerned for employment in various areas of the workshop.

Cyprus

As part of the counselling process, vocational training is focused on individual planning, which includes defined skills, work habits, and the acquisition of new work habits and procedures. A professional team develops the personalized plan in collaboration with the company and the person who will be integrated.

Moreover, further support and collaboration is provided to all participants when requested or deemed necessary.

Germany

The content of vocational training concepts is interdisciplinary, such as teaching work ethics or teamwork skills, rules and duties, conflict resolution, verbal and non-verbal communication and the acquisition of key qualifications. Vocational education therefore takes place primarily in the format of practical life lessons. Vocational education concepts also include specialist content, such as job-related content concerning employment in related areas of the sheltered workshop or application-related content such as the application process and job interviews. However, not all occupations in vocational education and training are covered, meaning that job-related content can only represent individual activities within an occupational profile. Once again, job coaches are involved to provide counselling on how to initiate an internship.

Slovenia

As part of the counselling concept, vocational training is based on individual planning, which includes the defined skills, work habits and learning new work habits and new work processes. The individual plan is drawn up by a professional team in cooperation with the employer concerned and the person who is to be integrated. An assessed capacity of at least 30% (after completion of the rehabilitation process) is required. If the capacity of the person concerned is between 30% and 70%, employment in a company for the disabled, for example, can be considered, while a capacity of 70% to 100% would be a prerequisite for supported employment in a normal working environment.

In the area of professional reintegration, 15 services are offered. The services are planned individually. The services offered include, for example, training at a specific workplace or in a chosen profession. For the transition to the labour market, the impaired person is supported through training in a real working environment. However, the transition from special employment to regular employment is rare. In addition, there is no concept for employment in a regular working environment. Such a concept is advocated, which should take into account individual needs and working procedures, working environments, the needs of the person with disabilities and the legal obligations of employers

4.3 Materials to prepare for the general labour market

Belgium

Information material is available. However, it has been found that written information material is too much for people with cognitive impairments. Preparation for the general labour market is therefore primarily carried out through personal interviews conducted by the DSL as the responsible authority with the affected persons with cognitive impairments.

Detailed counselling is therefore provided in person, which is accepted by the people concerned. The disadvantage of this procedure is that the DSL lacks staff capacity, as a result of which the procedures are not carried out quickly and those affected cannot receive the necessary counselling promptly. This is because before the DSL initiates counselling processes, those affected must first go through the ICF tool and then wait for the final report on their assessed capacity.

In sheltered workshops, there are also social assistants who support the transition to the labour market through personal counselling sessions.

Cyprus

Various tools are used based on individual needs and levels. In addition, the results of older EU research projects are used.

Germany

The initial focus is on personal discussions with the person with disabilities. In addition, various materials are used to implement the counselling given in advance. These materials, primarily in written form, can be divided into learning material on job-specific topics, application material (cover letter, CV) and internship material (information sheet, internship sheet with emergency medication if necessary, internship contract, risk assessment and profile as information for the employees in the company). Should further material be required during the integration process as part of the internship, this will be prepared and made available.

Slovenia

The Slovenian report shows that appropriate materials are used. A document was submitted for the documentation of the individual planning process, which also shows the period of the measure. In addition to social content, this document also includes work-related learning content. This is followed by an assessment of the participant's level of development. On the other hand, it is recommended to use a survey document developed by a Danish production school. This survey, although developed for a different target group, is nevertheless suitable for use by managers of direct work processes outside the HR departments for management, group processes and evaluation. This is because it assesses the results of the inclusion process using various categories of learning content and social skills. The classification of "Beginner - Practiced - Experienced - Competent" is recommended as an evaluation grid.

4.4 Networks for integration into the general labour market

Belgium

Networking can be expanded in East Belgium. This is because there is little exchange between experts or sheltered workshops or with the DSL. For example, it was mentioned that in cases where an employer contacts a sheltered workshop to recruit a person with a disability, but this sheltered workshop is unable to offer a suitable employee, the request is rejected instead of being forwarded to another sheltered workshop.

The DSL does not offer information events for employers who wish to employ people with disabilities. There is a tool for employers who already employ people with disabilities. These employers are contacted when people with disabilities are promoted on the labour market. Inclusion in this pool is on the employers' own initiative. Employers themselves can also ask the DSL for support in finding a suitable employee. Inclusion experts rarely make such requests to employers from the private sector.

Cyprus

Networks exist between the person concerned, the family and the employer, with the integration experts being seen as the link between these players. There is also networking via the CSI Foundation, particularly when it comes to finding suitable jobs for people with disabilities.

Germany

Various actors are involved in the integration and thus transition from the Sheltered workshop to the general labour market, which can be divided into network actors in the initiation of the internship (in addition to the person with disabilities and their family, in particular job coaches, employers and colleagues in the internship company) and network actors in the transition to the workplace (in particular experts in vocational training, integration office and inclusion experts from the integration services as well as the responsible authorities as cost bearers). Close and open communication between the various stakeholders is important for the functioning of the networks.

Slovenia

The counselling process, the preparation procedures as well as the required materials are closely linked to the cooperation process between the rehabilitation providers and the future employers. Subsequently, the transition to the labour market takes place on the basis of a network of rehabilitation and integration providers and future employers.

Particular emphasis was placed on the role of employment offices in the successful integration or appropriate adaptation of jobs, especially in rural areas, when it comes to bringing employers who want to employ people with disabilities together with suitable people.

4.5 Quality and usability of the materials from work package 2

Belgium

Videos and podcasts were developed in WP 2. These were played to the participants in focus group B as part of WP 3. Overall, the materials from WP 2 were very well received.

Cyprus

The output from WP 2 was rated as up-to-date, user-friendly and relevant to the context as well as useful for gaining information.

Germany

The materials (podcast, explanatory videos) that were developed in WP 2 were essentially found to be good, but in need of improvement. In particular, the computer voice was criticized for sounding unnatural. The sequences were also considered too long. Finally, distribution channels other than the project website should be explored.

Slovenia

No specific details were provided. However, it can be inferred from the report that the work results (podcasts, explanatory videos) of WP 2 were shown to the participants at the beginning of the interviews.

4.6 Summary of results from focus groups B of all countries

Belgium

For the DSL to take action, the ICF tool must be completed, as this tool is used to assess capacity. The process is far too time-consuming and should be accelerated so that the necessary support for the person with support needs can be provided promptly with regard to integration into the labour market.

It is advocated that the integration process should be accompanied by the DSL, as is the case with internships and works well. It should be ensured that there is no frequent change of contact person at the DSL.

In principle, personal contact is very important. Those affected want more explanatory videos and pictures instead of written brochures with lots of text.

The offer for employers who want to employ people with disabilities should be expanded, not only through written information material, but also, for example, through courses that prepare other employees for the employment of people with disabilities. Inclusion officers for companies that (want to) employ people with disabilities would be a possibility. Appropriate coaching would be sufficient for smaller companies.

Working in the general labour market is associated with a great deal of stress and strain for people with disabilities. In this context, the introduction of a mentoring program is being discussed at a political level. The aim of this program is to train employees in the private sector as in-house inclusion mentors so that they can offer people with disabilities a form of work assistance. All interviewees in focus group B were in favour of this planned mentoring program as a good form of support in the workplace.

Politicians should take action, also with regard to the DSL's staffing requirements. The financial resources should be created.

An important obstacle that hinders the integration of people with disabilities into the labour market is considered to be the lack of networking between the actors involved, i.e. DSL, employers and sheltered workshops. This needs to be improved and expanded, e.g. through information events for employers or cooperation between the DSL and sheltered workshops not only at the service level, but also at the level of social assistants. With regard to networking, the framework conditions should be created and financial resources made available.

Cyprus

Proper preparation and support of rehabilitated persons in the labour market is considered necessary for successful integration. In this context, guidance and vocational training concepts should be developed that inclusion specialists could use in their work. This also includes information and training material. Visual aids (use of pictures, symbols or objects to facilitate the understanding of instructions and instructions) should be used for the persons concerned with cognitive impairments.

Employers who want to hire people with disabilities, as well as staff in companies where people with disabilities are employed, also need appropriate training. Training for the former should include concepts on how to monitor, evaluate and reward rehabilitated adults based on their abilities and limitations like any other member of the overall staff. The training of the latter, on the other hand, should serve to eliminate stereotypes and teach how to communicate properly and effectively with new colleagues.

In order to promote the necessary networking, the creation of a platform on which the stakeholders - employers, people with disabilities and possibly their families, inclusion experts - can communicate with each other to identify needs for the labour market and then meet these needs with suitable people with disabilities is considered useful.

Germany

The counselling process takes place in several phases. In the transition process from the Sheltered workshop to the general labour market, interdisciplinary skills, job-related and application-related skills are taught.

The materials used in the integration process are diverse. Adaptations can be made if necessary. From the employers' point of view, information material about the company and the person concerned would be useful for the integration process. There was disagreement in focus group B when it came to naming the diagnosis that could be important for use in the company. Here there was agreement that information on the existing disability should not be requested in paper form, but in a personal interview.

The status quo in networking is considered to be good and should be maintained; no concrete suggestions for improvement are made. After all, the job coach not only plays an important role in advising or arranging vocational training, but also in coordinating the network work.

Slovenia

The promotion of people with disabilities is legally based on the Act on Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of People with Disabilities. A person with a disability is suitable and eligible for support if their ability to work has been assessed as 30% or more.

Vocational training and guidance are seen as closely linked. The principle of individualization is emphasized. Above all, the needs of the person with disabilities whose inclusion is at stake must be taken into account, such as visual aids (use of pictures, symbols or objects to facilitate the understanding of instructions and cues), breaking down tasks into smaller steps, clear and consistent expectations, patience and understanding.

In any case, it is also considered necessary to raise awareness among the entire population. Furthermore, employers who are already obliged to adapt jobs due to the quota system should also be obliged to create jobs adapted to the disability beyond the quota. This is because there is less willingness to employ people with intellectual disabilities.

Obstacles to integration into the labour market include the lack of knowledge within the institutions about "communication and independent performance", which is increasingly difficult to achieve within the framework of the possible work processes on the regular labour market and its competitive nature. This is because potential employees with a disability need more guidance and leadership, control mechanisms, more space and time for learning and flexibility of performance.

Another obstacle to integration into the labour market is that training people with disabilities requires specialized staff that is not available on the open labour market.

5 Answering the research questions

Chapter 5 deals with answering the key research questions of work package 3 raised in the introduction.

This is based on the results of focus groups A and B, which were taken from the country reports (see chapters 3 and 4). Recommendations for the guidelines for the development of the Include³ method are derived from this in Chapter 6.

The Include³ method is designed to help harmonize the strengths of people with cognitive impairments in workshops and the requirements of the labour market through counselling and vocational training.

The overarching question of work package 3 is therefore:

How should the Include³ method / a curriculum for guidance practitioners be designed?

Key questions were developed for the focus groups (work package 3, activity 1) to address the overarching question. In the following, the results of focus groups A and B on the three key questions (5.1, 5.2, 5.3), which are highly relevant for the development of the Include³ method, are answered on a cross-national basis.

5.1 Counselling, instructions and materials to integrate people with disabilities from sheltered workshops into the labour market

The participants in focus groups A and B in the four countries emphasized the need for personal, individual and trusting counselling to ensure a successful transition from a sheltered workshop to the labour market. Furthermore, empowerment and participation are essential guidelines for guidance.

Counselling initiates the integration process. In order to determine whether integration into the labour market is possible or whether support from a sheltered workshop is an option, the ability, inclinations and interests as well as personal and social skills of the person with intellectual disabilities must be determined. There are specific procedures and methods for this in the four countries (e.g. ICF tool in Belgium). These points should not be neglected in the course of the integration process either, so that it is possible to react to changes in the performance and development of the person concerned during the support.

In addition to the person with intellectual disabilities, their immediate environment such as family members and other third parties such as guardians or employers are also involved in the counselling process. The importance of the family for the integration process was particularly emphasized by the participants in the Cypriot focus groups. The respective inclusion specialist forms the link between the parties involved. Counselling takes place in individual or group discussions. Counselling is provided not only by job coaches, for example, but also by inclusion specialists or authorities.

The content of the counselling can be process-related (e.g. the application process, preparation of application documents and practicing application situations), job market-related (e.g. requirements of the job market or an internship, career path planning) and reflection-related (e.g. interests and inclinations or personal development).

To ensure successful counselling, it must be ensured that the contact persons do not change during the integration process. A specific contact person should accompany the entire integration process, starting with the counselling phase through to the successful transition into the job market. The intensity of the counselling and support provided to the person with disabilities may decrease over time. However, it should be ensured that even after a successful integration into the labour market, the contact person remains available for concerns and questions not only for the person concerned, but also for his or her relatives as well as employers and colleagues in the company concerned.

The materials used to provide counselling should be formulated in easy-to-understand language and contain visual aids. Country-specific, informative and appealing explanatory videos and podcasts should also be used. In addition, materials should be created that are aimed at the respective company, employer or colleagues of the person to be integrated and contain information regarding the employment of people with disabilities.

Table 10. Tabular representation of instructions and materials, focus on counselling

Counselling	Accompaniment	Suitability assessment	Materials
Counselling content is process-related, labour market-related or reflection-related.	Support is very intensive at the beginning and decreases with duration and successful integration	Determination of suitability and performance such as personal/social skills using specific procedures and methods (e.g. ICF tool) for initial and reintegration prior to the start of the reintegration process	Less written, easy and understandable language, use of visual aids, use of application folders
Counselling is characterized by empowerment and participation	Close personal, individual and trusting counselling and support	Suitability assessment during the integration process,	Explanatory videos and podcasts should be informative, appealing and country-specific
Empowerment: This is achieved through individual and group offers, not only by job coaches, but also by third parties	Job coaches remain the point of contact even after integration	The results of the aptitude test determine whether support is provided in a workshop or on the labour market	
Involve relatives/family/guardians	No repeated change of contact person	The results of the aptitude test lead to the adaptation of the job or internship to individual needs	
Contact person accompanies the entire process, from counselling to			

Counselling	Accompaniment	Suitability assessment	Materials
integration (including internship)			

5.2 Guidance on adapting vocational education and training to prepare for the labour market

As a result of the focus groups A and B conducted in the countries, it can be stated that training or courses relating to vocational education and training are not offered in all four countries.

With regard to preparation for the labour market, the participants in focus groups A and B mentioned internships in all four countries.

People with intellectual disabilities should already be placed in internships at special schools so that they can recognize their own personal inclinations early on and get to know certain occupational fields, including their requirements.

The focus should be on internships in companies in the general labour market. Internships in sheltered workshops are offered for people who are not yet eligible for employment on the general labour market. These include getting to know the workshop areas and teaching practical life skills through appropriate training. In order to facilitate the transition to the labour market, the services offered by sheltered workshops should be designed with the labour market in mind.

Vocational training programs should be suitable for promoting, developing and improving useful social skills and abilities. It is essential that the personal characteristics and interests of the person concerned are not disregarded.

Furthermore, the learning content on the labour market should also include general requirements such as technical terms and work ethics, including dealing with superiors and colleagues.

Practical vocational and internship-specific vocational training content includes all materials relating to the application process, such as creating CVs and practicing role plays for job interviews. From the report for Germany, for example, it can be seen that the - primarily written - materials can be divided into learning material on job-specific topics, application material (cover letter, CV) and internship material (information sheet, internship sheet with emergency medication if necessary, internship contract, risk assessment and profile as information for the employees in the company).

Table 11. Tabular representation of guidance, focus on vocational training

Learning content	Internships	Materials
Teaching learning content on the labour market included general requirements such as technical terms and work ethics, including dealing with superiors and colleagues	Work placements already arranged in the special school, conducive to recognizing personal inclinations as well as certain occupational fields and their requirements	Materials on the application process such as creating cover letters and CVs, practicing role plays for the job interview
People are trained and supported to promote, develop and improve useful social skills and abilities	Internships Company	Learning material on job-specific topics
Practical and internship-related learning content	Internships in the workshop, getting to know workshop areas and teaching practical life skills through appropriate training courses	Learning materials in the form of internship material (information sheet, internship sheet with emergency medication, if necessary, internship contract, risk assessment and profile as information for the employees in the company)
personal characteristics and interests are taken into account	Services in workshops that are close to the labour market increase the chances of integration because these activities prepare people more specifically for the labour market	
Training/courses for vocational education are partly missing (Belgium)		Materials, primarily in written form,

5.3 Networking

The participants in focus groups A and B from all four countries particularly emphasized the importance of networking. According to them, network management and continuous networking are the basis for a successful transition into the labour market.

The networks that need to be cultivated include not only potential employers who want to employ people with intellectual disabilities, but also families and other close relatives. The role of family and other close relatives is particularly emphasized by the participants in the Cypriot focus groups. The role of employment services should also not be neglected when it comes to bringing employers together with suitable potential employees, as the Slovenian report reflects as a result of the focus groups. This also applies to Germany.

Functioning networking cannot be confirmed for all four countries. In East Belgium, networking is considered to be capable of expansion. This is because there is little cooperation between sheltered workshops and the DSL as the responsible authority or with employers.

Network work should be managed by counselors and/or job coaches who also act as a link between all network partners. In any case, it is necessary to strengthen cooperation with employers. This is because the labour market is not open to people with intellectual disabilities due to existing reservations. In this context, the job coaches in particular should be made responsible for making contact with suitable companies for the purpose of completing a work placement.

Networking also includes preparing employers who want to employ people with intellectual disabilities, in particular by providing sufficient information on the clinical picture of intellectual disabilities and the associated limitations in performance. This helps employers to make adjustments to the working environment. For example, full-time employment can lead to excessive demands on the person concerned, so that the possibility of part-time employment could be created. In addition, company employees need to be kept informed during the employment of a person with disabilities, in particular to deal with potential conflicts.

In this context, it can be concluded from the results of focus groups A and B in Slovenia that intensive cooperation with employers, including their education, can prevent any stigmatization and exclusion of people with intellectual disabilities that stand in the way of a successful transition into the labour market.

Table 12. Tabular representation of networking

Role of the counselling and support specialists	Networking	Training/educational work
Strong management by counselling/accompanying specialists, job coaches for people with disabilities	Continuous networking	Training of employers and colleagues regarding recruitment and during employment (e.g. conflict management)
Job coach plays a central role, in particular contacting companies for internships for people with disabilities	Network management required	Educating employers and colleagues about the clinical picture of mental disabilities, but also their capabilities, thereby destigmatizing them
Counselling/guidance specialists act as a link between network partners	The networks also include families/relatives	
Labour administration central role (SL, Dt)	Network of rehabilitation providers	
	Involving employer contacts to a greater extent	

5.4 Further findings

In addition to answering the interview questions, further statements on the state and society, the labour market and the limitations of intellectual disabilities were also evaluated.

Table 12. Tabular representation of further findings

State and society	Labour market	People with cognitive impairments
State support versus salary from employment: State support for people with disabilities is reduced or canceled depending on the amount of the salary	Labour market not open to people with intellectual disabilities	Especially in the case of severe impairments: Desire to work in the general labour market once or twice a week or for a few hours a day
Raising awareness among the entire population	Precarious employment relationships: Offers of employment on the labour market are usually temporary	
	Desire: Permanent jobs	
	Training people with disabilities requires specialized staff that is not available on the open labour market	

6 Implications for the Include³ method

Implications for the Include³ method can be derived from the previously answered key research questions on guidance, vocational training and networks from the results of focus groups A and B from the four countries.

Phases of the counselling process:

The Include³ method comprises several phases (orientation, testing, decision and reflection), each with its own counselling support options. The orientation phase should include an aptitude test to determine performance as well as aptitudes and interests. A phase can also be repeated several times if, for example, an internship (trial) leads to the person with a disability being able to rule out an occupational field for themselves. It is then necessary to return to a new orientation phase. Reflection during and after the decision is an important element, as it evaluates the steps taken so far and thus sets the course for further decisions. The person with intellectual disabilities should be particularly involved in the reflection process. It is advisable to combine the individual phases with an assessment of suitability for the specific job (job with an employer or in a sheltered workshop).

The Include³ method requires statements on how to deal with successive guidance processes. This is particularly important if the phases are run through several times and advisors or the advising institution change during the transition process. The premise should be that after successful integration, the intensity of guidance and support decreases with increasing duration.

Principles of counselling:

The Include³ method requires basic principles for the design of the counselling. Basic principles provide a direction and show a benchmark against which the counselling can be measured. The following basic principles can be derived from the wishes of the focus group: Openness, appropriate regularity, empowerment, participation, perseverance, opportunity orientation, creativity, individualization (attention should be paid to over- and underchallenging).

The Include³ method is based on a stable counselling relationship that requires open, regular and close communication.

Counselling should be individual, trusting and personal.

Role of counsellors:

The Include³ method requires statements on how the advisor should deal with the multiple roles of vocational training staff and network coordinator. For people with cognitive impairments, it is important that they have a permanent contact person from the outset who accompanies the integration process on an ongoing basis.

Contents of vocational training:

The Include³ method should take equal account of technical and interdisciplinary content (work virtues, dealing with superiors and colleagues, personal interests) in vocational training. Individual and group coaching on the topics of empowerment in general and participation as well as methods for reducing anxiety and stress and reacting in conflict situations are also required.

Early placement in job-specific internships provides knowledge of various occupational sectors as well as personal skills and interests and thus serves as early career guidance and facilitates the transition to the labour market. If the person's ability does not yet allow them to complete work placements on the general labour market, vocational training measures in sheltered workshops should take effect, which are geared towards the needs and requirements of the labour market or specific occupational fields or potential employment opportunities. Based on an aptitude assessment, testing and evaluation are carried out using defined methods.

People with intellectual disabilities usually need more time to acquire and understand knowledge and skills. Therefore, patient, praising and understanding guidance is required. For this reason, work assignments at the workplace should be described in small steps and adapted to the realistic abilities of the person concerned in order to facilitate the learning and successful completion of tasks.

Material to support counselling and vocational training:

The Include³ method necessitates informative materials designed to impart valuable knowledge in a simple and understandable language. Furthermore, there is a need for methodological materials that can be actively engaged with, facilitating knowledge acquisition through practical application.

The material of the Include³ method can have different purposes. If it has educational purposes (e.g. industry-specific knowledge), the boundaries between guidance and vocational training are blurred.

The Include³ method's materials should encompass the implementation of career choice decisions, involving collaborative completion by both individuals with disabilities and the respective companies.

The material of the Include³ method used for counselling and education should be descriptive, take into account the national context and provide an overview of employment opportunities (e.g. specific job profiles, job requirements). In this way, it contributes to the empowerment of people with disabilities. The use of the material should adapt flexibly to the situation of the person concerned. The use of the material should not raise false expectations. The use of the material should provide approaches that can be followed up with counselors or vocational training staff.

The material used should not only be written, but also visual. Podcasts and explanatory videos should also be used.

Networking skills:

The Include³ method focuses on forming and advising networks. The networks include people with intellectual disabilities, rehabilitation providers, rehabilitation agencies, employment services, employers as well as families and

close relatives. The inclusion specialist/job coach forms the link between the network partners and plays a central role.

Awareness campaigns on the clinical picture of intellectual disabilities and their capabilities should be aimed at employers with the aim of contributing to destigmatization and opening up the labour market to this group of people (working with role models). Training for employers, supervisors and colleagues regarding the recruitment of suitable people with disabilities and during employment should be carried out (peer support and diversity management).

The Include³ method should therefore address the network competencies that contribute to network expansion, continuous network work and network coordination.

7 Conclusion

This overall report deals with the comparative analysis of the results of the focus groups that took place in Belgium, Cyprus, Germany and Slovenia between June and September 2023.

A total of 59 people with different levels of expertise took part in the focus groups in the four partner countries. The required inclusive approach was exceeded with a total of 25 people with intellectual disabilities. This ensured that the views of the affected group of people as well as the views of inclusion and counselling experts, employers and internship companies were included.

First, the key findings of Focus Group A (people with health-related disabilities) and Focus Group B (inclusion specialists, employers) were summarized on a country-by-country basis (Chapter 3, Chapter 4).

Subsequently, the knowledge gained was applied to the questions derived from the overarching research question

- What instructions and materials are needed to integrate people with disabilities from the workshops into the labour market (focus on counselling)?
- What can guidance on adapting vocational education and training to prepare for the labour market look like (focus on vocational education and training)?
- What should the network work look like?

Further findings and statements from focus groups A and B were summarized separately in chapter 5.4.

The aim of the Include³ project is to develop the Include³ method and a curriculum for educational staff in sheltered workshops and guidance practitioners who prepare for transitions and accompany them during the transition. In order to achieve this goal, implications for the development of the Include³ method were derived in chapter 6, which are divided into phases of guidance, principles of guidance, role of guidance practitioners, content of vocational education, material to support guidance and vocational education as well as network competences.

The next step is to work out the guidelines for the development of the Include³ method, which are described in a separate report and are to be regarded as the final part of work package 3.

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Appendix

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Appendix I Questions focus group A

Research questions	Content/interview questions for people with disabilities ATTENTION: Use plain language!	Answers/statements of the respondents	Comments/first interpretations, interesting aspects
Register anonymous short description of the person (Attention: 5 persons!)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age? • How long in a sheltered workshop? • Have you had any experience in the general labour market? • Was the integration process based on the general labour market? • Industry? 		
What guidance and materials are needed to integrate people with disabilities from workshops into the labour market?	<p>How were you prepared for the general labour market (actual-state-analysis)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How were you informed? - Who gives you guidance and counselling? - What did you talk about? - What is important to you when someone talks to you? - What helps you to implement what you have discussed? - What's going well? - What can be improved? 		

Research questions	Content/interview questions for people with disabilities ATTENTION: Use plain language!	Answers/statements of the respondents	Comments/first interpretations, interesting aspects
	<p>What kind of wish do you have, when someone talks to you about your future on the general labour market (target analysis)?</p> <p>What materials did you use to inform yourself about the general labour market (actual state analysis)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What was the content of the materials? - Were the materials helpful to you? - What did you like to use? - What don't you like? <p>Which materials would you like to have (e.g. worksheets/checklist CV, checklist "My first day at work") (target analysis)?</p>		
<p>What can guidance on adapting vocational education and training to prepare for the labour market look like?</p>	<p>How will you be prepared for the general labour market (internship/field jobs) (actual state analysis)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who prepares you for the general labour market? - What are the contents? - How often do you meet together? - What are you intending to learn there? - What professions do you get to know? - How are you prepared for your first day at work? - How do you find out what you're good at? - How do you find out what are your interests? - What did you do on your own and where did you need help? 		

Research questions	Content/interview questions for people with disabilities ATTENTION: Use plain language!	Answers/statements of the respondents	Comments/first interpretations, interesting aspects
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What worked out well? - What didn't work out so well? <p>What kind of preparation do you want for your workplace outside the sheltered workshop ? (target analysis, in reference to the answers in question part 1)?</p>		
<p>How should networking for integration into the general labour market look like?</p>	<p>With which persons and organizations (with whom) do you have contact for your internship (actual state analysis)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who supports you in agreements with the various organizations (e.g. Integration Office)? - What's going well? - Where are the difficulties? - What can be done better? <p>What would you like to see when different organizations talk to you (target analysis)?</p>		
<p>How do the participants assess the quality and usability of the products from WP2 of the Include³ project? (using the example of a selected podcast and a selected explanatory video in the national language, a selected practical example (chapter 3 in the report)</p>	<p>How do you like the video?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What do you like? - What could be improved? - Would you recommend the video to other people from the sheltered workshop? <p>How do you like the podcast?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What do you like? - What could be improved? 		

Research questions	Content/interview questions for people with disabilities ATTENTION: Use plain language!	Answers/statements of the respondents	Comments/first interpretations, interesting aspects
	- Would you recommend the podcast to other people from the sheltered workshop?		

Appendix II Questions focus group B

Research questions	Content/interview questions for people with disabilities	Contents/interview questions for employers	Content/interview questions for inclusion experts	Contents/interview questions for experts in vocational education in sheltered workshops	Answers/statements of the respondents	Comments/first interpretations, interesting aspects
Register anonymous short description of the person (Attention: 12 persons!)	s. Focus group A Attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which organization? exact job title? How long already employed in the field of inclusion? 	s. Employer column	s. Employer column		
What guidance and materials are needed to integrate people with disabilities from workshops into the labour market?	What is your opinion about the statement of...? What is your experience?	<p>How were you counseled on hiring your new employee from the sheltered workshop (ACTUAL state analysis)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What was the content of the counselling? What worked well? Where do you think there is room for improvement? <p>What would you like to see (TARGET analysis)?</p> <p>Which information materials did you use before hiring your</p>	<p>What counselling concept/instructions exist to integrate people from the workshops into the general labour market (ACTUAL state analysis)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What does this concept look like (basic principles, structure of counselling, role of the counsellor, etc.)? To what extent are the requirements of 	s. Inclusion experts column		

Research questions	Content/interview questions for people with disabilities	Contents/interview questions for employers	Content/interview questions for inclusion experts	Contents/interview questions for experts in vocational education in sheltered workshops	Answers/statements of the respondents	Comments/first interpretations, interesting aspects
		<p>new employee from the sheltered workshop (ACTUAL state analysis)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What content was covered in these materials? - What worked well? - Where do you think there is room for improvement? <p>What would you like to see (TARGET analysis)?</p>	<p>the labour market included?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent are strengths, abilities and interests of people with disabilities included? • To what extent do you use this concept? • What works well in existing concepts? • Where do you think there is room for improvement? • What best practice examples can you name? <p>What would you like to see (target analysis)?</p> <p>What materials (e.g. checklists, worksheets, diagrams) are available to</p>			

Research questions	Content/interview questions for people with disabilities	Contents/interview questions for employers -	Content/interview questions for inclusion experts	Contents/interview questions for experts in vocational education in sheltered workshops	Answers/statements of the respondents	Comments/first interpretations, interesting aspects
			<p>integrate people with disabilities into the labour market (ACTUAL state analysis)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which materials do you use in your work? • What contents are addressed in the materials used? • What works well in the existing concept? • Where do you think there is room for improvement? • Which best practice examples can you name? <p>Which materials would you like to see (target analysis)?</p>			

Research questions	Content/interview questions for people with disabilities	Contents/interview questions for employers	Content/interview questions for inclusion experts	Contents/interview questions for experts in vocational education in sheltered workshops	Answers/statements of the respondents	Comments/first interpretations, interesting aspects
<p>What can guidance on adapting vocational education and training to prepare for the labour market look like?</p>	<p>What is your opinion about the statement of...? What is your experience?</p>	<p>What is your assessment of how the persons were prepared for the workplace with you (ACTUAL state analysis)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What knowledge did they already bring with them for the internship? ● What worked well from your point of view? ● Where do you think there is room for improvement? <p>Do you have any suggestions on how the preparation should be in general and individually (TARGET analysis)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How do people need to be prepared? ● What do they need to know on the first day of the internship? 	<p>Is there a vocational training concept to prepare for the general labour market (ACTUAL state analysis)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If so, what does it contain? ● To what extent are labour market requirements included? ● To what extent are strengths, abilities and interests of people with disabilities included? ● What works well in the existing concept? ● Where do you think there is room for improvement? ● What other concepts/examples of good practice for preparation for the labour market do 	<p>s. Inclusion experts column</p>		

Research questions	Content/interview questions for people with disabilities	Contents/interview questions for employers	Content/interview questions for inclusion experts	Contents/interview questions for experts in vocational education in sheltered workshops	Answers/statements of the respondents	Comments/first interpretations, interesting aspects
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What background knowledge do you as an employer need about the workshops, about your future employer and about the people who work in the sheltered workshops? • What else can you think of? 	<p>you know (e.g. outside the sheltered workshops)?</p> <p>What else would you like to see (TARGET analysis)?</p>			
What should networking for integration into the general labour market look like?	What is your opinion about the statement of...? What is your experience?	<p>Which actors are involved when you hire a person from a sheltered workshop? (actual state)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are the different actors brought together? • What practical examples do you have of good cooperation? • What works well? 	<p>Which actors are involved in integration into the general labour market (actual state analysis)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are the different actors brought together? • Is it a network? • What practical examples do you have of good 	s. Inclusion experts column		

Research questions	Content/interview questions for people with disabilities	Contents/interview questions for employers	Content/interview questions for inclusion experts	Contents/interview questions for experts in vocational education in sheltered workshops	Answers/statements of the respondents	Comments/first interpretations, interesting aspects
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What difficulties are there? • What suggestions do you have for improvement? <p>How should the cooperation between the actors look like from your point of view? (target)</p>	<p>cooperation between these actors?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What works well? • What difficulties are there? • What suggestions do you have for improvement? <p>What ideas do you have for the networking of the various actors (TARGET analysis)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What else would you like to see? 			
<p>How do the participants assess the quality and usability of the products from WP2 of the Include³ project? (using the example of a selected podcast and a selected explanatory video in the national language, a selected</p>	<p>What is your opinion on the statement by...? What is your experience?</p>	<p>How do you evaluate the materials (ACTUAL state analysis)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you like ? • What potential for improvement do you see? • Would you use the materials in your daily work? 	<p>s. Employer column</p>	<p>s. Employer column</p>		

Research questions	Content/interview questions for people with disabilities	Contents/interview questions for employers	Content/interview questions for inclusion experts	Contents/interview questions for experts in vocational education in sheltered workshops	Answers/statements of the respondents	Comments/first interpretations, interesting aspects
practical example (chapter 3 in the report)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would you recommend the materials to others? If yes, to whom? 				

Appendix III Focus groups instruction guidelines

Introduction

BE, CY, DE and SI will carry out two (2) Focus Groups. BE and DE joining for one set of German-speaking focus groups. In each country focus group A with at least 5 sheltered workshop participants with intellectual disabilities and a focus group B with at least 3 participants from focus group A, 3 employers, 4 inclusion experts, 2 of which have VET responsibilities in a sheltered workshop.

The participants will be involved by each partner at local level. The Focus Groups will be used as an operative tool for co-production. Apart from the partners' expertise, the starting point of the Focus Groups' thematic will be the results of WP2 as point of departure to discuss, how the CGC process in workshops can be used to bring sheltered VET in line with both the needs, capabilities and aspirations of people with intellectual disabilities and labour market options.

Main Points

The use of focus groups is a research method that is intended to collect data, through interactive and directed discussions. A focus group is a small but diverse group of people whose opinions, ideas and perceptions are studied in guided discussions. As compared with a questionnaire, participants have more control in that they are able to respond to questions in greater depth, and probe awkward and sensitive issues.

Using focus groups can be categorized as a form of qualitative research where a group of people are asked about their perceptions, opinions, beliefs, and attitudes towards certain issues that the researcher wants to study. Although focus groups are similar to in-depth interviews, they have some fundamental differences. The researcher asks some questions in an interactive group setting where participants are free to talk with other group members. The researcher uses a discussion guide that has been prepared in advance of the focus group to guide the discussion. Generally, the discussion starts with overall impressions and gradually becomes more specific. By using this approach it is possible to gain access to the experiences of many different individuals and, as individuals interact with one another, data is enriched, enabling views to be reformulated through exchange. It is particularly suited to research amongst populations whose views find little hearing in general society, for example persons with cognitive disabilities in sheltered workshops.

Focus groups are an extremely valuable tool to investigate the needs of the Include³ project target groups.

Some main points:

- We shall have dual moderator/facilitator¹ focus groups: one moderator/facilitator will ensure that the session progresses smoothly, while another will take notes and ensure that all the topics are covered. The focus groups in BE/DE, CY and SI will be moderated by 2 members of the project teams.

¹ The moderator and the researcher can be the same person. In different case, the moderator follows the instructions of the researcher.

- We shall have semi-structured focus groups: the moderator/facilitator has a set agenda and does not let the group deviate significantly from it. However there is some flexibility within the main framework: the participants can take control of the discussion process, moving the conversation to topics that are of relevance to them.
- The focus groups will take place in a formal setting designated by the researcher and the participants will be invited to take part to the focus group.
- Leading a good focus group discussion is a balancing act between on the one hand flexibility, allowing a free-flowing conversation, and on the other structure, ensuring that the conversation does not stray too far from the research objectives, that it remains relevant, inclusive of everyone and not dominated by one person. It is very important to obtain responses from the maximum number of people in the group to get the fullest coverage.
- We will first have a focus group A with only participants with intellectual disabilities (at least 5 participants), so they can define their positions in a safe space.
- We will then enter a focus group B to discuss with all involved members of focus group A, CGC and inclusion professionals (at least 4), sheltered-workshop VET specialists (at least 2) and employers (at least 3)).
- It's important to moderate between the dominant person and the shy person, and to encourage equality of contribution. This should be done tactfully, with avoidance of hurting someone or embarrassing them. A lot can be achieved by eye contact: withdraw it from the dominant person, look at the shy person encouragingly. If this fails, then try a verbal intervention: "That was very interesting, can we perhaps hear some other views?", "You haven't had a chance to say what you think".
- Expression of personal views should be encouraged: participants need to feel free to say what they think, which they may find difficult if they feel that it is not socially acceptable. The facilitator should encourage this by stressing that disagreement, and challenging received attitudes, is acceptable.
- Focus groups should take place by the end of August 2023 the latest.
- Please notice: The best way for documentation and analysis is to record focus groups. MS Teams offers cost-free in time transcription.
- Notice: Template for data protection declaration will be uploaded in Drive.

Guidelines

Phase	Description
Setting the scene and laying ground rules	As participants arrive, the facilitator should welcome them and thank them for coming. Once everybody is present and seated, the facilitator should provide a brief introduction outlining the purpose of research, laying ground rules (one person to talk at a time, all views welcome, confidentiality) and to stress that there is no hidden agenda, and that all views will be treated in confidence.
Getting to know each other	Next, each participant introduces themselves, giving name and a brief bit of background.
Introducing a theme that needs to be explored	The facilitator introduces the opening topic/question, which should be fairly general, and capable of generating discussion. Attempts should be made to make everyone contribute as a way of breaking into the group. It may be necessary for the facilitator to intervene quite a bit by asking questions, and generally keeping the discussion going.
Discussion	When the discussion gets under way, the facilitator will need to make sure that all points are covered and promote group discussion.
Introducing another theme that needs to be explored	The facilitator will use a guide with a list of topics/questions to be covered. It is advisable however to have memorized this list in advance, as to read from questions will look forced and inhibit discussion.
Discussion	After each theme there will be discussion among the group
Ending the discussion	<p>Before ending the focus group, participants should be encouraged to state their final position on key topics and offer any additional comments relevant to the group's key purpose.</p> <p>It is very important to end the discussion on a positive note and also to thank people for coming.</p>

Main Themes/ Questions

Questions/ themes are designed to: (a) investigate the topics that Include³ focuses on and provide concrete data, (b) be sufficiently stimulating, (c) be relevant to the participants, and (d) be open, so as to lead to in-depth responses and rich data. It is important to stick to the questions to have information about all relevant areas.

- Questionnaire is uploaded in Drive. All partners agreed to the last version will follow the questions in the questionnaire. Gathering data and answers on each question in the questionnaire will ensure quality of the analysis.

Analysing the data

Each researcher should look at his/her notes, and analyze the main themes and sub-themes, as well as the participants' characteristics. You need to think about how you are going to substantiate your findings: what is the real evidence? Are there particular characteristics of the participants which might affect the data? Are there any particularly strong statements? Does a consensus emerge? It is important to stick to the analysing scheme to have a unified structure throughout all focus groups as there will be an international comparing report.

There is the possibility of using analysing software (e.g. free test version of [MaxQDA](#)) to have a clearer structure in results. Please enumerate your interview partners (for example employer 1 to 3: E1, E2, E3; person with disabilities: P1, P2, P3, ...; inclusion experts: I1, I2, I3, ...; persons with VET responsibilities: V1, V2, V3, ...).

Grid will be uploaded.

The Grid will be set online to facilitate its completion by the researchers. Once all partners have submitted it, the DE and CY will proceed in analyzing the data from all countries. CY will have the editorial responsibility.

[HdBA – the University of Applied Labour Studies](#), as the national institution responsible for the education of specialists to work in the Federal Employment Agency, has a particular expertise on questions of vocational education and training (VET) and counselling with regards to such questions. This includes the education and training of counsellors working in the specialist departments for supporting people with disabilities who are, among other things, responsible for assigning clients into the VET section of sheltered workshops. HdBA has a specialised chair for inclusion studies and focused resources on this area over recent years.

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[OZARA](#) service and disability company d.o.o. is one of the national key service providers in the field of vocational rehabilitation and social inclusion. Enjoying indisputable status of professional authority in the field of training, employment of persons with disabilities, social inclusion, vocational and employment rehabilitation in Slovenia, OZARA d.o.o. brings crucial resources to the consortium by transferring its knowledge regarding the needs identified in the scope of project proposal. It has around 150 potential end users, and tens of professional workers and mentors, supporting these disadvantaged groups.

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[The VHS Bildungsinstitut](#) (Adult Education Centre) is the educational service of the Christian Labour Movement (CAB) in East Belgium, in the German speaking Community. The CAB is the largest social movement in Belgium. The VHS is engaged mainly in social-political learning activities, such as trainings for project coordinators for cultural and social projects, and in the ACADEMY 50+ in training for elderly people in different subjects such as politic sciences, sociology, philosophy, history, cognitive stimulation, etc. After 2015, the VHS coordinated the integration pathway in East Belgium with language classes (German) on different levels and civic lessons for all people coming to the German speaking Community. The VHS is also involved in trainings for unemployed persons in application techniques, and integration into the labour market. These are also topics that are discussed in several Erasmus+ projects.

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[SYNTHESIS](#) Centre for Research and Education Ltd is a pioneering organisation which initiates and implements projects of positive social impact, with a focus on social inclusion and accessibility of services and products for everyone. SYNTHESIS is one of the leading institutions in Cyprus in the fields of social entrepreneurship and social innovation. It founded and manages HUB NICOSIA, an educational centre and a community of organisations with cultural, environmental and social aims. SYNTHESIS main target groups are people from the marginalised/ disadvantaged / vulnerable parts of the society, such as youth, adults and the aging population, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, people with physical and mental disabilities.

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[VšĮ "eMundus"](#) has a broad expertise in the development of various ICT applications. The mission of eMundus is to actively promote the development of the knowledge society by developing services related to educational activities, information technology, innovation and practical applications in education and social activities, ecology, healthy lifestyles and harmonious education in order to ensure quality cooperation.

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