

Transnational report

Community engagement events as a feedback loop for assessing needs in counselling, vocational training and networking in the transition from sheltered employment to the general labour market

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Introduction

Jenny Schulz

The realisation of Community Engagement Events are part of WP3 of the Erasmus+ project "Include³". Include³ is a European project that will run from September 2022 to August 2025 and focuses on the transition of people with cognitive disabilities from sheltered employment to the general labour market. The project aims to identify and disseminate good practice in vocational training and counselling in sheltered workshops in preparation for and during the transition to the general labour market. In addition, the project aims to develop a curriculum that supports counselling practitioners in an inclusive process to bring together people with cognitive disabilities, companies and vocational training in workshops in order to enable a transition to the general labour market. The project involves the Federal Employment Agency University of Applied Sciences (Germany), VHS Bildungsinstitut VoG (Belgium), Synthesis Centre for Research and Education (Cyprus), eMundus (Lithuania) and Ozara d.o.o. (Slovenia).

The aim of the community engagement events was, on the one hand, to inform those involved in the field of inclusion about the "Include³" project and thus increase the reach of the project results. On the other hand, the participants were to come together for a targeted exchange in order to provide feedback on the results from focus group interviews and guidelines. The community engagement events thus ensure that the results of our project are relevant to practice and take into account the needs and experiences of those involved. In addition, we found that those involved in the field of inclusion contributed important topics and thoughts that they are currently dealing with in practice, over and above our presentation topics.

A total of four community engagement events took place between 23 February 2024 and 15 March 2024 in Belgium, Cyprus, Germany and Slovenia with a total of 70 participants in attendance.

The following individual reports from the countries highlight the diverse impulses that the Include³ team gave to those present and the corresponding feedback from those involved in the field of inclusion. In addition, the individual contributors and the day's proceedings are also briefly analysed. Where workshops were held, the structure and results of the workshops are presented. While the events in Cyprus and Slovenia were primarily informational in nature, workshops were also offered in Germany and Belgium.

Category	Belgium	Cyprus	Germany	Slovenia
Date	28 February 2024	23 February 2024	27 February 2024	15 March 2024
Participants	13	10	27	20

Table 1: Overview of the community engagement events

Belgium: Presentation of the Include3 project and workshop

Ursula Meyer

On 28 February 2024, a community engagement event was held in Eupen as part of the Include3 project. Various inclusion experts, employers from social enterprises, employees from special schools and a person with disabilities were welcomed as participants. A total of 13 participants were present.

The programme drawn up by the VHS Bildungsinstitut provided for a general introduction to the Include3 project, a somewhat more detailed presentation of the progress made so far and a workshop on the topic of inclusion in the primary labour market.

Tasks and objectives

As not everyone present had already taken part in the multiplier event, Liliane Mreyen from the VHS presented the objectives of the Include3 project. In particular, the aspect of providing counselling and training for people with disabilities from a single source and offering appropriate training material was emphasised. Another important objective emphasised was to prepare employers and future colleagues of people with disabilities for the new situation and to develop appropriate materials or training courses for them.

The participants found the international aspect particularly interesting, which could provide new impetus for their own considerations. As there is a separation between counselling and training in Belgium, a far-reaching change would have to be initiated here.

Project results to date

Ursula Meyer then presented the findings from the focus groups that were conducted last year together with people with disabilities and inclusion experts. The most important criteria for inclusion in the primary labour market cited by the people concerned were stress reduction, conflict avoidance and opportunities to develop their special skills. For the employees from the sheltered workshops, the focus was on better networking with employers in the primary labour market and creating more incentives for inclusion. It was also important to involve the private sector as an active partner and to achieve stronger networking between all parties involved.

The presentation of the guidelines, insofar as they were available at the time, met with particular interest. Their aim is to provide the basis for an overall concept for the content and methodology of counselling and training for people with cognitive impairments. The guidelines are intended to act as guidelines to provide orientation for the work of all those involved in the inclusion process.

The basic principles are shown in the following diagram:

4. Bisherige Ergebnisse: Guidelines Phasen und Grundprinzipien der Beratung



Illustration 1 Results of the guidelines to date

Ursula Meyer emphasised reflection in the counselling cycle as a particularly important aspect, especially for the situation in Belgium. This is not just about considering how well the person has enjoyed a work placement, but above all whether new insights or skills have emerged from it. It may then be necessary to go through the process again, but this should be possible in any case.

To ensure this, the role of the counsellor must also be adapted to the process. According to the Include3 method, the work of the trainers should be combined with that of the counsellors, thus building a close relationship of trust. Ursula Meyer also emphasised that the Include3 method does not want to and cannot reinvent everything, but rather review existing procedures or tools for their benefits and integrate them into an overall methodological concept.

Discussion

A lively discussion quickly ensued after this presentation, in which the results of the guidelines were transferred to the special situation in Belgium. There, counselling for people with disabilities is in the hands of the DSL (Service for Self-Determined Living), while the sheltered workshops are responsible for training.

In the discussion, the categorisation of people with and without disabilities was generally questioned. Basically, every person has a need for support in some respect, even as a child, and this should be taken into account. Without the categorisation of a disability, the inhibitions of non-disabled people could also disappear. However, as long as these remain, more emphasis should be placed on educational work.

And companies need to be better prepared for people with disabilities. They are difficult to train and need to be supported. And human resources, such as job coaches, are needed to look after all employees. To arouse more interest here, political pressure on employers would have to be increased, e.g. through social clauses such as those that exist in the public sector.

However, a lot could also be done through better networking and communication, but information is often lacking. It was therefore very much welcomed that the Include3 method also includes learning videos and similar information material. There are already many measures in place and 350 companies in East Belgium already work with people with disabilities. The experience of a physically disabled participant shows that her colleagues reacted very positively and were helpful. However, this can be different for people with cognitive disabilities.

Workshop

The second part of the community engagement event was followed by a workshop aimed at pooling the experiences and ideas of the participants. A combination of two methods was planned: the World Café and the Walt Disney method. The coffee house atmosphere, the tablecloths on which everyone could write and the specific questions were adopted from the World Café. The Walt Disney method consists of dividing the participants into three groups: the dreamers, the realists and the critics. Each group was given a question and 20 minutes to discuss it. One person moderated the table, wrote the most important points on moderation cards and later presented the results.

Overall, there was a very lively exchange on the following questions:

- What could inclusion in the DG look like in 2050? (dreamer)
- How could inclusion be improved today? (Realist)
- What are the problems with inclusion? (Critics)

The following key points were developed by the participants:



Illustration 2: Results of the workshop

Dreamer:

- Strengthened cooperation
- Differences in abilities don't matter, everyone can do something and this is also recognised
- Open communication
- Community projects that do not emphasise differences
- Negative energy is transformed into positive energy
- Intersectionality is recognised and multiple exclusion is eliminated

Realist:

- Social skills could be better promoted at school
- Destigmatisation of services and sheltered workshops
- Support in the company through intercultural mediators
- Create social clauses that reward companies if they hire a person with support needs and do not penalise them if they do not
- More information in plain language
- Living inclusion means accepting the needs of others
- Rethinking social norms and values

Critics:

- Lack of social acceptance and fear of contact
- Overwhelmed by what does not conform to the norm
- Long-term support for companies cannot be financed
- Supporting people with support needs in the private sector is much more time-consuming than in a sheltered workshop

The lively discussion came to an end at lunchtime, with the participants promising to continue monitoring the progress of the Include3 project and expressing their desire for detailed documentation of the event. The VHS Bildungsinstitut was also asked to involve the media, including traditional print media, even more in order to generate more publicity for the topic of inclusion.

Cyprus: Include³ information day

Georgia Karaoli

Introduction

On the morning of 23 February 2024, the Include3 project team hosted a significant event at "The View Cafe," part of the Christou Steliou Ioannou Foundation. The session, scheduled between 10:30 and 12:15, was aimed at discussing the integration of individuals with intellectual disabilities into the workforce and society at large. The event attracted various participants, including specialists in inclusion, psychologists, ergo-therapists, counsellors, and career guidance specialists. Notably, the event also saw the participation of representatives from the Self-Advocacy Group, a team of mentally disabled individuals advocating for themselves in various decision-making contexts.

Proceedings

The event commenced with the arrival and registration of participants from 10:30 to 10:40, followed by a warm welcome from Georgia Karaoli of SYNTHESIS. The first presentation, held by the Self-Advocacy Group, outlined their identity, objectives, actions, and future steps. This presentation was crucial in setting the tone for the event, emphasising the importance of self-representation and autonomy for individuals with intellectual disabilities.

Following this, Georgia Karaoli took the stage again to introduce the Include3 project. This project, aimed at the inclusion of individuals with intellectual disabilities in the labour market and broader social context, was discussed in detail. The presentation covered the project's overview and future directions. The project's goal is to create supportive materials such as podcasts, videos, and graphic representations to facilitate the smooth integration of individuals with intellectual disabilities into the open labour market.

Karaoli also detailed objectives targeted at specialists and inclusion counsellors, which include developing a guide with theoretical methods, practical applications, and best practices to support the transition. An educational programme specifically designed for professional guidance counsellors is also in development, aiming to provide the necessary tools and methodologies for effective inclusion.

Outcomes and Future Directions

The Include3 project has yielded several key outcomes, including an international report on best practices across Europe and the ongoing development of a guide for counsellors. Future steps include the creation of a training programme for counsellors and an online platform featuring open educational resources.

In Cyprus, the focus group discussions highlighted the current state of the labour market, which is notably limited due to the country's size, resulting in inadequate employment opportunities for individuals with cognitive difficulties. The creation of an inclusive culture was emphasised as a crucial part of the counselling process, requiring education for both rehabilitated adults and their future colleagues.

The counselling process should aim to eliminate stereotypes and teach effective communication strategies. Another point raised was the emotional and psychological resilience of rehabilitated individuals and how to support them in developing relevant skills and competencies.

Materials and Resources

The educational materials, as advised by professionals and guidance counsellors, should be updated, user-friendly, and contextually relevant. Open channels of communication between all parties involved, including rehabilitated individuals, families, employers, employees, counsellors, and other relevant professionals, are essential.

Professional Training for Transition Preparation

Professionals in the inclusion field are working closely with the Cyprus Career Counselling Association's "Inclusion Department." There is a focus on finding ways to support rehabilitated individuals in a manner that fosters their desire and effort for greater autonomy in their professional and economic lives.

Networking

The need for a platform where interested employers and employees or inclusion experts can communicate to match needs with available personnel was highlighted. The methodology and curriculum should promote networking skills.

Conclusion

The Include3 event at the Christou Steliou Ioannou Foundation was a pivotal moment for all participants, including the dynamic team from the Self-Advocacy Group. The discussions and presentations not only highlighted the current efforts and achievements of the Include3 project but also set the stage for future collaborations, particularly with the Christou Steliou Ioannou Special School, which expressed keen interest in future cooperation.

The event concluded with a casual gathering, offering beverages and snacks, where participants had the opportunity to network, share ideas, and show mutual respect. This social aspect of the event underscored the importance of community and collaboration in the journey towards inclusive employment and societal integration for individuals with intellectual disabilities.

In summary, the Include3 project event was a comprehensive and insightful session that not only provided valuable information on the current state and future directions of inclusion efforts but also fostered a sense of community and shared purpose among all attendees.

Germany: Include³ information and action day with workshop

Jenny Schulz

Brief description

On 27 February 2024, a specialist event in the EU-funded "Include3" project took place on the premises of the University of Applied Labour Studies (HdBA).

27 experts accepted the invitation from Prof. Dr Silvia Keller, Prof. Dr Yasemin Körtek and Jenny Schulz.

In their welcoming speeches, Prof. Dr. Silvia Keller and Antonia Lesle, Head of Vocational Training at Diakoniewerkstätten Rhein-Neckar, emphasised the particular importance of people with disabilities for the primary labour market in times of a shortage of skilled workers.

Jenny Schulz then informed those present about the project objectives (including the creation of a curriculum to support education and counselling in the transition from sheltered employment to the general labour market) and the work packages in the project.

She also gave a brief insight into podcasts, explanatory videos and reports that have already been finalised.

Prof. Dr. Yasemin Körtek talked about the transition from sheltered employment to the general labour market from the perspective of current guidance and education practices in Belgium, Cyprus, Germany and Slovenia. She presented results from several focus group interviews with experts from the fields of inclusion, vocational education and training, companies and experts in their own right.

Prof. Dr. Silvia Keller then explored the question of what is needed in vocational training and counselling during the transition from sheltered employment to the general labour market. She presented guidelines that are being developed in the Include3 project and serve as the basis for the development of a curriculum for the training of counsellors and vocational training staff.

Afterwards, the attendees had the opportunity to share their expertise and views on the main statements of the Include3 guidelines in three workshop groups. This expertise provides the project with valuable feedback for the further development of the guidelines.

Marlene Schleicher from Elterninitiative Rhein-Neckar e.V. then gave a moving account of how her son Kai found a job on the general labour market. She highlighted challenges and favourable factors.

Finally, Prof Dr Silvia Keller bid farewell to those present and gave an outlook on the curriculum and the next steps in the project.

The Include3 team would like to thank all those present for the successful exchange.

Results

1.1.1 Group A: Experts from the service providers

Counselling on the transition from the workshop for people with disabilities to the general labour market	How do you like the statements?	I would like to add this to the statements:	What experience/ideas do you have for implementation?
Through counselling, people with disabilities should discover their strengths and powers. And thus make decisions and achieve goals (empowerment).	😊	Depending on the understanding of counselling	Development planning, view of the labour market Integration: EUTB and AA
People with disabilities should express their own opinions and have a say in the counselling process (participation).	😊		Reflection, Individual, Self-efficacy, Participation
There should be a permanent contact person for people with disabilities. The contact person provides counselling. And supports the transition from the workshop to the labour market.	😐	Implementation difficult	Transition management, networking, open hierarchical structure
There are several steps in the counselling process. The person with a disability and the contact person talk together in the steps. The steps are: Orientation, trying out, deciding and considering.	😊	Change of perspective, strength-orientated, competence-orientated	Enable development process (honesty), development-orientated
A suitability assessment should be carried out during counselling. Suitability assessment means looking at which tasks are suitable for a person with a disability.	😊	Strength-orientated, competence-orientated, job carving	Development-orientated, application possibilities, competence-orientated

Counselling on the transition from the workshop for people with disabilities to the general labour market	How do you like the statements?	I would like to add this to the statements:	What experience/ideas do you have for implementation?
In the beginning, the contact person should often see the person with a disability in the company and accompany them closely. Later, the support should become less frequent.	😞	Support structures situational, personnel development (sustainable)	Note: The accompaniment may become less frequent later on.
The method should address how to deal with dual roles (e.g. counsellor simultaneously imparts vocational training content and is network coordinator).	😊	Mental health, competence expectation	

Table 2: Group A: Experts from the service providers on the results of counselling

Vocational training in the workshops to prepare for the labour market	How do you like the statements?	I would like to add this to the statements:	What experience/ideas do you have for implementation?
In vocational training, people with disabilities should learn: What are work virtues? How do I behave in the company?	😊	Expectations Cultural group, social environment, scope of peer support	Sensitisation in the company
In vocational training, people with disabilities should learn: What professions are there? What do you need to be able to do the jobs?	😊	Expectations Cultural group, social environment, scope of peer support	Sensitisation in the company, note: instead of professions, which activities are there?
In vocational training, people with disabilities should learn: How do I deal with anxiety at work? How can I become stress-free? How do I deal with conflicts?	😊	Expectations Cultural group, social environment, scope of peer support	Sensitisation in the company

Table 3: Group A: Experts from the service providers on the results of vocational training

Networks during the transition	How do you like the statements?	I would like to add this to the statements:	What experience/ideas do you have for implementation?
There are various network partners involved in the transition from the workshop to the general labour market. Network partners are, for example, employers, carers, the employment agency and the job coach. All network partners should know each other and work well together.	😐 Vision	Identifying boundaries (family, third parties), clarifying roles, maintaining networks/structures, time management	Speed dating
The job coach or counsellor should have an overview of the network.	😐 Vision	Dealing with results (solution-orientated) and leadership in the network	Individual added value, operational level as specialists, exchange/evaluation, framework and time
Job coaches and counsellors should learn and contribute networking skills for the management of the inclusion network for transition.	😊 Vision		

Table 4: Group A: Experts from the service providers on networking results

1.1.2 Group B: Expert workshop

Counselling on the transition from the workshop for people with disabilities to the general labour market	How do you like the statements?	I would like to add this to the statements:	What experience/ideas do you have for implementation?
Through counselling, people with disabilities should discover their strengths and powers. And thus make decisions and achieve goals (empowerment).	😊	It depends on the counsellor. Counselling and empowerment should start much earlier.	The network is important for empowerment. Results from previous counselling sessions must be included. And include your personal network.
People with disabilities should express their own opinions and have a say in the counselling process (participation).	😊😊	Point of criticism: Experience. Counsellor listens to requests but does not help accordingly (one-way street). Employers do not accept people with disabilities or have little patience. Long waiting lists, for example for job coaching.	Guidance for employers on flexible working hours, part-time work, increasing hours, a job should be behind an internship offer.
There should be a permanent contact person for people with disabilities. The contact person provides counselling. And supports the transition from the workshop to the labour market.	😊	Criticism: Experience with changing contact persons. You have to be able to choose the contact person you like.	The contact person must really be permanent. The chemistry must be right. There should be a choice of several contact persons. Wish: at least 3 people to choose from.
There are several steps in the counselling process. The person with a disability and the contact person talk together in the	😊	The addition: it is not a pure sequence. It is not a completed process and the decision-	Really serious internships, counsellor should check, close support, also

Counselling on the transition from the workshop for people with disabilities to the general labour market	How do you like the statements?	I would like to add this to the statements:	What experience/ideas do you have for implementation?
steps. The steps are: Orientation, trying out, deciding and considering.		making phase should be in the hands of the person with a disability. It must continue in a circle (not a linear process). Employers must be involved in the counselling. Employers and people with disabilities should formulate their decision transparently and fairly. Criticism: in practice, employers often have no real interest in hiring. Dilemma of disincentives in the pension system	counselling on ways back into the workshop, financial guidance for people with disabilities
A suitability assessment should be carried out during counselling. Suitability assessment means looking at which tasks are suitable for a person with a disability.	😊 😐	Can cause anxiety: exam situation. Suitability changes over time.	Offer an individual aptitude assessment: an internship, a trial task, a test situation, an assessment. Select from these where the person with a disability can best present themselves. An overall picture must be established over a long period of time. It must be possible to repeat the aptitude test.
In the beginning, the contact person should often see the person with a disability in the company and accompany them closely. Later, the support should become less frequent.	😊	Positive. Good feeling when you can do something on your own without the counsellor/contact person.	

Counselling on the transition from the workshop for people with disabilities to the general labour market	How do you like the statements?	I would like to add this to the statements:	What experience/ideas do you have for implementation?
The method should address how to deal with dual roles (e.g. counsellor simultaneously imparts vocational training content and is network coordinator).	Was not asked in the group.	Was not asked in the group.	Was not asked in the group.

Table 5: Group B: Expert workshop on results for counselling

Vocational training in the workshops to prepare for the labour market	How do you like the statements?	I would like to add this to the statements:	What experience/ideas do you have for implementation?
In vocational training, people with disabilities should learn: What are work virtues? How do I behave in the company?	😊	Supplement: punctuality, reliability, adherence to breaks.	Training: Clock reading, practical life lessons, further training, training contingent: modules from which you can choose, like from a buffet. Individual training.
In vocational training, people with disabilities should learn: What professions are there? What do you need to be able to do the jobs?	😊😞	Do not define an area from the outset. Do not force anyone into an area that they do not want.	Practical life lessons, further training, further training contingent: modules from which you can choose like from a buffet. Individual training.
In vocational training, people with disabilities should learn: How do I deal with anxiety at work? How can I become stress-free? How do I deal with conflicts?	😊	Currently difficult to implement, but more should be done.	Shouting, relaxation rituals, reducing group sizes.

Table 6: Group B: Expert workshop on the results of vocational training

Networks during the transition	How do you like the statements?	I would like to add this to the statements:	What experience/ideas do you have for implementation?
There are various network partners involved in the transition from the workshop to the general labour market. Network partners are, for example, employers, carers, the employment agency and the job coach. All network partners should know each other and work well together.	😊 😐	If the person with a disability wants the partners to be involved. The expertise of the network partners must be right.	The chemistry between the person with a disability and the network partner must be right. Everyone has an individual network map.
The job coach or counsellor should have an overview of the network.	😊 😐	Existing networks must also be taken into account. More say for people with disabilities, basis of trust	No statement
Job coaches and counsellors should learn and contribute networking skills for the management of the inclusion network for transition.	Was not asked in the group.	Was not asked in the group.	Was not asked in the group.

Table 7: Group B: Expert workshop on networking results

1.1.3 Group C: Experts from the area of transition from workshop to work

Counselling on the transition from the workshop for people with disabilities to the general labour market	How do you like the statements?	I would like to add this to the statements:	What experience/ideas do you have for implementation?
Through counselling, people with disabilities should discover their strengths and powers. And thus make decisions and achieve goals (empowerment).	😊	Also applies to other groups of people with disabilities. It's about the person who wants it. The right to wish and the right to choose.	No comments
People with disabilities should express their own opinions and have a say in the counselling process (participation).	😊	Counselling as a participatory process. Counselling also means showing ways forward.	No comments
There should be a permanent contact person for people with disabilities. The contact person provides counselling. And supports the transition from the workshop to the labour market.	😊	Counsellors should be sensitised - for clients and their environment. Trust, transparency, education.	No comments
There are several steps in the counselling process. The person with a disability and the contact person talk together in the steps. The steps are: Orientation, trying out, deciding and considering.	😊	Steps must always be adapted to the person concerned.	No comments
A suitability assessment should be carried out during counselling. Suitability assessment means looking at which tasks are suitable for a person with a disability.	😊	Evaluation of performance and observations during the internship.	No comments

Counselling on the transition from the workshop for people with disabilities to the general labour market	How do you like the statements?	I would like to add this to the statements:	What experience/ideas do you have for implementation?
		Conclusive, available, complete documentation of trials/suitability diagnostics	
In the beginning, the contact person should often see the person with a disability in the company and accompany them closely. Later on, the support should become less frequent.	😊	Aids, funding/support, creation of barrier-free workplaces.	Materials on occupational health and safety, hygiene regulations in simple or easy language (visualisation), profiling of the person concerned (skills, competencies, needs), routing slips for employers (regarding aids, disability images, possible work locations).
The method should address how to deal with dual roles (e.g. counsellor simultaneously imparts vocational training content and is network coordinator).	😊	Role and responsibility of the counsellor with consideration of perspectives.	No comments

Table 8: Experts from the area of transition from workshop to work on the results of counselling

Vocational training in the workshops to prepare for the labour market	How do you like the statements?	I would like to add this to the statements:	What experience/ideas do you have for implementation?
In vocational training, people with disabilities should learn: What are work virtues? How do I behave in the company?	😊	Target group-specific offers: Punctuality, perseverance	No comment.
In vocational training, people with disabilities should learn: What professions are there? What do you need to be able to do the jobs?	😊	What does the labour market need?	Time factor: person-centredness does not come for free. Recommendation to extend the education sector to three years (equality)
In vocational training, people with disabilities should learn: How do I deal with anxiety at work? How can I become stress-free? How do I deal with conflicts?	😊	Social skills, soft skills, reliability, communication	Vocational preparation (SRH): 40-point programme - exchange possible KuKuK training programme: contents include anxiety and stress reduction and InAcoach - digital coach for completing work tasks

Table 9: Experts from the area of transition from workshop to work on results on vocational training

Networks during the transition	How do you like the statements?	I would like to add this to the statements:	What experience/ideas do you have for implementation?
There are various network partners involved in the transition from the workshop to the general labour market. Network partners are, for example, employers, carers, the employment agency and the job coach. All network partners should know each other and work well together.	😊	Add the following partners to the network: schools (SBBZ), vocational schools, company representatives for the severely disabled, IFD, funding organisations for measures. Contact person in the workshop in close dialogue with the company contact person	Roadmap AG-BA: Identify eligibility for funding, processes/checklists Inclusive company network NRW: Interface transition - missing resource
The job coach or counsellor should have an overview of the network.	😊	Employer service: Calling up opportunities BA: Eligibility for internships (DRV, IFD) - transparency	Overlapping services Contact person/counsellor must be present/available after recruitment.
Job coaches and counsellors should learn and contribute networking skills for the management of the inclusion network for transition.	😊		Creating a network map a) Institution-related b) personalised

Table 10: Experts from the area of transition from workshop to work on networking results

Note: Not all statements contain a gendered form. This is due to the simple language of the original statements, which are reproduced in this table.

Slovenia: Information day and lively exchange

Moira Kobše

On 15th of March 2024, OZARA d.o.o., Slovenian partner of Include3 project presented advancing results and developments in the project to the public. The main focus of the Multiplier event was on presenting the developments within the project that happened in the last year as a lot of new material was developed.

All together 20 external participants joined the event with participants from public and private sphere: Employment centres, Center for reuse social business, Institute for development of alternative practices social business, Local Higher education school, Employment office, Private business entities and media counselling organisation. The event was also open for participants to Social inclusion programme of OZARA d.o.o.

The event was concluded with opening debate about the first outline of Include3 method curriculum and focus on specific thematic. The debate among participants focused on general clusters of feedback that can be summarised as follows:

Employment and/or returning to labour market: depending on many factors outside (availability of supportive environments, non-discriminatory practices, understanding the meaningful contribution of target groups to the labour market, shift of perspective that does not happen only on societal level but also on systemic level - i.e. recently regained right of voting).

The network of rehabilitation services needs to be strengthened for offering more space and especially time for individualised approach.

Independent living concept that includes service and promotion of living outside of institution to foster independency (living as such than connects to all aspects of life including labour market transition).

Most important conclusion taken out of the feedback received can be connected to national or systemic shifts that are notably happening or taking place in recent years (especially since 2018, when the Resolution on the National Mental Health Programme 2018-2028 has been developed). Employment, the right to work even if under supported conditions is one of the most important elements of independent living. The so-called "having a say" from the most vulnerable societal groups needs to be taken into account within decision making process within different services. Rehabilitation process remains and was communicated as one of the most important processes to bring together employers and potential employees as adaptation of workplace is a necessity, a right and offers services that enables both parties to find best possible solution.

One of the remaining challenges currently and in the future is the reality of employment market as such and flexible job opportunities - the mismatch in needs from specific business sector skilled labour force, working day structure and task's structure being adaptable to people with disabilities. The typology of work that is adaptable to people with intellectual disabilities and also mostly available to their ability is more feasible in employment centres since there is much more flexibility to adapt also the work procedures to individual ability of each employee that is facing limitations in this sense.

Conclusion

Jenny Schulz

The individual reports on the community engagement events show that the results from the focus groups and the guidelines in the individual countries met with great interest among those present and stimulated interesting discussions.

The key results of the community engagement events for the individual countries are summarised below.

- Belgium: At the community engagement event, it was emphasised that the results of the guidelines need to be adapted to the national and local context. Companies need to be better prepared for employees with disabilities and there needs to be better networking and information for all stakeholders involved in the inclusion process.
- Cyprus: The participants in Cyprus also emphasised the importance of networking and exchange between relevant stakeholders and groups for the inclusion of people with disabilities.
- Germany: In workshops, those present agreed with the statement that the transition to the general labour market requires individual counselling, networking by the counsellor, a great deal of reflection during the process and coordinated training content.
- Slovenia: Strengthening the network of rehabilitation providers was also at the centre of discussions in Slovenia. In addition, employment in or return to the general labour market depends on a variety of factors. Those present also emphasised that the independence of people with disabilities is important. Empowerment can be achieved, for example, through forms of housing that promote independence.

The results of the discussions serve as feedback from the field and from experts themselves and flow directly into the creation of the guidelines in the Include³ project.

[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 political 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](#) Center 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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