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INCLUSIVE MOBILITY: SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AT EU LEVEL

Project Title	MOB4ALL
Intellectual Output	IO1 –A3
Deliverable Name	Global report Inclusive Mobility: Supporting Students with Special Needs at EU level”
Date of Delivery	
Author(s)	All MOB4ALL partners



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

General context

Economic and social participation of people with disabilities is essential to achieve EU's goals of creating smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth. However, several barriers still need to be tackled.

In the field of education and training, the Erasmus+ programme aims at facilitating the access to participants with disadvantaged backgrounds and fewer opportunities, thus supporting the European Commission's objective of making learning mobility a reality for all.

Nevertheless, only a small percentage of mobility beneficiaries reported at least one type of disadvantaged situations (19%). Of these, only 1% reported disability (defined as mental, physical, sensory, or other disabilities), which reinforces their low participation in mobility opportunities [Erasmus+ Higher Education Impact Study 2019].

MOB4ALL project objectives

MOB4ALL aims to promote the transnational mobility of students with special needs through the capacity building of the different actors who can support these students in the context of international mobility for educational purposes (Professors, staff members from International Relations Offices/mobility officers, staff members from other specialised units and tutor students/buddies).

By establishing a cooperation among HEIs, specialised mobility providers and institutions supporting students and people with disabilities at EU level, the project will transform the participant HEIs environments through the development and sharing of individual-centred practices and protocols, thus reducing the inequality of access to resources and opportunities in Higher Education.

With a duration of 30 months, MOB4ALL will achieve the following intellectual outputs:



- O1 – Preparation of the Report “Inclusive Mobility: Supporting Students with Special Needs at EU level”, which seeks to raise awareness on the needs of students with disabilities and to identify transferable successful practices and procedures leading to an increase in the quality and number of students with special needs participating in transnational mobility activities for educational purposes;
- O2 – Development and implementation of the Specialised Training Course “Training for Better Integration of Mobility Participants with Disabilities” targeting different actors who can support students with disabilities in the context of international mobility for educational purposes;
- O3 – Creation of Guidelines for Mobility Officers, Academic and Non-academic Staff, and Tutor Students, describing a methodology supporting these staff members to better manage the needs of incoming and outgoing mobility students with disabilities.

The main target groups of MOB4ALL encompass:

- Academic staff members (Professors, tutor Professors);
- Non-Academic staff members (managers and staff members from International Relations Offices at HEIs and other staff members active in providing direct support to students with special needs);
- Tutors and coaches from associated partners and other relevant public and private stakeholders;
- Tutor students that support students with special needs involved in mobility actions (buddies);
- Students with special needs/disabilities.

Moreover, MOB4ALL will also target: HEIs, researchers, teacher associations, youth associations, policy-makers, public entities and other stakeholders active in social inclusion policies, as well as among relevant lo

Methodology

Based on the research methodology developed as part of O1. A1, all partners have conducted an analysis to identify the main aspects and procedures that have contribute to the success of inclusive mobility projects/actions in the EU.

Case studies and inspiring practices targeting the international mobility of students with special needs have been reviewed, in order to identify practices and procedures that can be transferred, adapted, and valorised as part of MOB4ALL.

Consortium partners have organised targeted meetings/discussion groups with students with disabilities, in order to collect their feedback and to better understand their needs.

This report compiles all the case studies and inspiring practices and the feedback from students with disabilities gathered by the consortium partners.



Main Findings summary

International mobility programmes have comparable advantages for students with disabilities as with the general student population in terms of higher academic achievement, increased language skills, personal confidence, and personal development.

However, statistics show that students with disabilities are still underrepresented in international mobility programmes, further deepening their already disadvantaged position among peers.

Like other students, students with disabilities want to take part in mobility programmes.

Thanks to the meetings and case studies realized by each consortium partner, several problems have been identified:

- 1/ A significant number of students choose not to disclose their disability to home institution
- 2/ Students with special needs think that Erasmus + or other mobility programme are not open for them. They don't know that support and complementary grants are available.
- 3/ Lack of accessible information about the host institution and the support service that can be put in place during the mobility
- 4/ Planning and preparation for an international mobility programme takes more time for students with disabilities as many factors need to be considered
- 5/ Fear about logistical aspects of the mobility



NATIONAL REPORT – AUSTRIA

Project Title	MOB4ALL
Intellectual Output	IO1 –A2
Deliverable Name	National Report
Date of Delivery	
Author(s)	MCI Innsbruck



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1. INTRODUCTION

This document is conceived to present the main national outcomes obtained as a result of the implementation of MOB4ALL project in **MCI Innsbruck (Austria)**.

MOB4ALL, aims to promote the transnational mobility of students with special needs through the capacity building of the different actors who can support these students in the context of international mobility for educational purposes (Professors, staff members from International Relations Offices/mobility officers, staff members from other specialised units and tutor students/buddies).

As a first step in the development of the project, IO1 had as final objectives the following:

- To collect 7 **case studies and inspiring good practices** targeting the international mobility of students with special needs will be reviewed, in order to identify practices and procedures that can be transferred, adapted, and valorised as part of MOB4ALL.
- 1 targeted **meeting/discussion group** with students with disabilities, in order to collect their feedback and to better understand their needs. (4 - 7 students with disabilities and, among them; the 3 types of disabilities should be present. Professors, staff members, mobility experts with experience in the field can be also involved as participants.)
- 1 National report per country with main findings and results.
- 1 Final Report: **“Inclusive Mobility: Supporting Students with Special Needs at EU level”**.

To achieve these goals, some concrete activities have been implemented in all partner countries with the aim of providing a true reflection of the perception about the situation of students with special needs in each of them. A research methodology was developed by INCOMA, and shared with the rest of the consortium.

Once the methodology had been defined, activities were implemented as described in the following sections of this document.

This report will compile the results of all the activities carried out in **MCI Innsbruck (Austria)** by **MCI Innsbruck** . Therefore, the **Austrian** National Report will serve as an overall picture of the students with special needs in Higher Institutions in **Austria**.



2. SUGGESTED STRUCTURE OF NATIONAL REPORTS

a. Introduction (method, target group...).

This report aims at raising awareness on the needs of students with disabilities. In addition to that, it identifies transferable successful practices and procedures leading to an increase in the quality and number of students with special needs participating in transnational mobility activities for educational purposes.

The following actions were taken for the National Report:

- (1) **in-depth expert interview** with PhD Elisabeth Rieder (Leopold-Franzens-Universität Innsbruck)
- (2) **a focus group interview** with various experts at MCI (participants, see table below) and
- (3) **a field research** about student X, being a student with disability at MCI who went abroad.

Target group of this project are students with disabilities but also academic staff members and non-academic staff members.

b. Analysis of the collected data (focus group, case study/ initiative).

The interviews (in-depth expert interview and focus group interview) as well as the field research about a student with disability who went abroad were conducted during the month of April. The data obtained was recorded in writing and analysed in a next step by the MOB4ALL project participants. The involvement of two people in the analysis ensured that no important information was lost and that the results were presented objectively.

c. Main Findings and outcomes of the in-depth interventions.

Student with disability going abroad:

In general spending a semester / internship abroad is an amazing experience but something, students do in addition to their studies at home. Bearing that in mind, it is an activity related to additional efforts and cost for the students. Therefore, it is especially challenging for students with disabilities to go for a semester/year abroad. This might be confirmed when having a look at the current situation: The overall number of young people and students experiencing Erasmus+ exchanges is increasing. In contrast to that, the number of students and young people with disabilities taking part in Erasmus+ has been almost stagnating over the past few years. Students with disabilities are in need for special guidance and support. The best practise enables students with disabilities to gain this experience.

Studying abroad was an achievement for the student himself on a personal and professional level. His tutor student was also able to study abroad while earning money for the help of student X, which was crucial for him to finance the semester abroad.

It was also a learning process for the university to understand what this student needs. This has supported the MCI in its approach to address the needs of students individually.



Results and Finding of Focus Group:

The focus group conducted with experts at MCI confirmed the lack of low-threshold services for students with disabilities as a problem. Even though MCI is currently, working on a support service for students with psychological problems and for students with disabilities there is still a huge amount of work forthcoming. Diversity and inclusion are values that are already manifested in MCI's spirit but need to be implemented in MCI's work and study process, both externally and internally.

Already implemented:

- guidelines for students with disabilities (special exam accommodations);
- handbook for students with dyslexia;
- inclusive mindset for employees with disabilities;
- MCI General Building is barrier-free;
- implementation of a disability officer;

Possible improvements:

- raising awareness both to internal and external audience;
- inclusion training courses for employees;
- events, lectures on the topics (possibly even a theme week/month);
- present a good example to the outside world: open from within;
- provide contact person with resources (to be a multiplier and to be able to network to the right points);
- be better prepared for request from partner universities;
- anchor the topic more strongly in research and development: projects to solve acute problems;

Expert interview with Elisabeth Rieder (LFU)

In general spending a semester / internship abroad is an amazing experience but something, students do in addition to their studies at home. Bearing that in mind, it is an activity related to additional efforts and cost for the students. Therefore, it is especially challenging for students with disabilities to go for a semester/year abroad. This might be confirmed when having a look at the current situation: The overall number of young people and students experiencing Erasmus+ exchanges is increasing. In contrast to that, the number of students and young people with disabilities taking part in Erasmus+ has been almost stagnating over the past few years. Students with disabilities are in need for special guidance and support. The best practise enables students with disabilities to gain this experience. Elisabeth Rieder is an expert in this field, who can provide the whole Mob4All Project with valuable insights into her work. An increase of outgoing students with disabilities at the University of Innsbruck demonstrates the importance and value of her work.

d. Overall national/local conclusions and recommendations.

The first phase shows that on a regional level, there are already a number of offices dealing with mobility concerns of students with disabilities. Next step for MCI would be to network with these institutions in order to learn from their knowledge and expertise, but also to anchor the topic more firmly. After completion of this first phase MCI launched an internal process to address the issues of inclusion and mobility for all from within, in parallel with the "MOB4ALL" project.



The next step will be to engage in discussions with various network partners in order to improve the situation. MCI will rely on partners with many years of experience as well as students with disabilities, who are involved as experts in their own cause.

At national level, there are already well-equipped offices, especially at the larger institutions, which support students with disabilities in going abroad. Nevertheless, such a stay is expensive and of high organizational effort. Therefore, on the one hand, further possibilities for support, as well as fundings, need to be implemented in order to increase the number of exchange students with disabilities.



3. ANNEXES

ANNEX 1

IO1. TEMPLATE FOR THE COLLECTION OF CASE STUDY

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Title or Headline:
<p>Experience of a semester abroad: MCI Student with disability (visual impairment) goes abroad</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduction: <i>General description of the scenario</i>
<p>Student X* was diagnosed with visual impairment (above 50%). 2017 he started his master degree studies at MCI. Due to the regulations at MCI the student was exempted from paying study fees. In addition to that, there were special exam accommodations in place for him (special computer for writing exams). Furthermore, student X had a study peer (tutor) by his side, helping him with studying in general (written notes, etc.). The tutor was paid through funding from his home country Denmark.</p> <p>As internationalization is one of the main pillars at MCI, student X decided to spend a semester abroad (United states of America). Together with the study program and International Relations Office at MCI student X did research on possible partner universities. In the end, student X considered Pepperdine University the best option for him.</p> <p>* on request of the student name and further information are not published.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Summary: <i>Analysis of the situation (Issues, challenges,...) (10-15 lines maximum)</i>
<p>One of the main challenges was that student X also needed his student tutor for his studies abroad. Having agreed upon only one exchange seat for MCI students at Pepperdine university, MCI was challenged to organize a second exchange spot for the tutor of student X.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Result: <i>How did the person solve the issue or drive a benefit?</i>
<p>With the effort of International Relations Office at MCI, the two universities came to an accommodation and Pepperdine University granted a second spot for student X's tutor. Finally, it was possible for both students to complete the semester abroad at the respective partner university in the USA.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conclusion/ Recommendations



Studying abroad was an achievement for the student himself on a personal and professional level. His tutor student was also able to study abroad while earning money for the help of student X, which was crucial for him to finance the semester abroad.



ANNEX 2

IO1. TEMPLATE FOR THE COLLECTION OF INSPIRING PRACTICES RELATED TO INCLUSIVE MOBILITY (STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Title:
<p>Inspiring practise related to inclusive mobility gathered through an expert interview with PhD Elisabeth Rieder (Leopold-Franzens-Universität Innsbruck)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Country of origin/Implementation
<p>Innsbruck, Austria</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Aims and description
<p>Organizational support of students with disabilities for their international semester. Guidance through contacting Office for the Disabled at the partner university. Organization of accommodation, contact persons, and travel issues etc. Special regards to modified examination regulations (same as home university). Financial support through national or regional funding, or via contact to students union.</p> <p>If needed search & payment of student tutor for supporting disabled student in any situation in the host country.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Link (E-learning or Provider)
<p>Homepage:</p> <p>https://www.uibk.ac.at/behindertenbeauftragte/</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Target Group
<p>People with disabilities for studies and internships abroad.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Relevance for MOB4ALL project outcomes
<p>In general spending a semester / internship abroad is an amazing experience but something, students do in addition to their studies at home. Bearing that in mind, it is an activity related to additional efforts and cost for the students. Therefore, it is especially challenging for students with disabilities to go for a semester/year abroad. This might be confirmed when having a look at the current situation: The overall number of young people and students experiencing Erasmus+ exchanges is increasing. In contrast to that, the number of students and young people with disabilities taking part in Erasmus+ has been almost stagnating over</p>



the past few years. Students with disabilities are in need for special guidance and support. The best practise enables students with disabilities to gain this experience.

Elisabeth Rieder is an expert in this field, who can provide the whole Mob4All Project with valuable insights into her work.

An increase of outgoing students with disabilities at the University of Innsbruck demonstrates the importance and value of her work.



ANNEX 3

IO1. TEMPLATE FOR THE COLLECTION OF DATA OF THE MEETING/DISCUSSION GROUP

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of participants: <i>number and profile of participants.</i>
<p>8 participants, from different departments at MCI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Claudia Pauzenberger [mobility expert] • Johannes Dickel [employee representative] • Constanze Kaufmann [mobility expert] • Cora Mantel [Mob4All] • Tommy Mayr [disability officer] • Magdalena Posch [digitalization expert] • Renate Gruber [social work department] • Sarah Widmoser [Mob4All]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objectives:
<p>General perspective/ situation on inclusion at MCI Experiences in mobility for students with disabilities</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of Methodology: <i>online/questions/ time schedule/ moderator</i>
<p>Focus group [online, short introduction & presentation, moderation afterwards] Duration: 1,5 hours Moderators: Sarah Widmoser & Cora Mantel</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results and Findings.
<p>Already implemented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - guidelines for students with disabilities (special exam accommodations); - handbook for students with dyslexia; - inclusive mindset for employees with disabilities; - MCI General Building is barrier-free; - implementation of a disability officer;



Possible improvements:

- raising awareness both to internal and external audience;
- inclusion training courses for employees;
- events, lectures on the topics (possibly even a theme week/month);
- present a good example to the outside world: open from within;
- provide contact person with resources (to be a multiplier and to be able to network to the right points);
- be better prepared for request from partner universities;
- anchor the topic more strongly in research and development: projects to solve acute problems;

• **Conclusions**

The focus group conducted with experts at MCI confirmed the lack of low-threshold services for students with disabilities as a problem. Even though MCI is currently, working on a support service for students with psychological problems and for students with disabilities there is still a huge amount of work forthcoming. Diversity and inclusion are values that are already manifested in MCI's spirit but need to be implemented in MCI's work and study process, both externally and internally.



NATIONAL REPORT – FINLAND

Project Title	MOB4ALL
Intellectual Output	IO1 –A2
Deliverable Name	National Report
Date of Delivery	April 30th 2021
Author(s)	Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences



1. Introduction

This document is conceived to present the main national outcomes obtained as a result of the implementation of MOB4ALL project in **Finland**.

MOB4ALL, aims to promote the transnational mobility of students with special needs through the capacity building of the different actors who can support these students in the context of international mobility for educational purposes (Professors, staff members from International Relations Offices/mobility officers, staff members from other specialised units and tutor students/buddies).

As a first step in the development of the project, IO1 had as final objectives the following:

- To collect 7 **case studies and inspiring good practices** targeting the international mobility of students with special needs will be reviewed, in order to identify practices and procedures that can be transferred, adapted, and valorised as part of MOB4ALL.
- 1 targeted **meeting/discussion group** with students with disabilities, in order to collect their feedback and to better understand their needs. (4 - 7 students with disabilities and, among them; the 3 types of disabilities should be present. Professors, staff members, mobility experts with experience in the field can be also involved as participants.)
- 1 National report per country with main findings and results.
- 1 Final Report: **“Inclusive Mobility: Supporting Students with Special Needs at EU level”**.

To achieve these goals, some concrete activities have been implemented in all partner countries with the aim of providing a true reflection of the perception about the situation of students with special needs in each of them. A research methodology was developed by INCOMA, and shared with the rest of the consortium.

Once the methodology had been defined, activities were implemented as described in the following sections of this document.

This report will compile the results of all the activities carried out in **Finland** by **Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences**. Therefore, the **Finland** National Report will serve as an overall picture of the students with special needs in Higher Institutions in **Finland**.

2. Suggested structure of national reports

Introduction (method, target group...)

The target group of this project are



- **students with special needs**
- academic and administrative staff

For students with special needs, the purpose is to offer better internationalization opportunities. To achieve this, it is necessary that also HEI staff is aware of the challenges that students with special needs face when considering study abroad. To raise this awareness, training on the topic must be available.

The actions taken for the purpose of this project included a target group interview with three students and three staff members.

Analysis of the collected data (focus group, case study/ initiative)

At Haaga-Helia, students with special needs are offered support on the basis of a clear model which has been developed for this purpose. This model is described in Annex 2. Background for this comes from Non-Discrimination Act, stating that all HEIs in Finland should give special support to students with an illness, a disability or learning difficulties. While the support model is already in place and functioning in student services in general, students with special needs still experience difficulties when seeking international opportunities. Therefore the approach described in the support model can and should be widened and applied also to internationalization services.

Main Findings and outcomes of the in-depth interventions

Students with special needs are underrepresented in international mobility for several reasons. Their needs must be addressed individually and with a collaborative approach. Students often lack adequate information about services and support available in their particular situation and different stakeholders must cooperate better to achieve a one-point service solution. The obstacles are, however, not impossible to cross. From institutional perspective there must be clear communication between academic and administrative staff to ensure that the special needs support is available at all stages of the student's journey. It is also important to recognize the points that cause the most distress (selection of suitable destinations, information about funding etc.) and focus the extra support on them. From the student's perspective, there should not be too many contact points and/or information sources, as this may lead to confusion. It is also crucial to receive reliable and well-timed information about opportunities instead of restrictions.



Overall national/local conclusions and recommendations

Based on the target group meeting, the following recommendations are made:

- Better communication between different agents in home HEI, host HEI as well as national agencies in both countries.
- More accessible information and help in processing it.
- Personal guidance and follow-up meetings.
- Positive message and examples.
- Training for HEI staff to better understand and address special needs students.
- Ensuring that students whose special needs are recognized and verified (according to the good practice in place already at Haaga-Helia for instance) do get the special support tailored to their needs also when it comes to internationalization services. This can be achieved by sharing adequate information while maintaining mutual confidence and taking care to avoid unnecessary labelling of any parties.

3. Annexes

Best Practices Related to Inclusive Mobility at Haaga-Helia

ANNEX 2

IO1. TEMPLATE FOR THE COLLECTION OF INSPIRING PRACTICES RELATED TO INCLUSIVE MOBILITY (STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS)

Title
Recognition and support of special needs students at Haaga-Helia UAS
Country of Origin / Implementation
<p>Non-Discrimination Act states that all HEIs in Finland should give special support to students with an illness, a disability or learning difficulties. Reform of the Non-Discrimination Act in 2015 emphasized the fact that all educational institutions must have a clear strategy on how to ensure reasonable adjustments to all students with special needs. Haaga-Helia has developed a pedagogical model, which helps us recognize and effectively support the students with special needs (detailed description below).</p> <p>Since Finland has a long tradition in the field of special education pedagogics in the elementary and secondary education, there is a solid background for constructing pedagogical practices also for higher education. Nevertheless, the national review <i>'Higher Education for Everyone?'</i> stated also clear development areas. The review</p>



calls out for raising awareness among HEI personnel since negative attitudes towards special need arrangements still exist. Typical arguments against special arrangements are that they will risk the equality of student evaluation and that students should not get used to special support during the studies since they won't receive such support in the future working place either (Lehto 2019: 158). Discussion about equality vs. equity is active in the field of higher education in Finland (see also the picture in the end of this document).

Aims and description

Haaga-Helia has qualified **special education teachers** who provide special needs counselling service. These professionals are senior lecturers who use a certain percentage of their annual working time for special needs support. The core of their work is **personal counselling to students**, but they also **consult colleagues** on students' special educational needs. Annually ca 200 students contact our special education teachers. Most common learning difficulties are *dyslexia*, *challenges in concentration (even ADD/ADHD)* and *challenges in mathematical processing (even dyscalculia)*. Naturally, the whole spectrum of special needs is present in individual student cases.

From student perspective our recognition and support model works the following way:

- All first semester students are encouraged to contact the special education teacher if they have an illness, a disability, or a learning difficulty. Guidance counsellors and teachers remind individual students of this possibility if they notice signs of learning difficulties later on during the studies. We even ask **incoming exchange students** whether they have any disabilities or learning difficulties as they apply to Haaga-Helia. They receive information about our services and they are encouraged to contact the special education teachers during the exchange period if needed.
- We review student's situation in 1-3 counselling sessions. If the student does not have a previous diagnosis, special education teacher can use certain established tools to recognize most common learning difficulties.
- If we find grounds for special support, the student receives a **written pedagogical statement with individual support measures**. We have a list of support measures, which include e.g. the following: Exam arrangements such as extra time in exam, possibility to use computer in all exams or a private space for completing the exam. Teacher may also explain exam questions in other words during the exam and ignore mistakes clearly caused by the learning disorder (e.g. typos in dyslexia). University library gives an extended loan period for course books and an access to a national audio library. For some students a possibility to record lectures and review the material in advance are highly beneficial. In addition, we can personalize measures for individual needs.



- Student shows his/her pedagogical statement to the teacher in the beginning of the course. They discuss the support measures suitable for the course. If needed, the teacher consults the special education teacher.
- During the counselling student also receives tips for **effective study techniques**. Special education teacher also makes sure that the student is aware of general support measures available at Haaga-Helia (student psychologist, study groups, organized peer support etc.). This is especially important if actual grounds for special support does not exist and the student continues with studies in the regular way.

It is essential that the pedagogical support measures are carried out in practice. Multidisciplinary discussions between the special education teacher and academic staff have led to new pedagogical solutions e.g. in the field of evaluation. We emphasize the fact that multi-professional cooperation and good communication is essential for successful special need support.

Target Group

The main goal is that the student succeeds in the studies and graduates in time. We have noticed that support described above can have a great **positive impact on students' self-esteem, self-management, motivation, and courage**. Our motto is: **Haaga-Helia opens doors for future careers**. We also aim to prepare the students with special needs for their future careers. It is crucial that students with special needs find learning strategies to support them also later in the (working) life. In complex situations, special education teacher can support a student with contacting medical support or finding other help he/she may need.

Relevance for MOB4ALL project outcomes

We hope that this good practice leads to following results within MOB4ALL project: Sharing information about the everyday pedagogical practicalities on how we recognize and support students with special needs. Discussing which support measures are common in participating HEIs. Defining which special support students can receive during student exchange (e.g. exam arrangements, support in accessibility) - essential factor for enhancing the mobility of special need students.

Sources

Lehto, Huhta, Huuhka: Kaikkien korkeakoulu? Raportti OHO!-hankkeessa vuonna 2018 tehdyistä korkeakoulujen saavutettavuuskyselyistä. OHO!-hanke 2019. (National review 'Higher Education for Everyone?' available in Finnish: <https://ohohanke.fi/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/kaikkien-korkeakoulu-oho-saavutettavuusraportti.pdf> , 31.3.2021)

Inspirational illustration to launch discussion among HEI personnel

EQUALITY VERSUS EQUITY

In the first image, it is assumed that everyone will benefit from the same supports. They are being treated equally.

In the second image, individuals are given different supports to make it possible for them to have equal access to the game. They are being treated equitably.

In the third image, all three can see the game without any supports or accommodations because the cause of the inequity was addressed. The systemic barrier has been removed.

<https://www.businessdisabilityinternational.org/when-is-equality-not-equality/>, 9.4.2021

ANNEX 3

IO1. TEMPLATE FOR THE COLLECTION OF DATA OF THE MEETING/DISCUSSION GROUP

- **Description of participants:** *number and profile of participants.*

Participants:

- 2 representatives of administrative staff
- one representative of academic staff
- 3 students with special needs
 - hearing impairment
 - ADD
 - reading disorder
- 2 interpreters of sign language



● **Objectives:**

It has been recognised that students with special needs are underrepresented in international mobility. The purpose of the target group meeting was to find out possible reasons that lead to this by gaining in-depth feedback from students with special needs. Furthermore, the overall objective was to discover ideas about what could be improved in the services offered by HEIs to enable the participation of students with special needs in international opportunities.

● **Description of Methodology:** *online/questions/ time schedule/ moderator*

The meeting was held online via Zoom. A set of questions as well as general description of the project and its purpose was sent out to all participants in advance so that they would be aware of the topics beforehand. During the meeting the format was free discussion with interventions from the moderator only to ensure that all participants will have a chance to share their views and that all questions are addressed. Participants were informed that the interview would be recorded but used confidentially for research purposes only.

Discussion was conducted in Finnish to ensure a relaxed atmosphere. Answers were analysed and summary was written in English.

Questions were:

1. Presentations
2. Would you be interested in international mobility?
3. What are possible problems or obstacles that students with special needs might face when considering international mobility?
4. How could these problems or obstacles be solved?
5. What kind of training would be of help?
6. What can Haaga-Helia or another higher education institution do to support study abroad opportunities for students with special needs?

● **Results and Findings.**

Students with special needs often face extra challenges when considering the option to study abroad. They must be very persistent to go along with the process and need help from peers, friends and administrative as well as academic staff. One student described the process as a “fight”.

Obstacles on the way often occur at the very beginning of the journey – when trying to find comprehensive, up to date and applicable information about how to get started. There is clearly need for a one-entry-point solution that offers information and guidance about the whole process. Often it is not enough to limit the information offered to what happens inside



the HEI, but other stake holders such as local and government agencies offering financial support for people with special needs must be included.

In the case of the hearing-impaired student, a very special challenge was finding an interpreter who can communicate from the language of potential host country to sign language used in Finland. This has turned out to be very difficult if not impossible in practice. For students with ADD/ADHD conditions the amount of information can feel overwhelming and the administrative process starting from application may be too heavy, so there is increased need for personal guidance. In the case of reading disorders, it is often enough to ensure that support and extra time for completing assignments is available also at the receiving institution.

All students suggested that perhaps personal check-up meetings with a staff member would be a good solution to ensure that they follow the process and do not drop out in the middle of it. It was also suggested that information about international opportunities are indeed open for all should be shared in a more inclusive way already at the very beginning of higher education studies because the process is often time consuming and requires extra preparation from students with special needs. All in all, the meeting was an eye-opening experience to all parties involved and gave plenty of ideas for development.

● **Conclusions**

Students with special needs are underrepresented in international mobility for several reasons. Each students' situation is also different so the support needs differ as well. Students must be met as individuals.

Possible solutions are information that is better targeted for students with special needs, personal help and guidance when navigating through the information about internationalisation opportunities, collecting information from different stakeholders in one place, coordinated discussion between different agents inside the HEI (student, international services, guidance counsellors, special education teachers).

Although the sample group was rather small, it did offer good insights into the diverse needs of the target group of MOB4ALL project because the participants represented different special needs. As further steps discussions will be opened within the HEI as well as national agents to share insights and plan how to make international mobility more accessible in practice.



NATIONAL REPORT – FRANCE

Project Title	MOB4ALL
Intellectual Output	IO1 –A2
Deliverable Name	National Report
Date of Delivery	May 2021
Author(s)	Université Côte d’Azur, France



1. INTRODUCTION

This document is conceived to present the main national outcomes obtained as the result of the implementation of MOB4ALL project in France.

MOB4ALL, aims to promote the transnational mobility of students with special needs through the capacity building of the different actors who can support these students in the context of international mobility for educational purposes (Professors, staff members from International Relations Offices/mobility officers, staff members from other specialised units and tutor students/buddies).

As a first step in the development of the project, IO1 had as final objectives the following:

- To collect 7 **case studies and inspiring good practices** targeting the international mobility of students with special needs will be reviewed, in order to identify practices and procedures that can be transferred, adapted, and valorised as part of MOB4ALL.
- 1 targeted **meeting/discussion group** with students with disabilities, in order to collect their feedback and to better understand their needs. (4 - 7 students with disabilities and, among them; the 3 types of disabilities should be present. Professors, staff members, mobility experts with experience in the field can be also involved as participants.)
- 1 National report per country with main findings and results.
- 1 Final Report: **“Inclusive Mobility: Supporting Students with Special Needs at EU level”**.

To achieve these goals, some concrete activities have been implemented in all partner countries with the aim of providing a true reflection of the perception about the situation of students with special needs in each of them. A research methodology was developed by INCOMA and shared with the rest of the consortium.

Once the methodology had been defined, activities were implemented as described in the following sections of this document.

This report will compile the results of all the activities carried out in **France** by **Université Côte d’Azur**. Therefore, the France National Report will serve as an overall picture of the students with special needs in Higher Institutions in France.



2. SUGGESTED STRUCTURE OF NATIONAL REPORTS

a. Introduction (method, target group...).

To gather information about how to develop international experience among students and staff with special needs UCA managed different actions.

- An Online workshop with students, academic and administrative staffs
- A specific survey for students with special needs who had an international mobility experience.

Online workshop

The online workshop was held on April 6th and lasted around two hours in which participated 5 students, 2 academic staff and 3 non-academic staff.

The purpose of the workshop and the specific goals of the MOB4ALL project were presented first by email, along with the different topics that would be discussed during the workshop; then a short presentation of MOB4ALL project was also done at the beginning of the meeting.

The workshop took place in French and the participants were informed that a report will be created, and their inputs will be used to improve the support given to students and staffs with special needs who want to realise an international mobility.

Specific survey

To gather information regarding international mobility experience from the perspective of students with special needs UCA identified 6 students with special needs who realized an international mobility and sent them a specific survey.

This survey encompasses 8 questions on their mobility experience, how they prepared it, if they faced any difficulties, how they solved the problems....

b. Analysis of the collected data (focus group, case study/ initiative).

To gather information from students with special needs regarding international mobility, they have been asked to answer the following survey:

1) Did you plan, before your departure abroad, to benefit with the same disability/health arrangements at the Host University as you benefited at the UCA?

The development needs (computer and third time for example due to dysgraphia and attention disorder) were anticipated and implemented at the host university.

2) Did you contact UCA' department for students with special needs to renew your medical opinion?

The disability service of the host university contacts the students beforehand to renew the French documents so that the student does not have to do so.

3) Did you get all the information about the disability and / or health support services provided at the Host University before your departure? Did you contact them before departure?



Overall, yes but once they arrived, they realized that the information was incomplete, once on the spot they had to find a dedicated referent to implement their specific needs.

4) Did you ask for support to the specific department for students with special needs at Université Côte d'Azur? If so, to which departments and / or which contacts?

The International Relations Office of the sending university and the Exchange Manager contact the students to provide them with the necessary assistance.

5) Did you encounter any difficulties when you arrived at Host University in terms of:

- have contact with health and / or disability services/departments?

When the documents and medical certificates are written in French, the students are sometimes faced with a problem in the translation of these documents, they are sometimes asked to have the translation carried out by a certified translator.

- the transmission of your documents in connection with the planning of your studies and / or exams?

Sometimes the accommodations in the host university are stricter and regulated than in the starting university, this may cause some students to not have access to all their accommodations when they arrive.

- the practical implementation of your arrangements?

The intervention of the neuropsychiatrist for the translation of a document or certificate in English may be useful.

Distance learning allows students not to be penalized too much, but some accommodations only apply to homework and table exams, face-to-face, and not to homework.

6) Did you manage to solve those problems? If so, how?

For some students, having to start all the administrative tasks over is sometimes discouraging, for the implementation of the accommodations they manage with the limitations imposed.

7) Do you have specific arrangements for study and/or exam in UCA? If yes, which ones?

The typical recommendations for studies arrangements and exams for a student with specific UCA needs are: third-time, access to a computer for any examination and control.

8) Did you benefit any specific arrangements at Host University for study and/or exam? If yes, which ones?

The same arrangements as those mentioned above but sometimes inapplicable to certain controls.

c. Main Findings and outcomes of the in-depth interventions.

Trought the online workshop and the survey students and staff mentioned the following problems as the main barriers for students with special needs to realise an international mobility:

- Lack of information regarding mobility opportunities



- Lack of support at Home University to prepare the mobility.
- Fear of being alone without any specific support in the Host University.
- Poor knowledge of languages.
- Fear of facing a new experience due to the difficulties caused by one's disability.
- Lack of a point of reference to turn to in case of health care needs.
- Excessive administrative procedures to be managed and carried out during the pre-Erasmus period and during the stay on site.
- Low cognitive flexibility.
- Lack of networking with other students, who have already gone through this experience and can provide useful pointers for dealing with it.
- Difficulty in communicating adequately with teachers.

d. Overall national/local conclusions and recommendations.

We summarize four recommendations:

1. Make sure the student contacted the relevant office/department at Host University before departure
2. Have a confirmed list of necessary documents the student needs to bring to the Host University.
3. Check before departure the available support and arrangements at Host University.
4. Before the departure, the student tries to identify and contact the disability mission and the reference of the host university.



3. ANNEXES

ANNEX 1

IO1. TEMPLATE FOR THE COLLECTION OF CASE STUDY

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Title or Headline: Student with special needs feedback on his international experience mobility
<p>Student with special needs feedback on his international experience mobility.</p> <p>These students expect the implementation of facilities in the host university identical to that of their university of departure. Sometimes the development needs (computer and third time for example due to dysgraphia and attention disorder) are anticipated and implemented at the host university.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduction: <i>General description of the scenario</i>
<p>Despite a specific support by international relations office at Home University, the student faced several problems once he arrived at Host University.</p> <p>For example, when students arrived at the host university, they realized that the information was incomplete, once on the spot they had to find a dedicated referent to implement their specific needs.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Summary: <i>Analysis of the situation (Issues, challenges...) (10-15 lines maximum)</i>
<p>A specific support was given to the student to prepare his mobility. Concrete and relevant information regarding the support in the Host University has been given but this information was not sufficient, and the student faced several problems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Medical documents to be translated in English by a certified translator. When the documents and medical certificates are written in French, the students are sometimes faced with a problem in the translation of these documents, they are sometimes asked to have the translation carried out by a certified translator. ● No access to the same facilities at the Host University Sometimes the accommodations in the host university are stricter and regulated than in the starting university, this may cause some students to not have access to all their accommodations when they arrive. ● No specific contact at the Host University ● Sometimes when students arrive, they realize that the information was incomplete, once on the spot they had to find a dedicated referent to implement their specific needs.



● **Result:** *How did the person solve the issue or drive a benefit?*

- The student managed to have his medical documents translated. The intervention of the neuropsychiatrist for the translation of a document or certificate in English may be useful.
- The office for students with special needs at Host University eventually took contact with the student.
- The student decided not to ask for more support regarding his studies as he was afraid to have to do all the administrative process again from the beginning. For some students, having to start all the administrative tasks over is sometimes discouraging, for the implementation of the accommodations they manage with the limitations imposed.

● **Conclusion/ Recommendations**

- Make sure the student contacted the relevant office/department at Host University before departure
- Have a confirmed list of necessary documents the student needs to bring to the Host University.
- Check before departure the available support and arrangements at Host University.
- Before the departure, the student tries to identify and contact the disability mission and the reference of the host university.



ANNEX 2

IO1. TEMPLATE FOR THE COLLECTION OF INSPIRING PRACTICES RELATED TO INCLUSIVE MOBILITY (STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Title
<p>a Disability Mission in a French University</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Country of origin/Implementation
<p>France, and in particular Université Côte d'Azur</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Aims and description
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● General objectives and summary descriptions for students with disabilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Analysis of the students' needs, depending on their situation and their study plan. The Disability Mission and the Disability Reception and Support Officers on all campuses are concerned about the difficulties that students may encounter during their studies and their exams conditions. ○ Development of means of compensation. The reflection of the disability system relates to the means of compensating disability. But they are considered with a long-term perspective of promoting the students' future professional and social autonomy. ○ Plural teams for a global vision. The functioning of the disability system is based on plural teams, and its composition and very existence must be adapted to each situation. The plural team is built around the students. It brings together disability stakeholders, teachers, doctors, carers, and any other necessary partners. These professionals share their information, their analyses, and their expertise in order to formalize support plans that meet the needs of the student throughout their course. ○ Preventive Medicine. A prior appointment with the University Service of Preventive Medicine and Health Promotion, is always necessary. The medicine doctor carries out a medical examination focused on the disabilities and expresses in his opinion the restrictions of the students' aptitudes (example: the student is visually impaired). This notice is sent to the disability team, which drafts an order for disability adjustments for studies and exams for this particular student. This decree describes the arrangements that the teaching and knowledge control services must then implement (example: practical work and examination subjects written in large print). ○ Multiple opinions and points of view for a global solution. The medical opinion is not the unique element which presides over the drafting of the decree. It is also



important that the educational and organizational indications of the training are considered. The plural team is very helpful at this point.

- The arrangements. Depending on the situation, the planned arrangements may include:
 - Human assistance: help with note taking, help with the use of specific tools, integration tutoring, translation from Sign Language into French, etc.
 - Material and technical aids: computer loan with specific software, adapted tablet...
 - Organizational arrangements: arrangement of timetables, increased time for certain tests, extension of the loan of books to the University Library, development of courses, etc.
- General objectives and summary descriptions for staff with disabilities:
 - The recruitment of new staff with disabilities:
 - Promote access to employment for people with disabilities. We have chosen to promote and facilitate the hiring of staff recognized as disabled workers. It has put in place an integration policy that values training, skills, and professional experience. Three access routes are open to applicants with disabilities:
 1. The competitive process to access civil servant posts.
 2. The contractual route with a vocation for tenure, specific to people with disabilities.
 3. The contractual route for non-civil workers.
 - Our University provides personalized reception and follow-up during these different recruitment methods for people with disabilities, including for fixed-term contracts.
 - 100% OF OUR JOB OFFERS ARE OPEN TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES! And we consider in all our job descriptions the cognitive and physical constraints associated with the proposed job.
 - Integration upon arrival at our University. Our preventive Medicine Doctors are competent to propose the workstation adjustments necessary to compensate for the disability or an aptitude restriction. Disabled workers benefit from enhanced medical surveillance, with a pre-employment medical examination. The purpose of this examination is:
 1. To ensure that the new staff member is medically fit for the job to which the employer plans to assign him.
 2. To possibly propose adaptations to the position or assignment to other positions.
 3. To ascertain whether the new member of staff does not have a dangerous condition for other workers.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4. To inform the new staff member about the risks of exposure at the workstation and the necessary medical monitoring. 5. To make the new staff member aware of the preventive measures to be implemented. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ However, consultation and coordination between all stakeholders is essential on the development proposals, their implementation, and their monitoring. ○ Maintaining the employment of disabled workers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Workstation arrangement due to a disability. WHAT IS AN ARRANGEMENT? An ergonomic chair, a desk on a more accessible floor, an adapted computer, a specific telephone headset, redesigned working hours, a video subtitling service, new training, an assessment of my professional skills, external support to be better integrated into the team and in order to the team integrate me better, health support from staff medicine, a more serene dialogue with my colleagues, a disability correspondent and a HDR even more attentive to my needs...
<p>● Link (E-learning or Provider)</p>
<p>http://univ-cotedazur.fr/handicap</p>
<p>● Target Group</p>
<p>All of our objectives and actions are aimed primarily at all of our students and staff with disabilities.</p> <p>For our staff (administrative staff, teachers/researchers, and researchers) we carry out an ambitious inclusion policy and have signed an agreement with the FIPHFP (Fund for the Integration of Persons with Disabilities in the Public Service).</p> <p>This allows us to build effective and impactful communication on the subject of disability, to promote the professional integration of people with disabilities within the three public functions, as well as the training and information of agents in contact with them, to achieve objectives in terms of changes in employment rates, recruitment and retention; to benefit from multi-annual funding: the agreement guarantees part of the financing of the employer's disability policy over 3 years and prefinances the action plan by the payment of instalments,</p>



The convention allows us to structure a disability policy through the 5 traditional axes: Governance, management; Communication awareness; Recruitment; Retention in employment; Use of the protected or adapted sector.

However, we ensure that all of our objectives are generalizable and in fact benefit all students and staff at our university. This is one of the founding principles of disability management in France.

● **Relevance for MOB4ALL project outcomes**

Université Côte d'Azur is, and has the ambition to be even more, an institution of higher education, research, innovation, and civic and professional integration with strong European and global influence.

We strongly encourage all of our students to make at least one foreign visit during their studies in our institution. And we now want all our staff, whatever their profession, function, and level, to benefit from at least one international experience.

In addition, in a long French tradition of welcoming and enriching its culture, France and particularly the Université Côte d'Azur is very open to receiving students from universities in other European countries and around the world. Numerous actions and services have been put in place to ensure that their stay in our establishment is as fruitful as possible, whether in terms of learning or discovering France and the French people.

In the same way, we welcome staff from European or world universities. And not only teachers or researchers, but also those of all the diversity of professions and levels which are present within these establishments: administrative, technical, documentary, social staff ...

Improving these exchanges is the main objective of MOB4ALL! We are therefore natural contributors for this project and will be very interested and motivated to implement the recommendations that will be drawn from them.



ANNEX 3

IO1. TEMPLATE FOR THE COLLECTION OF DATA OF THE MEETING/DISCUSSION GROUP

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Description of participants: <i>number and profile of participants.</i>
<p>An internal workshop has been organised in UCA on April 6th, 2021.</p> <p>Different stakeholders have been involved in this workshop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2 academic staff ● 3 non-academic staff ● 5 students
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Objectives:
<p>This workshop aimed to discuss with the different target groups about how we can make international mobility more accessible to students with special needs.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Description of Methodology: <i>online/questions/ time schedule/ moderator</i>
<p>The workshop was organised online. The agenda was the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mob4All project presentation: in order to explain to all stakeholders, the context, and the purpose of the workshop. ● Several open questions to start the discussion with the participants. <p>We covered the different stages of a mobility: preparation, arrival, study period, life abroad, ...</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Results and Findings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of information regarding mobility opportunities ● Lack of support at Home University to prepare the mobility. ● Fear of being alone without any specific support in the Host University. ● Poor knowledge of languages. ● Fear of facing a new experience due to the difficulties caused by one's disability.



- Lack of a point of reference to turn to in case of health care needs.
- Excessive administrative procedures to be managed and carried out during the pre-Erasmus period and during the stay on site.
- Low cognitive flexibility.
- Lack of networking with other students, who have already gone through this experience and can provide useful pointers for dealing with it.
- Difficulty in communicating adequately with teachers.

- **Conclusions**

Need to improve the dissemination of information regarding International Mobility offers considering specific nonvisible disability.



NATIONAL REPORT – ITALY

Project Title	MOB4ALL
Intellectual Output	IO1 –A2
Deliverable Name	National Report
Date of Delivery	30 April 2021
Author(s)	University of Genoa



1. INTRODUCTION

This document is conceived to present the main national outcomes obtained as a result of the implementation of MOB4ALL project in Italy.

MOB4ALL aims to promote the transnational mobility of students with special needs through the capacity building of the different actors who can support these students in the context of international mobility for educational purposes (Professors, staff members from International Relations Offices/mobility officers, staff members from other specialised units and tutor students/buddies).

As a first step in the development of the project, IO1 had as final objectives the following:

- To collect 7 case studies and inspiring good practices targeting the international mobility of students with special needs will be reviewed, in order to identify practices and procedures that can be transferred, adapted, and valorised as part of MOB4ALL.
- 1 targeted meeting/discussion group with students with disabilities, in order to collect their feedback and to better understand their needs (4 - 7 students with disabilities and, among them; the 3 types of disabilities should be present. Professors, staff members, mobility experts with experience in the field can be also involved as participants).
- 1 National report per country with main findings and results.
- 1 Final Report: "Inclusive Mobility: Supporting Students with Special Needs at EU level".

To achieve these goals, some concrete activities have been implemented in all partner countries with the aim of providing a true reflection of the perception about the situation of students with special needs in each of them. A research methodology was developed by INCOMA and shared with the rest of the consortium.

Once the methodology had been defined, activities were implemented as described in the following sections of this document.

This report will compile the results of all the activities carried out in Italy by the University of Genoa. Therefore, the National Report will serve as an overall picture of the students with special needs in Higher Institutions in Italy.

2. NATIONAL REPORT

a. Introduction

Aiming to gather information about the needs of students with special needs, our target group, UNIGE held one-to-one meetings. Four students with physical/motor disabilities participated. The meetings were held online through the TEAMS platform due to the impossibility of an in-person meeting due to the COVID19 pandemic.

The purpose of the meeting and the scientific goals of the MOB4ALL project were presented by the meeting moderator during the first contact phone call to decide on the meetings' date. It was explained to the participants that they would not need to prepare anything in advance, but that they would need to think about the topics to be discussed.



Anonymity was assured before the focus group began and participants were informed that the interviews would be reported in a transcript.

The discussion took place in Italian.

In agreement with the project partners, a number of questions were asked to explore the reasons for the stagnation in the number of students and young people with disabilities participating in Erasmus+ in recent years.

In detail, the following questions were asked to stimulate debate:

What are the reasons for these problems?

What can be done to solve them?

What could help at the level of training?

What can higher education institutions, companies or other stakeholders do to support students with special needs to have a mobility experience abroad?

The meetings were held on April and lasted 1 hour/each student in a pleasant and fruitful atmosphere.

b. Analysis of the collected data

Case Study

The case study concerns a mobility experience of a student with physical impairments in different European countries, including Spain, Portugal, and Sweden, over a period of 4 years as part of an MSCA RISE European project on women and disability. On this occasion, the student investigated how disability is considered in different contexts and in different countries and identified the topic of sports inclusion of women with disabilities as a research interest to be explored for her thesis and future projects. The experience was also important from a personal point of view, having had the opportunity to establish new social relationships and grow both professionally and personally.

Interviews

Four students were contacted. 3 students participated, a student with communication disabilities who attended Stockholm University, a graduate student with physical impairments (motor function) who attended Bochum University, a Digital Humanities student who attended Barcelona University. The fourth student contacted preferred not to give an interview but communicated that he did not have the possibility to participate in the Erasmus project because it was impossible to find an accessible and suitable accommodation.

The first student illustrated some difficulties encountered in both universities during the project start-up phase. Difficulties during his Erasmus experience in Stockholm were strictly connected with a not efficient support offered by the university tutor who didn't support him in the transcription and processing of the notes during the lectures, despite the request of the student himself. Except for this problem, the student noticed many positive aspects during the Erasmus experience: excellent relationship with professors, good transport services; very efficient university offices which supported him with information and good advice to take advantage of good practices inside the university structures; excellent relationship with Italian and foreign students, very useful benefits offered by university in city transports and excellent accommodation. The student socialized inside and outside the university context with some of his colleagues; he passed all the exams positively.

The second student illustrated some difficulties in both universities during the first project start-up phase, whereas the second project was more positive in this phase because the student had already done an Erasmus experience in the same University two years before. She lived an



exciting experience from different points of view: all places were accessible, and she could develop a great level of autonomy, from shopping to practicing sports (she's a competitive athlete of WCMX). She attended many German and Italian students, and she greatly improved her language proficiency in German. She expressed appreciation about University accommodations, perfectly structured for people with disabilities and close to the university campus where she attended lectures. The only negative aspect she found is in relation to an exam that she had to repeat in Italy because the mark obtained at the University of Bochum was not considered.

The third student said that the Erasmus experience has changed her outlook on life. In fact, she reported a change in the ways of coping with difficult situations or problems in everyday life. For example, managing her disability completely independently without the support of family, relatives, and close friends. Coping autonomously with life was experienced by the girl as an important phase of her personal growth. On an academic level, the student achieved the goals set at the outset and passed the university exams. She asked for the support from the office for students with disabilities both for academic aspects and on other issues such as health and social issues.

The fourth student did not participate because he/she could not carry out the Erasmus experience because the host institution was not able to find adequate accommodation that would meet the student's specific needs.

c. Main Findings and outcomes of the in-depth interventions

Students report that they have improved their management of daily life both at the university and in their personal lives, thanks also to an acquired ability to adapt to new situations.

No less important are the relational and inclusive aspects of the experience that allow students to return with more refined tools to improve their relational relationships even in their own university setting. All declared that they had achieved the expected learning objectives.

The negative aspects that emerged refer mainly to the period prior to departure and during the start-up phase of the Erasmus experience. In summary, the following problems emerged:

- Poor knowledge of languages.
- Fear of facing a new experience due to the difficulties caused by one's disability.
- Lack of a point of reference to turn to in case of health care needs.
- Excessive administrative procedures to be managed and carried out during the pre-Erasmus period and during the stay on site.
- Low cognitive flexibility.
- Lack of networking with other students, who have already gone through this experience and can provide useful pointers for dealing with it.
- Difficulty in communicating adequately with teachers.

d. Overall national/local conclusions and recommendations

Significant future perspectives emerge from the experiences in order to increase the international mobility of students with disabilities.

First of all, greater promotion of Erasmus experiences at the university level by the students themselves who have lived it could encourage an increase in participation.



An increase in financial benefits for students with disabilities and the organization of free language courses to be carried out before departure, and online during the experience abroad, are desirable in order to reduce further obstacles.

In order to provide essential information in the departure and reception phases, for example regarding health care, it is essential to identify an administrative contact person, an expert, working in the office for students with disabilities of both universities involved in the Erasmus project.

Last but not least, it emerges that a greater involvement of the professors in the construction of the educational experience is necessary, especially if this concerns internship or laboratory activities.

3. ANNEXES

ANNEX 1

IO1. TEMPLATE FOR THE COLLECTION OF CASE STUDY

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Title or Headline:
<p><i>An experience in Europe to grow!</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduction: <i>General description of the scenario</i>
<p>The student's mobility experience took place between 2017 and 2020 in different European countries including Spain, Portugal, and Sweden. During the mobility, the student was able to see how disability is considered in the different countries and, subsequently, she made her own considerations in order to start university research on aspects of her own interest. During the mobility period she was able to establish new social relationships, implement her own research on the topic of sports inclusion of women with disabilities and grow both professionally and personally.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Summary: <i>Analysis of the situation (Issues, challenges, ...) (10-15 lines maximum)</i>
<p>Regardless of the country of mobility, the student dealt with aspects of daily life including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Making long journeys independently or with a companion. - Managing one's own financial resources. - Coping with daily life in a new country, e.g., going shopping, travelling by public transport. - Adapting to new contexts, e.g., university. - Collaborating with new people. <p>As far as the professional growth aspect in the university environment is concerned, the student was able to take advantage of every element useful for her own empowerment, such as, for example, the possibility of getting to know sports associations that could contribute to enriching her knowledge in that specific sector or establish new contacts (networking) both with institutions and with people with disabilities.</p> <p>There were no obvious problems that could hinder the path undertaken by the student from any point of view, including logistical, professional, and personal. Certainly, but to a lesser extent, in the period before each mobility trip, the student felt a little anxious because she was facing a new experience. In spite of her anxiety, she felt "thrilled" to face a new adventure.</p>



<p>There were no obvious problems that could hinder the student's path from any point of view, including logistical, professional, and personal. Certainly, but to a lesser extent, in the period before each mobility trip, the student felt a bit anxious because she was facing a new experience. In spite of her anxiety, she felt "thrilled" to face a new adventure.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Result: <i>How did the person solve the issue or drive a benefit?</i>
<p>The student solved minor problems with the help of a career who supported her in those moments of daily life that were considered most difficult due to her disability, such as drinking independently, communicating with new people, and moving easily in her new environment. The presence of the accompanying person proved to be fundamental in order to enjoy the mobility experience.</p> <p>The benefits achieved exceeded initial expectations. The student went through a long period of study, showing concrete progress and implementing new activities in the university environment. She has collaborated with various university realities, associations, and social bodies with the aim of enriching her research, often also creating new thematic events to raise awareness and disseminate good practices on the topic of persons with disabilities inclusion.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conclusion/ Recommendations
<p>She advises other students with disabilities to undertake periods of mobility whenever the opportunity arises. These moments of life contribute to the empowerment of the person, enriching their knowledge both in the professional field and in personal growth.</p>

ANNEX 2

IO1. TEMPLATE FOR THE COLLECTION OF INSPIRING PRACTICES RELATED TO INCLUSIVE MOBILITY (STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Title
<p><i>Erasmus plus is an opportunity for everyone!</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Country of origin/Implementation
<p>The University of Genoa encourages students with special needs to participate in the Erasmus plus programme, offering support and assistance before, during and after the mobility.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Aims and description
<p>As far as students with disabilities are concerned, the Internationalisation Service in collaboration with the Disability Support Sector offers personalised assistance to both incoming and outgoing students. Moreover, UNIGE has prepared a Handbook (available on the website) containing operational guidelines for the management of training activities carried out abroad (outgoing mobility) by students, teachers, researchers, and technical-administrative staff within the framework of European programmes and international agreements, which promote academic cooperation with universities in Europe and worldwide. The Handbook aims at standardising, where possible, the administrative and management procedures of the mobility activities carried out by</p>



<p>the University, in compliance with the laws and regulations in force on the management of students' careers and with respect for the competences of the individual actors involved, with the aim of effectively and efficiently integrating the activities and providing a service increasingly in line with the needs of the various users (students, teachers, internal offices, international partners). Moreover, the Handbook specifies the procedures for activating incoming mobility, always in compliance with the provisions of specific calls for proposals, whose peculiarities and regulations are preserved.</p> <p>In order to simplify and streamline the management of mobility flows, both incoming and outgoing, an IT platform has also been set up thanks to the intra-structural synergy between the University Data, Informatics and Telematics Centre (henceforth CeDIA) and the Teaching and Students Area.</p>
<p>● Link (E-learning or Provider)</p>
<p>https://unige.it/en/international/outgoing-erasmus-plus</p> <p>https://courses.unige.it/?p=erasmus-incoming-erasmus-study-and-traineeship</p>
<p>● Target Group</p>
<p>Students with any kind of special needs.</p>
<p>● Relevance for MOB4ALL project outcomes</p>
<p>The Handbook and the measures indicated can be used as a basis for the construction of common guidelines for the implementation of future mobility actions within the MOB4ALL project.</p>

ANNEX 3

IO1. TEMPLATE FOR THE COLLECTION OF DATA OF THE ONE-TO-ONE MEETING

<p>Description of participants: <i>number and profile of participants.</i></p>
<p>4 participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A student with communicative disability who attended Stockholm University in 2015. ● A graduate student with physical problems (motor function) who attended University of Bochum in 2014 and 2016. ● A student of Digital Humanities who attended Barcelona University 10 years ago. ● A student who preferred not to release the interview and who communicated with us didn't get a chance to participate in the Erasmus Project because it was impossible to find an accessible and suitable accommodation.
<p>Objectives:</p> <p>To explain the aim of the project and the objective of the interview. To clarify that all information which is produced is for scientific purposes only. To collect personal opinions and thoughts about students' experiences during their staying in Universities where they attended the Erasmus Project; to examine all their positive and negative</p>



perspectives and opinions about academic and social life developed during their studying and life experiences.

Description of Methodology: *online/questions/ time schedule/ moderator*

Interviews online by Teams Platform, Skype, and filling a questionnaire

Results and Findings

The first student illustrated some difficulties encountered in both universities during the project start-up phase. Difficulties during his Erasmus experience in Stockholm were strictly connected with a not efficient support offered by the university tutor who didn't support him in the transcription and processing of the notes during the lectures, despite the request of the student himself. Except for this problem, the student noticed many positive aspects during the Erasmus experience: excellent relationship with professors, good transport services; very efficient university offices which supported him with information and good advice to take advantage of good practices inside the university structures; excellent relationship with Italian and foreign students, very useful benefits offered by university in city transports and excellent accommodation. The student socialized inside and outside the university contest with some of his colleagues; he passed all the exams positively.

The Second student illustrated some difficulties in both universities during the first project start-up phase, whereas the second project was more positive in this phase because the student had already done an Erasmus experience in the same University two years before. She lived an exciting experience from different points of view: all places were accessible, and she could develop a great level of autonomy, from shopping to practicing sports (she's a competitive athlete of WCMX). She attended many German and Italian students, and she greatly improved her language proficiency in German. She expressed appreciation about University accommodations, perfectly structured for people with disabilities and close to the university campus where she attended lectures. The only negative aspect she found is in relation to an exam that she had to repeat in Italy because the mark obtained at the University of Bochum was not considered.

The Third student: After 10 years, the student says that the Erasmus experience has changed her outlook on life. In fact, she reported a change in the ways of coping with difficult situations or problems in everyday life. For example, managing her disability completely independently without the support of family, relatives, and close friends. Coping autonomously with life was experienced by the girl as an important phase of her personal growth.

On an academic level, the student achieved the goals set at the outset and passed the university exams. She asked for the support from the office for students with disabilities both for academic aspects and on other issues such as health and social issues.

Fourth student: not available

Conclusions



“While the overall number of young people and students experiencing Erasmus+ exchanges is increasing, the number of students and young people with disabilities taking part in Erasmus+ has been almost stagnating over the past few years”.

● **What are the reasons for these problems?**

First Student: Difficulties with foreign languages, few experience and mental elasticity to enjoy this project abroad, bureaucratic difficulties in which he was involved during the project start-up phase, few economic benefits which don't allow students to live this important experience with serenity.

Second student: The fear of everything outside our little world; lack of independence, different habits of foreign countries, difficulties to get health care abroad (for example physiotherapy); the fear of having to deal with possible problems in a country so far from home without the support of family or friends.

Third student: Certainly, the fear of facing a new experience can be considered an obstacle for a student with disabilities. Each student with a disability can imagine his or her 'independent life', wishing to face a new way of life but often, the disability conditions make the process very difficult.

Fourth student: not available

● **What can be done to solve them?**

First Student: Good ability and aptitude in the study of foreign languages, having a sense of responsibility and autonomy, trying to not isolate oneself but always interact with Italian and foreign students during the Erasmus experience.

Second student: Increase the level of information on how Erasmus projects are implemented in cases where the student has already had an Erasmus experience; supporting students giving them correct information about place, accessibility, lifestyle, and university courses; Health facility that could provide information on obtaining health services for students in need of medical treatment.

Third student: Disseminate the Erasmus experiences of students with disabilities through the University's official channels, create a platform to foster contacts between students with disabilities who have lived the Erasmus experience and outgoing students who wish to make this experience

Fourth student: not available

● **What would help at training level?**

First Student: Developing a good degree of autonomy and independence in many aspects of the university life (i.e., to prepare exams); better knowledge of the language.

Second student: Developing total degree of autonomy and independence in many aspects of life. Nothing is impossible if you want to reach an objective. No limits, everything is possible if you have mental predisposition to do that. Perfect knowledge of the language and better ability to adapt to different situations.



Third student: Developing a good degree of autonomy and independence, deepening knowledge of a foreign language, opening the mind to new cultures and experiences

Fourth student: not available

● **What can higher educational institutions, companies or other stakeholders do to support students with special needs to do a mobility experience abroad?**

First Student: University of Genoa should increase the promotion of activities for students with disability who are involved in the Erasmus Project. Offices should increase economic benefits for students with disabilities, because that's so much expensive for them living in a foreign country during Erasmus experience; benefits or free language courses for students with disability before starting the Erasmus adventure; better interaction among offices and teachers at both universities involved in the Erasmus project for better monitoring studying and life experiences of every student with disability involved in Erasmus projects.

Second student: The University of Genoa should promote activities for students with disabilities who are involved in Erasmus Projects by posting more news, images, and videos of the Universities where students will have this experience. This may allow them to learn more about what they need to know about their next experience; both Universities must set up health and bureaucratic structures ready to support students in their various practices Teachers have to involve students who already had Erasmus experience to create a network with students who are going to start this experience.

Third student: The University of Genoa should promote activities for students with disabilities who are involved in Erasmus Projects.

Fourth student: not available



NATIONAL REPORT – SPAIN

Project Title	MOB4ALL
Intellectual Output	IO1 –A2
Deliverable Name	National Report
Date of Delivery	20 th July, 2021
Author(s)	Rafaela Caballero Andaluz



I.- NATIONAL STRATEGY

The Ministry of Universities and the Conference of Rectors of Spanish Universities, or CRUE (Spanish initials), detected the need to create a National Strategy for the Spanish Universities Disabled Students' Services Network, or SAPDU - a strategy embracing all of the university assistance services for students with special needs.

SAPDU is the point of departure for the task of adapting and unifying the different criteria and protocols -a task undertaken with the collaboration of all Spanish Universities. This is their response to the need to produce a unified reference document at a national level that will facilitate those adaptations best-suited to the needs of disabled university students in Spain independently of the University where they study. This is an eminently practical document whose aim is to be an effective tool in the hands of the different universities' technicians belonging to disability assistance services and of the teaching staff.

This tool, now being used at a national level and in different collaboration ambits with other projects, began to be employed discretely when performing unification and collaborative tasks with other international universities. In this aspect the MOB4ALL project aims to unify common criteria and protocols in all of the ambits of the ULYSSEUS network member universities' special educational needs requirements. This involves creating the network's own common guidelines, making them available to all other European universities.

II.- NATIONAL PLAN FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS.

The common elements in all group categories of students with special educational needs have been compiled, defined at a national level, and applied in the ambit of our partners. A meeting has been established with all of those in charge of mobility in our centres, as well with as those services involved in the monitoring and support of our University's incoming mobility students with special needs. A general criterion has, therefore, been established for everyone, independently of their diagnosis or specific needs, under the assumption that a common aspect exists – an aspect that will facilitate better action within the ambit of best practice while bearing in mind the following:

1. Adapting admission to University training programmes is a measure aimed at attending to the training needs of disabled and/or educational needs students. Such adaptations comprise providing the spatial, personal material and communication resources so that students with special needs can access the university



syllabus and/or in adjustments to non-prescriptive or basic elements of the training programme. This includes the timing, the methodology and the type of evaluation to be employed. In the university ambit, teaching staff adaptations are a measure that work in favour of the right of disabled students to equal opportunities when undertaking university studies, as provided for by Organic Law of Universities 6/2001, of 21st December (BOE nº 89 of 13/04/2007), in its additional twenty-fourth provision on the inclusion of disabled persons in universities.

2. The adaptations to be established will depend on, among other factors, the educational needs of the students. These needs will vary from individual to individual, the qualification s/he is studying for and his/her present situation. A previous evaluation of the student will enable those involved to establish the most suitable type of adaptations and resources. This should be expressed in positive terms with regard to the student's qualities and abilities. While remaining general in nature, the recommendations that are laid out in this document will serve as a guide. This means that they must be adapted, depending upon each disabled student's state of health. First, the recommendations directed at all disabled students or students with educational needs will be addressed and then more specific adaptations will be addressed, depending on the individual student's specific disability, or learning difficulty

III.- GENERAL APPLICATION IN UNIVERSIDAD DE SEVILLA.

General assistance recommendations for students with special educational needs:

1. Students with special educational needs must not be identified in the classroom unless s/he has given his/her authorisation for classmates to be informed. The cession or communication of this information to third parties is expressly prohibited, as set forth in Organic Law 15/1999 of December 13th on Personal Data Protection.
2. The student should contact his/her teacher(s) at the beginning of the academic year in order to examine his/her specific learning difficulties and to set out a suitable methodology.
3. At the beginning of the academic year the syllabus, as well as the tutorials timetable, the submission date for works, examination dates and all other relevant information must be provided.



4. New Information and Communication Technologies (email, virtual campus, forums, etc.) should be used in order to solve doubts, provide information and to address any other subjects-related questions.
5. Tutorials should be used as an educational strategy for supporting the student's training and his/her integration into university life. Tutorials enable teaching staff to identify difficulties with regard to the subject(s) they teach, to clarify concepts, answer doubts, extend content and to enable a more exhaustive monitoring of the students' progress, as well as to sound out potential methodological modifications to the syllabus with regard to the difficulties that have emerged.
6. Students must be consulted and informed with regard to the services and resources available in the University for students with special educational needs.
7. With regard to internships, the following must be observed:
 - a) The guidelines provided for in Art. 10 of Royal Decree 1707/2011 which regulates academic internships for university students: "The universities will provide the tutors of disabled students with the information and training necessary for this function to be undertaken".
 - b) Priority when selecting internship centres will be given only if this is justified because the student's needs severely restrict the choice of centre.
 - c) The student should be incorporated into the organisation that is best adapted to his/her needs.
 - d) The timetable of the intern should be adapted as a function of his/her educational needs. Such adaptations might involve fewer hours per day, or include a rest day, which might be extended during the internship itself.
 - e) Use of the human and technical resources provided by the University must be allowed.
 - f) There must be fluid communications between the professional tutors in the workplace and their academic counterparts in the University Centre, as well as with the other services involved in the internship.

IV.- PROTOCOL FOR INCOMING DISABLED STUDENTS

1. Universidad de Sevilla's approximately 700 partner universities nominate their students to fill the places agreed according to the Interinstitutional Agreements in force.

For students undertaking whole year of exchange studies or for those whose exchange takes place during the first semester, the nomination period established for the 2021-22 academic year was from April 15th to June 30th. For



those students who will be arriving at their destination university to study during the second semester of the 2021-22 academic year, there will be a second nomination period, starting on October 1st and finishing on November 30th, 2021. The 2021-22 academic calendar commences on September 20th, 2021, and finishes on July 2nd, 2022.

During this nomination period, the home university will inform Universidad de Sevilla of any incident or specific needs with regard to the students nominated. This will enable Universidad de Sevilla to make the necessary preparations for his/her welcome and stay and in order to put measures into place so that his/her stay is problem-free.

2. When made aware of a case of disability, the [*Centro Internacional*](#) will contact Universidad de Sevilla's University Community Assistance Service, or SACU, (Spanish initials) which will then take the necessary action through its [*Disability Unit*](#).
3. Simultaneously, the *Centro Internacional* will ask the home university for the medical information it holds and/or any social requirements concerning the student in question. This information will be used to undertake an in-depth study of the case with the aim of defining the complete protocol of actions to be taken, adhering at all times the applicable data protection legislation.
4. In order to administer all cases correctly and to the satisfaction of all parties, any documentation submitted, and all communications should be in either Spanish or English, with the aim of facilitating communication with the student and/or the home university.
5. The SACU's Disability Unit will study each and every case and will request from the home university all of the clarifications and supplementary documentation that it requires and considers necessary and relevant. This will be done via the *Centro Internacional*.
6. Once the student's situation has been analysed, the above Unit will offer the student personalised attention and will offer a series of resources and technical support in order to adapt the classes to the student's circumstances. Such resources and support include note-taking, personalised information, a companion when changing classes, and, if the need arises, immediate contact with the relevant Unit(s).



7. With regard to disabled students' academic progress, both the *Centro Internacional*, and the relevant Faculty or and School's Vice-Deanship for Mobility will contact the teaching staff concerned so that each case will receive personalised attention according to his or her needs. This includes such areas as access to, and the full exploitation of, the classes and the special evaluation measures to be applied – extra time for tasks, adapted spaces, etc.
8. Support procedures, such as the *Proyecto Contigo* project, including volunteer disability awareness-raising and training programmes are also in place.
9. Moreover, the Vice-Rectorate for Students' Financial Aid and Grants Service offers aid to those students who have special disability-associated academic needs.

All information of interest can be consulted by visiting the links below, or by sending us an email.

[CENTRO INTERNACIONAL:](#)

Emails: relint3@us.es, relint14@us.es

Tel.: +34 954 551 756 / +34 955 420 977

[SACU DISABILITY UNIT:](#)

Emails: sacucapacidad@us.es, sacucapacidad2@us.es

Tel.: +34 954 487 749 / +34 954 486 786

[LIST OF PEOPLE IN CHARGE OF MOBILITY BY CENTRE](#)



IO1. TEMPLATE FOR THE COLLECTION OF INSPIRING PRACTICES RELATED TO INCLUSIVE MOBILITY (STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Title
<p>INCOMA Mobility actions protocol for people with special needs</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Country of origin/Implementation
<p>Spain</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Aims and description
<p>INCOMA has been working and collaborating with very heterogeneous groups since its foundation, having grown in recent years its participation in programmes specifically aimed at creating learning and training opportunities for people with functional diversity, young people with special needs, and people at risk of social exclusion or socially discriminated or marginalised. Several projects have been developed with the aim of improve the better inclusion of young people with special needs in our society, but not only trough the development of mobility and training actions but also with projects linked with the exchange and promotion of best practices (MAKE IT HAPPEN and PRESTO projects).</p> <p>The INCOMA Mobility actions protocol for people with special needs brings together all this wide experience, highlighting the methodology used to carry out the implementation of mobility actions. In addition some case studies have included because have been considered useful for the common learning and improvement of all the stakeholders that make mobility actions possible.</p> <p>This protocol is mainly composed by 3 pillars:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project: <p>It can identified two types of mobility projects for people with special needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Standard projects</u>: in which one or several participants present some quality or capacity that need a special attention and work on an individual basis. - <u>Inclusion projects</u>: in which the whole group has been chosen because they belong to a group considered being at risk. In addition, there is a condition that unites them which is part of the main objectives of the project and has to be worked on and evaluated as a group. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mobility action: <p>Depending of the of project it can be identified some phases:</p>



I.Pre-departure: In this phase it is fundamental to understand that the psychological preparation of participants with special needs is completely different. In projects specifically designed for people at risk of social exclusion, the work on behaviours and reactions to unfamiliar circumstances becomes very important, taking into account that they might not have had a similar experience before.

II.In destination: In this phase it is very important to pay particular attention to the following aspects:

- Accommodation: So participants can feel comfortable.
- Internship: Here the expectations have an important role. Expectations should be neither too high nor too low for the participant.
- Transport and logistics: Participants have to have all the relevant information about local transports and how to use it.

III.Back to home country: The last phase is as important as the previous two phases. Is in this is the moment when participants have to apply what they have learnt to the reality of their own home country.

- **Psychological and emotional support:**

This section presents an overview of the main feelings observed in students with special needs that have been participated in a mobility action organized by INCOMA. Moreover, some actions are proposed in order to tackle these feelings.

● **Link (E-learning or Provider)**

This is an internal protocol, so it is not published. The document is presented at the end of this annex.

● **Target Group**

Students with any kind of special need (cognitive, physical, in risk of exclusion, Needs...)

● **Relevance for MOB4ALL project outcomes**

This protocol and its measures are used when a group or an individual student with special needs develop a mobility experience organized by INCOMA.

The measures and the different phases can be used as guidelines for the development and implementation of future mobility actions within MOB4ALL project and beyond. In addition, the



protocol is a very comprehensive document, based on the vast experience of INCOMA. Indeed, it is easily transferable to any kind of student with special needs (cognitive, physical, in risk of exclusion, Needs...)

Annex: INCOMA Mobility actions protocol for people with special needs



MOBILITY ACTIONS FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

One of the priorities in terms of European mobility actions is to create opportunities for all young people. It does not matter whether they come from one context or another, whether they are educated or not, or suffer from any illness or pathology that prevents them from facing reality in a different way from the majority, also have the possibility of benefiting from the training and mobility grants for educational purposes abroad that the EU offers.

INCOMA has been working and collaborating with very heterogeneous groups since its foundation, and in recent years our participation in programmes specifically aimed at creating learning and training opportunities for people with functional diversity, young people with special needs, and people at risk of social exclusion or socially discriminated or marginalised people has grown.

In the present document we intend to bring together this wide experience, highlighting the methodology used to carry out the implementation of mobility actions. In addition some case studies have included because have been considered useful for the common learning and improvement of all the stakeholders that make mobility actions possible.

THE PROJECT

The understanding of the project in which the mobility is framed, the objectives to be achieved and the needs of the partners and entities that are part of the project will guide the methodology to be used to coordinate all the activities to be developed.

In our case we can identify two types of mobility projects for people with special needs:

- Standard projects, in which one or several participants present some quality or capacity that need a special attention and work on an individual basis.
- Inclusion projects, in which the whole group has been chosen because they belong to a group considered being at risk, and there is a condition that unites them that forms part of the main objectives of the project and needs to be worked on and evaluated as a group.

THE MOBILITY ACTION

Depending on the type of project we are working on, we must establish clear working criteria. This process will depend directly on the partner sending or receiving the group, and on what resources (human and material) are available between both entities.



In this sense, mobility can be a part of the project, or the project itself can consist in a mobility action. In any case, the mobility action can be divided into different phases:

PRE- DEPARTURE

Preparing the logistical aspects of the mobility action is broadly similar to any other type of mobility action.

However, it is fundamental to understand that the psychological preparation of participants is radically different. In projects specifically designed for people at risk of social exclusion, the work on behaviors and reactions to unfamiliar circumstances becomes very important, bearing in mind that they may not have a previous similar experience:

- Exposure to uncertain events or events outside the comfort/control zone.
- An experience of personal autonomy (work routine, personal hygiene, assumption of responsibilities)
- Confidence on the part of external elements (sending-receiving entity tutors, placement tutor, pedagogues and companions during the experience)
- Creation of a personal and professional project for the future

For this reason, becomes more important the preparation of:

- Assumption of responsibility (the consequences of their actions and *locus of control*)
- Emotional reactions to unfamiliar circumstances
- Information related to the destination, language and culture, which helps to create mental schemas that will make the participants imagine themselves in different contexts and project themselves in the destination. Rules to follow (all these details can be discussed in the online meeting before departure).
- Action plan with a time evolution (mainly based on the career projection and its phases) assessing expectations and fears and working to bring them closer to the reality to be experienced in the destination country.

IN DESTINATION

In the first hours and days of the stay in the host country, participants will be exposed to a lot of stress due to the new circumstances they are facing. Based on our experience, many of them will seek to blame external elements for their difficulty in adapting. This is why it is vitally important that we monitor the following factors in great detail:

- Accommodation: the quality of the accommodation must be very good, making it easier for the participant to feel comfortable at home and avoiding to be away from



the house (where they are more likely to engage in disruptive **behaviours** that will **destabilise** their routine in the host country). In addition, the participant will perceive that all actors involved in the mobility are concerned about his/her well-being.

- Internships: the host company must be aware of the reality of the participant, their circumstances, their needs and the expectations they have in relation to the work. This does not mean that we condition the companies in a negative way, as this could lead to rejection and even discrimination (we avoid negative and **stigmatising** discourse, sticking to the most objective realities that bias the impression of the companies as little as possible). As far as the participants are concerned, the choice of the placement must be in accordance with their wishes and expectations, worked on in the previous phase. It is vitally important that they match the reality of the company so that the tasks are neither below nor above their capabilities.
- Transfer and local transport: the arrival in the destination country will be coordinated by the host **organisation** so that participants do not have to expose themselves to the stress of **finding the best option** to get to their destination, etc. During the Welcome Meeting, all the information already worked on during the online meeting will be reviewed, transport cards will be provided and how mobility works in the city will be explained. This process will help participants to understand local travel gradually, getting to know the different means of transport and areas of the city little by little during their stay. Transport to their place of work will also be explained, and they will be accompanied to ensure that they actively participate and understand the system.

BACK TO THE HOME COUNTRY

The phase of return to the home country is as important as the two previous ones, as this is the moment when participants have to put everything they have learnt into practice in their own city. It is important:

- That they have an employment plan to follow when they arrive in their city of residence.
- That they take everything they have experienced and learnt in Seville and apply and **internalise** it in their daily reality (development of emotional intelligence).
- That they work on the creation of a reality (social, housing) conducive to the maintenance of an independent life at all levels.)



PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

For some participants, an experience abroad may be a completely new experience to which they have never been exposed before. Uncertainty and sudden changes in reality can be traumatic for some people, and more likely for those who have not worked on developing their emotional intelligence. It is important for the tutor to be prepared to pick up many negative emotions during the follow-up and to help channel them so that the participant can cope with the stay.

The elements we most often encountered when working with participants with special needs were:

- **Anxiety.** In many cases the result of the change of reality, the internal stress of the first days of work in a new place or the adaptation to an external regulation/element that conditions our life.
- **Apathy.** Some of the participants experienced high levels of apathy from the first week onwards, often due to the change of routine, the stress of moving to a new place of work (and its physical implications) and the unfamiliarity of the environment and culture in which they live.
- **Fear of not meeting others' expectations.** Not being exposed to external judgment before, and knowing that there are now many stakeholders who have expectations of what they do can provoke fear and distress.
- **Frustration.** Generally, this feeling has stemmed from the impossibility of doing what they want to do at any given moment. Participants may be used to having free disposal of their time and reject all activities that do not bring immediate pleasure (I don't feel like going to class - I don't go / I'm sleepy at any time - I sleep).

The proposed guidelines to combat these reactions are:

- **Anxiety.** It can be worked on by following simple guidelines such as dividing the day into small parts (in order to achieve small objectives) and automating them so that they do not consume mental resources (establishing exact timetables for transport, preparing food), avoiding postponing tasks that cannot be carried out for a very long period of time (writing them down so that they do not take up mental resources, **internalising** that they are postponed indefinitely), carrying out simple tasks and not accumulating them in the memory. Convey that the first few days may be very stressful, but with time this anxiety will fade away.
- **Apathy.** It can be effective to work on creating new expectations and valuing the previous ones. After the creation of new expectations, it is advisable to carry out activities to **fulfill** the new ones. It can be effective to explain the motivation curve and its phases.



- **Fear of not meeting external expectations.** The best way to work on this is to communicate a lot, between the participant and the support tutor, the placement tutor and the company placement tutor. Convey to the participant what we really expect from him/her (in terms of attitude and motivation and not so much in terms of task performance and performance) and communicate any feedback received from the company always in an assertive way.

- **Frustration.** Two factors to combat this are mental flexibility and frustration tolerance. Learning to differentiate between what we want and what we need, controlling impulsive reactions and accepting and accepting unpleasant emotions in order to manage them. Understanding that actions have immediate or long-term consequences, and that certain efforts have positive long-term consequences, and involve effort only at the beginning and not when you are used to doing it on a daily basis.



IO1. UNISER CASE STUDY

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Title or Headline:
<p><i>Welcoming , inclusion, integration in Emilia Romagna region</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduction: General description of the scenario <p><i>In 2017 Uniser, in collaboration with a Spanish partner from Barcelona, welcomed for a month in Forlì (Emilia Romagna) a group of about 20 Spanish students from different Catalan Institutes, with different profiles and qualifications . Within the group there were two young special needs participants: a student with muscular dystrophy, Cristia' and a deaf-mute boy, Michael. During their mobility experience in Italy, Cristia 'and Michael were accompanied by an acc.person (caregiver???) and an interpreter to support them;</i></p> <p><i>The Preparation (pre-departure training) for the mobility experience was organized by the Spanish partner in collaboration with Uniser, aimed at providing all the details of the internship experience abroad before departure.</i></p> <p><i>Uniser took care of providing training on arrival, board, lodging, constant monitoring, and adequate companies, chosen based on the profiles and qualifications of the participants, where they would have carried out their internship experience.</i></p> <p><i>The initial concern about how to better manage the hosting activities , the company's research and suitable accommodation, disappeared when we received positive feedback from the companies involved in this experience: both the placements we contacted enthusiastically accepted the possibility to welcome young people in special needs within their working realities.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Summary: Analysis of the situation (Issues, challenges,...) (10-15 lines maximum) <p><i>Cristia ', a student of social integration, was hosted into a very active , local social cooperative. Uniser had been collaborating in the past , with this reality, which had welcomed other foreign trainees as well as young people at risk of social exclusion.</i></p> <p><i>Michael, a student of 'Hairdressing and hair cosmetics', had his experience at a local hairdressing salon.</i></p> <p><i>The accommodation provided for Cristia 'and Cristina (his acc.person) was located a few meters from the placement to obviously facilitate getting the hosting company . Being the Hosting organisation, a social cooperative that works in social integration projects, is equipped with all the services for the disabled and without architectural barriers.</i></p> <p><i>The location of the accommodation greatly favoured Cristia's autonomy and helped him focus on activities and the acquisition of professional and personal skills.</i></p> <p><i>Cristia' s accompanying person (Cristina) also was a participant with the same profile (social integration) and with experience as a carer for disable people , carried out her internship at the</i></p>



same cooperative in which Cristia' was hosted : the first week / ten days she supported Cristia ', helping him to enter the new reality; at the end of this period of coaching Cristia' carried on his experience without Cristina, adapting and integrating himself into the work group.

The interpreter for Michael (who also spoke a little Italian) supported him for the first days in the company, translating from Italian into sign language. Once he entered the dynamics of work and acquired the daily routine tasks, Michael embarked on his internship experience independently, knowing that if necessary his translator would support him for clarification and linguistic support.

● *Result: How did the person solve the issue or drive a benefit?*

The positive approach of all the protagonists of this experience has led to excellent results in terms of the acquisition of skills, both professional and personal; it should also be emphasized the positive feedback from both the students and the companies involved in terms of personal satisfaction for having overcome obstacles that inevitably face us, when we decide to get involved and face a new reality.

In particular, the linguistic and communication difficulties were managed with tenacity and with the right motivation, without ever giving up and always trying to find a constructive solution to the difficulties and small daily obstacles.

● **Conclusion/ Recommendations**

Another very interesting result at the end of this experience was what happened once the participant Michael returned to Spain. Michal has decided to create an association for the benefit of those who, like him in conditions of special needs, decide to undertake an educational mobility experience abroad, providing them with support and useful advice to be able to better manage this type of experience.

In conclusion, we can say that we got a confirmation that in order to better manage and be able to give valuable training experiences to young people in special needs, is necessary:

- *a good cooperation between sending and receiving organizations*
- *an adequate preparation*
- *the presence of specialized and trained accompanying person especially in the early stages of the experience, that can provide support for the correct integration and safety of students.*



Conclusions and Global Report

In conclusion of this study of how EU students with special needs are supported, we can summarize a certain number of facts.

First of all, we can see that each country, and surely each higher education establishment, is different from others with respect to its usages and processes for its students with special needs. These differences are probably due especially to the great diversity of disability laws and regulations in each country. However, we must not overlook the importance of social and societal aspects and in particular the image that is given and perceived of disability, for historical, political, or cultural reasons, in each country.

Also, some conclusions are general while others are more specific to a country or even to a specific establishment. And not everyone will recognize themselves in some of the remarks made by the students. But it is part of the desire to improve and simplify things to summarize here all these remarks and not only those that would be relevant to all members of the project.

So here are the main lessons we learn from this study.

What is disability or special needs? What are arrangements for them?

- **Differences in perception, understanding, actions, etc. are important.** It is necessary to agree on a *simple, clear, and precise definition* of what we mean by *disability* or *special needs*. This is essential to be able to truly understand each other between countries and institutions between which students exchange. But it is also and above all to move towards a facilitated portability of the arrangements of studies and exams. And this is one of the guarantees of the success of a successful experience abroad for a student with a disability.
- **The responses and solutions provided to students with special need are very different from one country to another, from one institution to another.** More difficult but just as useful, we should reconcile the uses and choices concerning what we all consider to be reasonable and justified arrangements according to each disability. That is to say, to define common criteria which give rise to similar and reasonable adjustments for studies and exams.
- **But the reliefs must remain individual and specific.** It is therefore necessary to reconcile the need to make the assistance provided to students with disabilities legible and portable with the need to take account of each individual case.

What are the main demands expressed by the interviewed students?

- **Higher education institutions should collect data** about the participation of students with disabilities in mobility programmes, agree on common targets, and monitor participation closely in different mobility programs.



- **Inclusion of students with disabilities in mobility programmes should be given a central place** in the national internationalization strategy or national action plan for mobility.
- **A research project analysing the impact of student with disability mobility** at European and national level is needed.
- **It's very important to promote the added value of mobility** with campaigns with inclusive resources.
- **We must encourage to disclose the disability.**
- **A SMP (support mobility plan)** is an important tool to deploy.
- **Higher education institutions should *automatically*** take over the recognition of disability status of incoming students with disabilities and provide necessary adjustments.
- **Higher education institutions should establish assisted living initiatives and support the integration of incoming students *into the institution and social life*** of the host town.
- **It' useful to develop** a buddy or mentoring system.
- **Training and capacity building for staff members are very important.** And establishing communities of practices and learning networks amongst different stakeholders.
- **It's necessary to improve collaborations at an institutional level** to share information and expertise.