

**ERASMUS+ PROJECT:*****Accessible Online Environment for Encouraging Autonomous English Language Learning Aimed at People with Disabilities (EN-ABILITIES), 2017-1-ES01-KA204-038155 (<http://en-abilities.eu/>)*****Description**

The EN-ABILITIES project provides an innovative approach to bring closer the language learning to people with Special needs.

Recommendation 2006/962/EC resulted in the EU Framework for Key Competences for lifelong learning (LLL). This recommendation defined the 8 LLL key-competences as a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes that all individuals need for personal fulfilment and development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment. One of the 8 key-competences is the communication in foreign language.

The document recognises the Member States' role to provide the appropriate infrastructures. For continuing education and training of adults ensuring equal access to LLL and support different needs and competencies. It stresses the importance of building on various individual competencies considering equality and access for those groups who need support to fulfil their educational potential, among them, people with disabilities.

Likewise, one of the priority areas for the EU Disability Strategy is the promotion of inclusive education and LLL. According to the progress report on the strategy implementation, the access to an inclusive and quality education remains elusive for many people with disabilities. Equal access to quality education and LLL enable disabled people to participate fully in society and improve their quality of life.

In Europe, 44 million people aged between 15-64 (14% of this age group) reported a fundamental activity difficulty in 2011. Almost one disabled person out of 10 aged 15-65 participated in education and training (formal and no-formal); that represents the half percentage of non-disabled people. Efforts to bring closer learning resources adapted to their needs and capacities should be done. One of the main barriers to their integration is the lack of language competence. Governments tend to provide a "one size fits all" model for language learning that does not consider the specific needs of people with disabilities.

The EN-ABILITIES project will deliver innovative products for encouraging the autonomous language learning of people with disabilities in formal and no-formal education settings. Concretely, the accessible Virtual Learning Environment built by a sequenced learning process suitable to be adapted to each student and according to the W3C remarks and Universal Design blueprints. Currently, there is not an online tool for learning English which accomplishes the main European guidelines as regards accessibility and Design4All.

Objectives

EN-ABILITIES proposes a comprehensive tool to facilitate the language learning of people with special needs. For that reason, this project contributes to the ERASMUS+ objectives and challenges, specifically promoting equality and inclusion of adults with SEN (Special Educational Needs).

The EN-ABILITIES primary objective is to develop tools aimed at encouraging autonomous language learning for adult students with SEN, in formal and no-formal education settings, implementing a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and a new validated and evidence-based methodology and approach translated into practical guidelines for ICT and software developers and pedagogical guidelines for teachers.

The proposed method deploys a sequenced meaningful learning process, suitable for being adapted to each student. This technique will be integrated into the VLE together with agile and flexible resources.

Therefore, EN-ABILITIES provides an innovative approach to bring closer the language learning to adult students with SEN.

Consortium

The project's consortium is composed of 5 different universities with the complementary background (ICT, teaching, rehabilitation, etc.), one ICT company and one Association.

Universidad de Burgos

Dublin City University

Universidade de Aveiro

Universitatea "Dunarea de Jos" din Galati

University of Belgrade

Prometeo Innovations SL

Sociedad Española de Asistencia Sociosanitaria (SEAS)

The partners were selected and integrated assuring that no gaps could remain for the scientific validation and the technical development, as well as to the final applicability of the outcomes. Moreover, all partners have an extensive network of potential end-users to be involved in the events and learning activities to validate the project outcomes and to be the ambassadors of the EN-ABILITIES results.

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<http://en-abilities.eu/resources/>