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PReventing Incident of Sexual Cyberbullying in Intellectual disability

2023-2-RO01-KA220-YOU-000174271

Inclusion strategy

Accessibility and inclusion measures in the implementation of project activities

Inclusion and accessibility constitute transversal priorities of the project and have been systematically integrated across all phases of implementation, including the design, delivery, monitoring and dissemination of activities. These principles guided the involvement of direct beneficiaries, associated stakeholders and all other actors engaged in the project. In line with the recommendations set out in the *Implementation Guidelines of the Erasmus+ Inclusion and Diversity Strategy*, the partnership adopted a proactive approach to identifying and addressing barriers to participation, with the aim of ensuring equal access, meaningful engagement and fair participation opportunities for all target groups.

When designing project activities, outputs and tools, the partnership has taken into account a range of factors that may hinder social participation, including disability-related needs, health conditions, cultural and linguistic differences, social and geographical barriers, economic constraints and risks of discrimination.

Across the national pilots, accessibility was consistently addressed by adapting evaluation and training tools, moving away from purely quantitative instruments where necessary, in favour of qualitative, experiential and playful methods better suited to participants' cognitive and communicative needs. Indeed, whenever project partners found that some materials were not sufficiently accessible or user-friendly, they proactively adapted them to better suit the needs of the participants. As people with intellectual disabilities have diverse abilities, communication styles and support needs, the project consortium tailored the materials to ensure they were accessible, understandable and appropriate for the specific group partners were working with.

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1. Disabilities and health-related needs

With regard to disabilities and health-related barriers, the consortium ensured that project activities were organised in a manner that was accessible to persons with physical, sensory, cognitive, or other impairments, as well as to those experiencing health-related limitations. Whenever face-to-face activities were organised, accessible venues were selected in order to facilitate participation on an equal basis with others.

Digital tools and online learning environments (e-learning) used within the project complied with the *Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)* where necessary, this meaning that all actions concerning the official project website and the training course programmes were selected with accessibility requirements in mind. The project's digital tools and online learning environments were designed with accessibility and inclusion in mind, indeed. The official project website features a clear navigation structure, responsive design, readable content and downloadable learning resources. Accessibility principles inspired by the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) were considered during the design and development process to improve usability for a wide range of users.

- Project materials and e-learning contents were developed using plain and easy-to-understand language, especially in view of the needs of young participants and other beneficiaries with different levels of literacy, language proficiency, or prior knowledge.
- An accessibility plug-in has been integrated into the project's web page, designed to provide visual and functional tools that facilitate navigation for users.
- Audio-visual materials, like the training course videos, were prepared using clear voice narration and simple language and were supported by visual elements to facilitate understanding and engagement.
- During the piloting phase, project activities were supported by professionals from the social sector who were already familiar with the beneficiaries involved. Their presence played an essential role in facilitating communication and interaction with participants, particularly those requiring more support. These professionals acted as intermediaries where needed, guided project partners in adapting their approach to participants' needs and contributed to creating a more inclusive, responsive and supportive learning environment.
- In addition, digital communication and dissemination materials, such as e-cards, were produced and published in accessible formats in order to broaden the reach of project information and outputs.

The whole project dissemination strategy was developed using clear and attentively selected language and images, to improve readability and usability for a diverse audience. Where necessary,

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reasonable accommodations and individual support measures were introduced to ensure that participants with impairments could access project activities, resources and opportunities under conditions equivalent to those of other participants.

Particular attention was paid to participants experiencing mental health challenges. Activities were organised following a person-centred approach, promoting psychological safety, respectful communication and the possibility of expressing concerns in a supportive environment. Facilitators were attentive to emotional wellbeing and adapted the pace and methodology of activities whenever necessary.

2. Cultural and language differences

The project also addressed cultural and linguistic barriers that could limit participation or reduce the accessibility of project results.

In recognition of the diversity of linguistic backgrounds among participants and target groups, the partnership ensured the translation of all project materials and resources into their respective national languages, so that individuals who were not able to use English as a vehicular language were not excluded from participation or from benefiting from project outputs. As a tangible result demonstrating this process, all project outputs are available in:

- English – official project language
- Romanian – translation provided by ASSOC
- Italian – translation provided by ANS
- Spanish – translation provided by INTRAS
- Greek – translation provided by EDRA
- Macedonian – until KMOP Skopje was part of the consortium

Cultural diversity was also taken into consideration in the planning of activities, the preparation of learning materials and the communication strategy adopted by the consortium, in order to create an inclusive environment that valued different perspectives, experiences and identities.

→ In Romania, for example, the beneficiaries of the Educational Programme tailored for young people with intellectual disabilities included people who identify as part of the Roma community.

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Whenever necessary, project contents were explained using Easy-to-Read principles and communication techniques adapted to the comprehension levels of participants with intellectual disabilities. This supported meaningful understanding of sensitive topics addressed throughout the project.

3. Social and geographical barriers

Particular attention was devoted to social and geographical barriers that could affect participation, especially those related to the reconciliation of project involvement with education, employment, family obligations, or caring responsibilities.

To reduce these barriers, the project consortium adopted flexible participation arrangements aimed at facilitating broader and more equitable participation, including the possibility of remote attendance for project events, training sessions and other relevant activities, whenever appropriate.

- Mini-informative events were organised both in presence and online.
- These events were scheduled at times considered most accessible and convenient for participants, taking into account their availability and potential personal or professional commitments.
- On several occasions, project partners conducted the project activities in schools, disability centers and other relevant venues to facilitate participation and ensure that project activities were accessible to different target groups.
- Regarding the Training Programme, even if all training materials are indeed available online, through the PR.I.S.C.I.LLA official website, whenever necessary or requested, the project partners organised face-to-face sessions.

This approach also supported the participation of individuals facing geographical obstacles, including those living in remote areas, or those with limited mobility due to work schedules, transport or logistical constraints.

The partnership sought, as much as possible, to agree with participants on schedules and delivery modalities that were better suited to their personal and professional circumstances, thereby promoting more equitable participation conditions.

→ In Spain, several training activities were delivered directly within educational and support facilities attended by the target groups. This approach reduced transportation barriers and

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facilitated participation among young people who might otherwise have encountered difficulties accessing external learning opportunities.

4. Economic Barriers

In order to avoid economic barriers, participation in project activities was free of charge for all beneficiaries and target groups.

The conduction of online activities further contributed to reducing economic barriers, as it limited the need for travel and other related costs that might otherwise have discouraged participation.

This approach reflected the project commitment to minimising exclusion linked to socio-economic disadvantage and to ensuring that participation opportunities remained as open and equitable as possible.

5. Preventing discrimination and promoting equal opportunities

The project operated under a strict zero-tolerance approach to discrimination of any kind.

The partnership remained committed to ensuring equal opportunities and fair treatment throughout all project processes, including staff recruitment, stakeholder engagement, participant selection, implementation of activities and dissemination of results.

Within the Greek and North Macedonian implementation context, inclusive measures were adopted to ensure the active participation of young people with intellectual disabilities and the professionals supporting them. Pilot sessions were organised in close cooperation with specialised care providers and educators who were already familiar with the participants' individual needs, enabling activities to be adapted in real time according to participants' cognitive abilities, communication styles and learning pace. Partners also encouraged the involvement of caregivers and support professionals whenever appropriate, helping participants engage with the educational content in a safe, respectful and supportive environment while promoting equal opportunities for meaningful participation.

→ By extending the pilot to a younger age group than originally foreseen (11–13 years old, rather than 18–25), the Italian partner ensured that preventive education on sexual cyberbullying could reach young people with intellectual disabilities at an earlier, more formative stage, in line with the principle of equal access to safety education regardless of age or disability profile.

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Relevant examples in this regard concerned the PR.I.S.C.I.LLA Educational and Training activities, within which particular attention was paid to supporting participants with limited digital skills:

- When needed, for specific participants involved in project activities, digital materials were also made available in printed format in order to facilitate understanding and ensure full access to project contents.
- Support was provided to help participants access all the digital materials and online resources. In fact, prior to the delivery of both the Educational Programme and the Training Programme, participants were provided with clear and detailed instructions on how to access and use the online resources, thereby reducing potential digital barriers.

Fair and transparent employment practices were applied when recruiting and employing project staff and all participation procedures were designed so as to guarantee equal access and to take into account the diverse needs of applicants and participants.

Inclusive, respectful and non-discriminatory language was systematically used in project communication, outputs and interactions, thereby contributing to the creation of a safe and welcoming environment for all those involved in the project. Any terminology that could be considered discriminatory, stigmatising, or inappropriate was consistently avoided.

→ For instance, in Romanian language, care was taken to avoid the use of terms related to disability that are now considered obsolete, even if they had been widely used in the past, in order to ensure respectful communication and avoid any negative impact on persons with disabilities.

Commitment to wider awareness

In order to reinforce the sustainability and multiplier effect of these social inclusion efforts, the partnership promoted awareness of inclusive practices beyond the direct project activities.

Stakeholders and audiences reached by the project were informed of the accessibility and inclusion measures adopted within the project framework and they were encouraged to reflect on and integrate similar practices within their own organisations, professional settings and daily lives.

As part of this commitment, the PR.I.S.C.I.LLA consortium produced and disseminated the present informative document summarising the inclusion and accessibility strategies adopted throughout the project. This document serves both as a transparency measure and as a practical resource to support the wider transferability of inclusive approaches promoted by the project.

Overall, the project approach to inclusion and accessibility was based on the understanding that participation could only be meaningful and equitable when barriers were anticipated and addressed from the outset. By embedding these principles across all project activities, the partnership ensured

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that the project was implemented in a way that was responsive to diverse needs, aligned with Erasmus+ priorities and conducive to broader, fairer and more effective participation.

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