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“In the TVLC project consortium, we believe that creating a national and international strategic and operational partnership will contribute to the conditions for establishing and implementing the concept of “inclusive education” for all learners.”

Birgit Grimbergen - Project manager
Rea College Pluryn - The Netherlands



Introduction

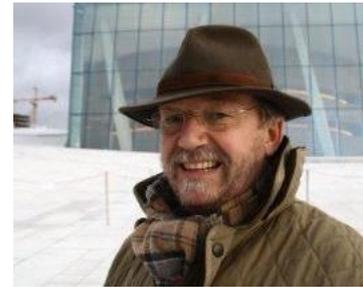
Our society is composed by individuals and groups with diverse ways of functioning. Having a disability is part of everyone’s life cycle and it can appear in different moments of life. In general, people face disabling conditions in a society that is unprepared or unaccepting of diversity while independent living is one of the most important aspects of all people. The empowerment of individuals, to make their own decisions and manage their responsibilities, is considered as crucial for creating independent living. The key to an inclusive society is acceptance and support that ensure human rights are accessible for all.

Understanding the concept of disability

Our understanding of disability has changed over time. In the past, persons with disabilities have been regarded as objects of charity and passive recipients of welfare. This view is slowly giving way to a human rights-based approach to disability, which rejects the long-established idea that obstacles to the participation of persons with disabilities arise primarily from their impairment. Instead, it focuses on eliminating barriers created by society that prevent persons with disabilities from enjoying their human rights on an equal basis with others. Such barriers include, for example, negative attitudes, discriminatory policies and practices, and inaccessible environments. In line with this approach, disability is seen as a socially created problem, and as a matter of removing barriers to the full participation of persons with disabilities. These barriers are what can prohibit full and equal participation in society. By eliminating attitudinal and environmental barriers — as opposed to treating persons with disabilities as problems to be fixed — persons with disabilities can participate as active members of society and enjoy the full range of their rights.

“Learners with a disability should not be educated in segregated schools. Learners with a disability have the right to receive the same education and curriculum as other learners. Therefore, Inclusive Education is a fundamental right for each learner.”

Guus van Beek - Quality expert
European Platform for Rehabilitation - Belgium



The UN-Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

Everyone in this world is protected by laws that defend their rights and inherent dignity (the dignity all people are born with). For example, every human being has the right to life and freedom from slavery. These rights are affirmed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by all member states of the United Nations in 1948. All individuals have the right to food and health care. Persons with disabilities have the right to the same range and quality of free or affordable health care as provided to other people. Persons also have the right to specific health services needed if they have a disability. All individuals have the right to education and the right to be protected from violence and abuse.

A convention is an agreement between countries to obey the same law about a specific issue. Article 1 of the CRPD explained the purpose of the convention as follows: *“The purpose of the present Convention is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity. Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.”* (from: Article 1 of the CRPD)

When a country signs and ratifies (approves) a convention, it becomes a legal promise and guides the actions of the government. It often leads the government to adapt and change its own laws to support the goals of the convention. Ratification occurs when a signed convention or agreement is officially approved by a country and becomes the law in that country. These laws will have impact on the obligations and performance of social service providers. To ensure that persons with disabilities are treated in the same way as other people, the Member States of the United Nations developed the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). To do so, they had the help of persons with disabilities themselves, and their representative organizations. The Convention became international law on 3 May 2008. The Convention protects and promotes the human rights of all persons with disabilities, including children and young people.

“VET providers in Slovenia are encouraged to develop inclusive learning environments that are both universally accessible and adapted to each learner’s needs. BIC Ljubljana is committed to that.”

Jasna Kržin Stepišnik – Director
Biotehniški Izobraževalni Center (BIC) - Slovenia



Concerning education of persons with a disability, the CRPD states the following:

“People have the right to go to school. If you have a disability, you cannot be excluded from education because of it. You should not be educated in segregated schools. You have the right to the same education and curriculum as other children, and your government must give you the help you need to make this happen. For example, it must provide suitable ways for you to communicate so that your teachers understand how to respond to your needs.” (Source: Article 24 of the CRPD)

According to article 8 of the Convention, every government that has ratified the Convention must review its progress towards keeping the promises of the Convention. Civil society organizations must be involved in monitoring the implementation of the Convention.

The challenge of defining inclusive education

All European countries are committed to working towards ensuring more inclusive education systems. They do so in different ways, depending on their past and current contexts and histories. Inclusive education systems are seen as a vital component within the wider aspiration of more socially inclusive societies that all countries align themselves with, both ethically and politically.

There is currently no internationally agreed definition of the concept ‘Inclusive Education’. The concept however has been part of the political debate for many years. The concept ‘Inclusive Education’ was originally used in relation to disability. This was the case in the 1990s, when talking about combating the discrimination or segregation that learners with special educational needs (SEN) due to disability faced in gaining full access to and participation in mainstream educational provision. (Victoria Sorania e.o., 2017) Nowadays the concept of Inclusive Education is used to combat discrimination faced by learners with disabilities. But nowadays the concept of Inclusive Education goes far beyond the issue of disability (OECD, 2004). Nowadays, Inclusive Education is seen as a response to aim for diversity that prepares individuals for life and active citizenship in the society. Inclusive education aims to promote citizenship and the common values of human rights, freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education. It builds on experiences and good practice of innovative approaches and practices developed for the education of people with

“We all have special needs at some point in our lives, and the only difference comes from how we manage to overcome or adapt to them ... the individual-based approach should be relevant in all fields of life, including education, in order to achieve (long-term) results.”

Veronika Kaska - Director
Astangu Vocational Rehabilitation Centre - Estonia



disabilities to design effective and equitable education systems for all learners in a lifelong perspective covering all aspects

of education.

As the European Agency’s position states: ‘The ultimate vision for inclusive education systems is to ensure that all learners of any age are provided with meaningful, high-quality educational opportunities in their local community, alongside their friends and peers’ (European Agency, 2017). Such a goal requires changing the educational culture in teaching and in practice the support for learners. It also requires moving away from the approach a ‘one -size-fits-all’ education and training, towards a more person centred and tailored-made approach to education and training that aims to respond to individual needs of learners.

Inclusive Vocational Education and Training therefore means that the difficulties of the individual learners are caused by the inability of the VET provider to address these difficulties in an adequate way. Inclusive Vocational Education and Training builds on developing a strong learner-centered approach in vocational education and training and on engaging the whole school community to act as a supportive learning community for all learners. This community aims to support the weakest, while encouraging the strongest to achieve their best, and ensures all members feel respected, valued and are enabled to fully participate in the school community. VET providers therefore are encouraged to develop inclusive learning environments that are both universally accessible and adapted to each learner’s needs.

Inclusive education has the aim for a real change at both policy and practice levels regarding education. It is not the curriculum that is in the centre of the educational system but the learners are placed at the centre of the system. An inclusive educational system needs to be able to recognise, to accept and to respond to the diversity of learners. Inclusive education aims to respond to the principles of efficiency, equality and equity, where diversity is perceived as an asset. Learners also need to be prepared to engage in society, to access meaningful citizenship and to acknowledge the values of human rights, freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination. (Victoria Sorania e.o., 2017)

“Inclusive education aims to provide high-quality education for all learners in mainstream settings. Special attention needs to be paid to learners at risk of marginalisation, exclusion and underachievement.”

Lisa Harms - Student Counsellor / internal advisor
ROC Rijn IJssel - The Netherlands



According to the study ““Inclusive education for learners with disabilities” (Victoria Sorania e.o., 2017), Inclusive Education requires three key considerations:

1. A political will and a clear commitment in supporting decision-makers for Inclusive Education at national level. Decision-makers will be responsible for facilitating the required measures to ensure that learners’ rights to education are respected, protected and fulfilled. Decision-makers at national level need to consider what type of legislation and policy measures are required to ensure the effective implementation of inclusive education systems at both national and local level.
2. An in-depth systemic change in the focus on education to increase the capacity of the education system. Inclusive education aims to provide high-quality education for all learners in mainstream settings. Special attention needs to be paid to learners at risk of marginalisation, exclusion and underachievement. Education need to support these learners actively and to respond to their circumstances and needs on a flexible way. Decision-makers need to reflect on how to ensure that inclusive education benefits all, and that no learner is forgotten or left behind.
3. A reflection on, re-definition and re-organisation of the existing and required human and financial resources. Inclusive education aims to ensure a whole-school approach, providing the necessary measures to enable schools to become more inclusive. Inclusive education needs to be part of the general funding allocated to schools for the education of all learners. It also includes additional funding to schools, if required, to provide intensified support for learners at risk of failure. In addition, it provides, if required, extra financial resources targeted at learners in need of the most intensive support.

The partners of the TVLC project, five mainstream and five specialised VET providers from 5 EU member states, shared the common belief that National and European educational policy should be based on principles of inclusive education and equal opportunities, availability and access for all

“Inclusive Vocational Education and Training for all learners requires a learning environment which is accessible and adapted to each learner's needs”

Marija - Project coordinator
Valikupia Vocational Rehabilitation Centre - Lithuania



learners. They believe that VET institutions should provide VET studies for all learners, individual with and without special educational needs. This should be facilitated in strong and sustainable cooperation with national authorities and local government. The learner's own preference of study field must be taken into account as much as possible, as well as their type of special education need and the available employment opportunities. Every student has the right to choose between regular VET schools and fields of study according to his/her preferences and capabilities.

In the project “The VET learning Community”, the partners of the project consortium, five mainstream and five specialised VET providers, explored the opportunities and limitations of implementing Inclusive Vocational Education and Training for all learners in their organisations. This publication described the findings on the study on the topic of Inclusive Education, an overview of pre-conditions of inclusive education at national level and the results of benchmarking the risk and opportunities for the various national contexts. The overview of pre-conditions will be supported by guidelines for implementation of Inclusive education for all from the perspective of the VET provider. One of the key findings of this study emphasizes that the enrollment in mainstream Vocational Education and Training and implementing Inclusive Vocational Education and Training for all learners requires a learning environment which is accessible and adapted to each learner's needs and that the implementation should be connected with aims and measures for social inclusion and specific system requirements to assure quality in the provision for Vocational Education and Training services.

What do project partners think about Inclusive Vocational Education and Training?

One of the objectives of the VET Learning Community project is to study and to investigate the feasibility (opportunities and limitations) of Inclusive Vocational Education and Training in the national context of the partners of the project. Inclusive Vocational Education and Training is an approach to educating and training learners with special educational needs. Under the model of Inclusive Education, students with special needs spend most or all of their time with their peers, non-disabled, students. Each partner of the VET learning Community project is asked to describe its

“RCN Pluryn is supporting mainstream Vocational Education and Training Providers in the Netherlands to become more inclusive. I believe that a strong cooperation with the mainstream VET provider, where we share expertise and experiences, is the key for establishing Inclusive Education for all learners.”

Anita de Wit - Manager
Rea Coillage Pluryn - The Netherlands



view on the feasibility of Inclusive Vocational Education and Training, seen from their own perspective and experiences.

REA College (The Netherlands)

REA College in the Netherlands (RCN Pluryn) expressed its commitment to Inclusive Vocational Education and Training in its position paper. (Position paper Inclusive Education REA College, 2016). The main aim of Inclusive Vocational Education and Training is to contribute to the inclusion in the society, by having a paid job. The services if RCN Pluryn are developed to support students with special needs to achieve this goal. Therefore, the way of educating in RCN Pluryn is closely linked to the labour market. To achieve inclusion in society RCN Pluryn also strives for inclusive education for all. RCN Pluryn is supporting mainstream Vocational Education and Training Providers in the Netherlands. Specialised employees` of RCN Pluryn are based at the facilities of the mainstream VET provider to support learners with special needs. This support is carried out by assisting students and by advising and coaching employees of the mainstream VET provider in how to adapt their way of teaching to the needs of the students with special needs. In the last years, RCN Pluryn experienced that all stakeholders are promoting and striving for Inclusive Education for all. Due to various barriers in the VET system, but also current legislation and regulations, this process of change will take time. Therefore, RCN Pluryn is convinced that a special provision for Vocational Education and Training for learners with special needs is still needed in the Netherlands for the next decade.

“A teacher, working at the ROC Rijn IJssel, can ask for support by a ‘special needs coordinator’. In all departments, teams are supported by workshops and training courses on topics related to Inclusive Vocational Education and Trainings”

Karin Willemse - Team leader
ROC Rijn IJssel - The Netherlands



ROC Rijn IJssel (The Netherlands)

ROC Rijn IJssel in the Netherlands expressed its commitment to Inclusive Vocational Education and Training in its position paper. (Position paper Inclusive Education ROC Rijn IJssel, 2016). ROC Rijn IJssel has taken some steps in creating an enabling atmosphere towards Inclusive Vocational Education and Training.

These steps are:

1. In-depth intake that identifies the need of support of the learner. the circumstances that have to be taken into account by the VET provider, the expectations of the learner and the possibilities of the training program and the nature and the barriers of the learner in attending the training program. Based on the information in the in-depth intake, the curriculum, the physical environment and/or learning time can be adjusted according the needs of the learner.
2. Principles of the guidance and support: ROC Rijn IJssel has a well-functioning structure of care. The principle of the guidance and support focus on the capacity of the learner, rather than on the limitation of the learner. The support is more and more focused on functioning of the learner within the regular group. It is also possible to receive individual support if needed and
3. Support for the educational teams: Teacher of the ROC Rijn IJssel can ask for support by a ‘special needs coordinator’ of by employees of Student Affairs. In all departments, teams are supported by workshops and training courses on topics related to Inclusive Vocational Education and Training.

"Inclusive Vocational Education and Training has a positive impact on the inclusion in the society as a whole. A greater well-being of each individual leads to the better society."

Tita Destovnik - Manager
CenterKontura - Slovenia



CenterKontura (Slovenia)

CenterKontura in Slovenia expressed its commitment to Inclusive Vocational Education and Training in its position paper. (Position paper Inclusive Education CenterKontura, 2016). CenterKontura has the opinion that inclusion for students with a disability is not tied exclusively to the Vocational Education and Training system. It is also tied to a working environment and to everyday life. Inclusive Vocational Education and Training has a positive impact on the inclusive society as a whole, as a greater well-being of each individual leads to the better society. Inclusive Vocational Education and Training therefore can be understood as responding and managing diversity. Within CenterKontura, employees are contributing to an atmosphere that accepts and supports the respect for diversity. In CenterKontura, respecting diversity is connected to the quality assurance system. CenterKontura believes that qualified and professional support are key factors for successful Inclusive Vocational Education and Training. Learners with special needs received training at the workplace. Their performance is monitored by qualified professionals. CenterKontura has shown that the inclusion of persons with disabilities is successful in the inclusive working environment with appropriate support and assistance.

“Throughout different projects we have reached to some significant examples of good practice ... Our experience show that these examples could significantly contribute to the resolution of the issue of Inclusive Vocational Education and Training ...”

Tanja Tek - Internal advisor
Biotehniški Izobraževalni Center (BIC) Ljubljana - Slovenia



BIC Ljubljana (Slovenia)

BIC Ljubljana in Slovenia expressed its commitment to Inclusive Vocational Education and Training in its position paper. (Position paper Inclusive Education BIC Ljubljana, 2016). BIC Ljubljana have been solving some identified barriers for inclusive Vocational Education and training. Throughout different projects we have reached to some significant examples of good practice. The experience has shown that these examples of good practice could significantly contribute to the resolution of the issue of inclusion in the systematic level – they contribute to the quality of life to different groups of learners (e.g. better opportunities for employment in the labour market). BIC Ljubljana has developed different support strategies of inclusive education, such as a management’s positive standpoint to the concept of inclusion education and establishing and improving the supportive network within this field that we have connected with the organisation CenterKontura. BIC Ljubljana and CenterKontura set some common goals and common plans for the future. Professionals of BIC Ljubljana and CenterKontura share and exchange knowledge in understanding student’s specifics, individual approach, professional treatment and support. BIC Ljubljana strongly believe in sustainable cooperation with specialised institutes like CenterKontura which will broaden and strengthen the Vocational Education and training for all learners.

“Valikupia Vocational Rehabilitation Centre stands for ensuring all learners, without and with special needs, a full and equal participation in society, a sustainable participation into the labour market and the improvement of the quality of life of each individual learner.”

Tatjana Ulbiniene - Director
Valikupia Vocational Rehabilitation Centre - Lithuania



Valikupia Vocational Rehabilitation Centre (Lithuania)

Valikupia Vocational Rehabilitation Centre in Lithuania (VRC) expressed its commitment to Inclusive Vocational Education and Training in its position paper. (Position paper Inclusive Valikupia Vocational Rehabilitation Centre, 2016). The mission of VRC is ‘Ensuring clients’ full and equal participation in society, their long-term integration into the labour market and improving their quality of life. VRC provides informal vocational educational and training programs, which are more flexible for adaptations for various accruing needs of the learners. All the programs additionally are adapted for the special needs of people with disabilities. Adaptations are made to the environment, teaching methods, training equipment used. Based on this VRC delivers inclusive training, being able to integrate people with different kind of needs to the same learning environment. The majority of students are studying in regular classes / groups and special needs students are separated in different classrooms, VRC consider this as a gap and challenge of successful integration and communication between learners.

“Kaunas FITTC is committed to implement Inclusive Vocational Education and Training by providing a safe environment and positive atmosphere in the school”

Dainora Pavalkytė - Project Manager
Kaunas Food Industry and Trade training Centre - Lithuania



Kaunas Food Industry Trade training Centre (Lithuania)

Kaunas Food Industry Trade training Centre in Lithuania (Kaunas FITTC) expressed its commitment to Inclusive Vocational Education and Training in its position paper. (Position paper Inclusive Kaunas FITTC, 2016). Kaunas FITTC is an organisation where majority of students are studying in regular classes/groups and special needs students are separated in different classrooms, Kaunas FITTC is aware of this gap in becoming successful integration, communication and acceptance between students with and without special needs. Now students with and without special needs only meet in common areas and have barely existing relationships between the two groups. Kaunas FITTC is committed to reach the following strategic goals: to implement inclusive education in a bigger scope by providing a safe environment and positive atmosphere in school.

Challenges, that school could face while practising Inclusive Education approach might consist of study program management – on the administrative level, need for new teachers – to have two teachers in a classroom where special needs student is included (to help and address different student needs) – governmental level (more teachers per school is quite a luxury). Also social and psychological issues for both – special needs and non-special needs students would be an issue until successful program of addressing student feelings and choosing right ways of communication would be implemented. There would be a question of material given in lessons as well as safety regulations in practical training lessons – work group consisting different teachers and management staff as well as stake holder (parent committee, etc.). All possible challenges would be dealt with by having support from social partners, governmental institutions, school management, experts and very clear and structured system of implementing Inclusive Education system for students with special needs.

“While working with people with special needs, this is my principle „Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn. “ (Benjamin Franklin).

Kadri Joost - Manager
Astangu Vocational Rehabilitation Centre - Tallinn - Estonia



Astangu Vocational Rehabilitation Centre (Estonia)

Astangu Vocational Rehabilitation Centre in Estonia (Astangu) expressed its commitment to Inclusive Vocational Education and Training in its position paper. (Position paper Inclusive Astangu Vocational Rehabilitation Centre, 2016). The Estonian education policy is based on principles of inclusive education and equal opportunities, availability and access. According to the legislation, all VET institutions are obliged to provide VET studies for learners with special educational needs in cooperation with national authorities and local government. Every student has the right to choose between regular VET schools and fields of study according to his/her preferences and capabilities. There are no special VET schools for students with special needs in Estonia. Astangu is a centre that provides study opportunities accompanied with supporting services. Astangu's view on inclusive vocational education and training is that the basic level of inclusive vocational education and training should be ensured in all of the mainstream VET providers. In Astangu's view, the mainstream VET provider should be flexible to create needs-based individual solutions in co-operation and partnership with different stakeholders (e.g. rehabilitation centres, local authorities, counselling agencies and employment offices). The learners in Astangu officially study at a mainstream VET school but all the studying activities take place at Astangu. In addition to this, Astangu also provides different vocational training courses that are not part of formal VET-program. Astangu's role is to support the development of VET study opportunities for persons with special educational needs in regular VET schools

“Tallinn School of Economics is committed to Inclusive Vocational Education and Training. Priorities for establishing Inclusive Vocational Education and Training have to do with an accessible learning environment and knowledge and competences of staff. “

Riinu Raasuke - Manager
Tallinn School of Economics - Estonia



Tallinn School of Economics (Estonia)

Tallinn School of Economics in Estonia (TSE) expressed its commitment to Inclusive Vocational Education and Training in its position paper. (Position paper Inclusive Tallinn School of Economics, 2016). For the Tallinn School of Economics, the concept of inclusive education in VET is rather new. Mostly learners with disabilities receive vocational education and training in separate groups but not in separate institutions. Learners with physical disabilities are more and more involved already to mainstream VET-system and are integral part of learning groups.

Tallinn School of Economics has the opinion that one should prioritise the following development topics in promoting inclusive VET in Estonia:

- Modernising of school environments to be accessible for learners in wheelchairs. (Although the majority of newly renovated schools are fully accessible, there are still old school buildings where the necessary equipment is missing.)
- Knowledge of teaching staff. (There is certain knowledge about special education involved into formal teacher training programs but unfortunately many teachers do not feel that they have the necessary preparation for teaching learners with special educational needs)
- Internship in companies. (Sending out learners with a disability for internship periods school must guarantee an environment in the company which meets the needs of a disabled learner)

“We promote Vocational Education and Training as a path leading to inclusion. To promote a real inclusion and participation in the society we offer individualized training methodologies, appropriate to every single learner.”

Alexandre Rebello - Quality director
APPACDM - Coimbra - Portugal



APPACDM Coimbra (Portugal)

APPACDM Coimbra in Portugal (APPACDM Coimbra) expressed its commitment to Inclusive Vocational Education and Training in its position paper. (Position paper Inclusive APPACDM Coimbra, 2016). APPACDM Coimbra advocates and encourages inclusive models of intervention. All practices of APPACDM Coimbra are guided by the inclusion principle that the person with disabilities has the right of full participation in the community. We believe that vocational education and training should take place in regular and mainstream contexts. Therefore, we promote that Vocational Education and Training as a path leading to inclusion. To promote a real inclusion, we provide individualized training methodologies, appropriate to every single person. Educational and training sessions are offered in small groups. The methodologies are person-centred and not curriculum-centred. In APPCDAM Coimbra, there is a specialized team to support people with special needs. APPACDM Coimbra believes that the organisation still needs to go through a number of fundamental changes until all the conditions are met for a real and efficient model of Inclusion Vocational Education and Training. APPCDAM Coimbra is aware that, in this area of Inclusive Education, it should do more efforts to contribute to develop inclusive practices, with the aim to guarantee that all learners, with and without special educational needs, can participate in the community based on equal treatment and equal opportunities.

“Inclusive Vocational Education and Training in our school is based on the principle that learners with special needs benefit, both academically and socially, from a rich and diverse learning environment in which they can relate themselves with non-disabled learners.”

Ana Gomes - Teacher
Escola Profissional Val do Rio - Portugal



Escola Profissional Val do Rio (Portugal)

Escola Profissional Val do Rio in Portugal (EPVR) expressed its commitment to Inclusive Vocational Education and Training in its position paper. (Position paper Inclusive Escola Profissional Val do Rio, 2016). EPVR believes that the concept of Inclusive Education should be applied to learners with and without a disability. To respond to students with special needs, EPVR needs to be restructured so it can respond to every learner's needs. EPVR believes that Inclusive Vocational Education and Training is based on the principle that learners with special needs benefit from a rich and diverse learning environment in which they can relate themselves with non-disabled learners. EPVR has the opinion that the factors that mostly influenced the learning process are related with the teaching space in the organization, the sizes and ways of working in groups, social relations that are established in this context and also the frequency and quality of interactions between student and teacher. This “reorganization” implies, a new reflexion on teaching-learning strategies, meaning redefining the teacher's role and the students' differences need to be looked upon differently. Also, education goals and school organization processes have to be reflected. Nowadays the schools' biggest challenge is to develop effective teaching strategies by creating learning environments based in educational results equity for all learners. Teachers must see learners as a whole, emphasizing on what a learner can achieve, avoiding focussing at problems, difficulties and limitations. In order to deal with a diversity of learner' needs in the classroom, educational approaches should be effective: cooperative teaching (teachers should work as a team), cooperative learning (learners helping each other), cooperative problems' resolving (establishing objective rules and a set of limits – agreed with the learners), heterogeneous groups (groups with different levels of abilities and resource to pedagogical differentiation strategies) and finally effective teaching and individual planning (all students benefit from a continued monitoring, evaluation and planning – the curriculum can be adjusted to different needs). EPVR sees the multidisciplinary team as an answer to educational, social, psychological and medical challenges of Inclusive Education. In conclusion, EPVR believes that is becoming more and more necessary to develop and to improve the accommodation of learners inside classrooms, to promote the use of materials and creative methods and also to include of all learners in the learning activities which promote positive learning experiences

“We believe that strengthening the involvement of teachers establishes the stronger basis for changes in the organization and its development to create a more Inclusive Vocational Education and Training.”

Elen Raudsepp - Manager
Tallinn School of Economics - Estonia



Key aspects for Inclusive Vocational Education and Training

The European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, published 6 key aspects of Inclusive Education (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2015). The aspects are highly relevant for the development of an Inclusive Vocational Education and Training:

1. Inclusive Vocational Education and Training should be based on the recognition of learners and building of their talents. Inclusive Vocational Education and Training therefore should meet individual learning needs and interests.
2. Inclusive Vocational Education and Training should encourage the involvement of all stakeholders by widening access to Vocational Education and Training, improving the equity to all learners to realise their full potential and to set out quality requirements to the VET-provider. Stakeholders are encouraged to value diversity.
3. Inclusive Vocational Education and Training should ensure the availability of flexible continuous provision and resources that support the learning of all stakeholders at both individual and organisational levels.
4. Inclusive Vocational Education and Training should ensure person-centred approaches to learning that engage all learners. It should encourage and support active participation of the learners in the learning process. This involves the development of learner-centred curricula and learner-centred assessment frameworks. Inclusive Vocational Education and Training also has impact on the continuous professional development opportunities for all teachers, school leaders and decision-makers. It also sets requirements for coherent governance / management processes.
5. Inclusive Vocational Education and Training should strive for achievements, outcomes and outputs of the Vocational Education and Training programs. It should educate all stakeholders to develop attitudes and beliefs, knowledge, understanding, skills and behaviours in line with the goals and principles of an Inclusive Vocational Education and Training system.
6. Inclusive Vocational Education and Training Providers should operate continuous improvement and learning systems that are building up the capacity of all stakeholders to

“The TVLC-project gave us the opportunity to share our experiences and to gain new inspiration for becoming more inclusive. The project activities pointed a clear direction to the further development of Inclusive Vocational Education and Training in our school.”

Mojca Mekiš - Internal advisor
Biotehniški Izobraževalni Center - Slovenia



systematically reflect upon their achievements and then use these reflections to improve and develop their collective

work towards their shared goals. Inclusive Vocational Education and Training could be considered as a measure for improving the quality of Vocational Education and Training Services to all learners. An increased number of VET providers have a clearly stated policy for promoting quality in Inclusive Vocational Education and Training and have developed initiatives to improve the quality of the services to their learners, to reduce drop-out and early school leaving.

In addition, many VET-providers outline a continuum of support for learners in VET institutes to meet the full diversity of learners' needs. In some EU countries, Vocational Education and Training providers for learners with a disability, have taken the initiatives to transform (or plan to transform) the role of these institutes as a resource to increase the ability of mainstream settings to act inclusively and make learning opportunities accessible to all learners.

Current policies and practice of Vocational Education and Training seem to continue demanding that learners adapt to the Vocational Education and Training system, instead of adapting the Vocational and Education and Training system to learners' needs. Teachers, for example, tend to pay less attention to the needs of learners with disabilities compared to non-disabled peers. The impact of the approach is that the learners with a disability are more likely to feel excluded in classrooms and in schools (OECD, 2007). Capacity-building is therefore a key issue for developing effective, efficient and equitable Inclusive Vocational Education and Training systems. For example, a guide for ensuring inclusion and equity in Vocational Education and Training stresses the need for a systemic, capacity-building approach to developing Inclusive Vocational Education and Training systems: 'Implementing changes effectively and monitoring them for impact, recognizing that building inclusion and equity in education is an on-going process, rather than a one-time effort' (UNESCO, 2017). Capacity-building may result in increased and improved pre- and in-service teacher training opportunities on Inclusive Education. It also builds on mechanisms for quality assurance and social responsibility, as well as school management strategies promoting innovation, well-being at work and openness to diversity. Capacity-building may also be supported by the allocation of resource

that incentivise special settings to act as resource centres enabling all stakeholders to act inclusively on a daily basis at regional, local, school and classroom level.

“Capacity-building, that included training and development of teachers, is considered a key issue for developing effective, efficient and equitable Inclusive Vocational Education and Training system.”

Trijn Laasi- Director
Tallinn School of Economics - Estonia



Self-assessment on Inclusive Vocational Education and Training

The concept of Inclusive Vocational Education and Training is based on the fundamental right of all learners to a quality and equitable Vocational Education and Training that meets their basic learning needs and considers the diversity of backgrounds and abilities a learning opportunity. However, confusion still exists within the Vocational Education and Training sector about what inclusive education encompasses, partly due to the fact that the idea of inclusive education can be defined in a variety of ways. It is also important to remember that there is no one perspective on inclusion within a single society or school. An analysis of international research suggests a typology of five ways of conceptualizing inclusion:

- 1.inclusion concerned with disability and “special educational needs”;
- 2.inclusion as a response to disciplinary exclusions;
- 3.inclusion as relating to all groups vulnerable to exclusion;
- 4.inclusion as the promotion of a school for all; and
- 5.inclusion as Education for All.

The project focused on the first type of concepts: inclusion concerned with disability and “special educational needs”.

Desk research

The European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education published the main findings of a project in Vocational Education and Training (VET) project. (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education: 20 key factors for successful VET, 2017) The Agency analysed VET policies and practices in 26 countries from the perspective of learners with special educational needs.

The main findings of the analysis are as follows:

“A multi perspective approach is fundamental for the a successful development of a more inclusive Vocational Education and Training. Therefore, the perspectives and roles of key stakeholders (Policy makers, Funders Managers, Teachers, Learners and Employers) within Vocational Education and Training must be included and respected.”

Guus van Beek - Quality Expert
European Platform for Rehabilitation - Belgium



1. The project identified numerous success factors – ‘what works’ – in VET for learners with special educational needs.
2. The analysis revealed a large degree of coherence across countries, with the same success factors.
3. Improvements and changes towards a more inclusive system in VET are possible.
4. Successful practice demands the involvement of all stakeholders in VET.
5. A good and efficient practice for learners with special educational needs in Vocational Education and Training is good practice for ALL learners.

Four ‘patterns of successful practice’ were identified. These patterns are inter-linked. Therefore, the improvement of a VET system’s performance must place equal emphasis on all four patterns at the same time. The patterns are likely to improve VET system effectiveness and the transition to employment of learners with special educational needs.

These four patterns focus on the perspectives and roles of key stakeholders within Vocational Education and Training:

1. Management pattern: this includes relevant factors related to managers of VET organisations.
2. Vocational Education and Training pattern: this includes relevant factors related to teachers, trainers and support staff.
3. Learners’ pattern: this includes relevant factors related to learners.
4. Labour market pattern: this includes relevant factors related to current and future employers/labour market representatives.

The 20 relevant key factors listed here have been clearly identified in the majority of the analysed practices. They lead to successful VET results with a clear link to employment opportunities.

All of these success factors are inter-related and mutually supportive. Therefore, in the process of creating an inclusive Vocational Education and Training the emphasis must be placed on all of them.

“Inclusive Vocational Education and Training starts with the recognition that all learners have different and unique talents / competences. The development of inclusive approaches in teaching and learning respects and builds on these talents and competences. They can be resources for supporting the learning process.”

Anita de Wit - Manager
Rea College Pluryn - The Netherlands



Legal framework: A national / federal legal framework on inclusive education in secondary/upper-secondary education is in place, and schools receive the required support (e.g. additional funding, higher staff–learner ratios, support staff, multidisciplinary teams, adapted educational materials, resources to implement more learner-centred approaches, resources to increase organisational flexibility to deal with diversity, etc.). A legal framework exists that allows VET institutions to offer different levels of apprenticeship with different curricula leading to different qualification levels. Flexibility in policy allows the VET institutions to offer different levels of VET programs, different curricula and different qualifications according to individual learners’ needs.

Motivation and commitment: Managers / directors and staff are highly motivated, committed, dedicated and open in expressing their enthusiasm. An authentic atmosphere of commitment, caring and belonging, together with positive attitudes, contributes to creating equal opportunities. Staff believe in learners’ abilities and see opportunities rather than challenges.

Leadership: The school director’s leadership is effective, distributive, appreciated and respected.

High qualifications: Teachers, staff and support personnel are highly qualified, through formal university-level qualifications, a vocational qualification and/or industry-based experience.

Further training and educational opportunities: In-service or further training opportunities are offered to all educational and support staff to ensure quality in education. Educational staff receive sufficient support in order to ensure and safeguard a learner-centred approach.

Multi-disciplinarily: Multi-disciplinary teams are established that include all professionals involved in VET, have clear roles, adopt a teamwork approach and co-operate well with other services.

Partnership, co-operation and networking structures: Partnerships involving all stakeholders and services are established, formalised and co-ordinated. This includes establishing co-operation structures with local companies for practical training and/or jobs after graduation. There is partnership between VET institutions and parents, based on strong, formal co-operation and dialogue with parents as equal partners.

“We believe that Vocational Education and Training for learners with a disability should take place at regular and mainstream contexts, but above all we stand that Inclusive VET has the ultimate goal to establish sustainable employment of learners with disabilities in the regular labour market and the full inclusion in the society.”

Ana Maria Albuquerque - Financial officer
APPCDM - Coimbra - Portugal



Suitable ratios/small classes: There is a suitable teacher–learner ratio thanks to small class sizes. Suitable support staff–learner ratios, co-ordinated at school level, provide the required broad range of support.

Assessment: Learners take part in assessment schemes prior to starting the VET program. This means that the most appropriate VET programs are selected, matching learners’ abilities and wishes.

Learner-centred approaches: A learner-centred approach, tailor’s pedagogical methods and materials, the curriculum, assessment methods and goals, etc., to individual needs. The focus is on the learners’ capabilities.

Individual plans: Individual education/learning/training/transition plans are developed and implemented, and lead to individual curricula.

Flexibility: The VET settings are flexible, ensuring that the structure and duration of the VET programs respond to learners’ needs (e.g. by extending the course duration, offering longer internships in preparatory classes, etc.). Furthermore, VET courses are flexible so that learners can start in a lower level program and move to a higher-level program either before or after graduation.

Pathways: There are options to improve a qualification or grade, to switch to a different program, to choose between different professions and to have an academic and/or professional certificate.

Certificates: Documents/portfolios are kept on the learners’ skills and achievements and on the support they require in the workplace.

Quality assurance: Stakeholders are committed to quality assurance and improvement strategies. Programs are implemented and certified to enhance VET quality and continuously improve learners’ preparation for the labour market.

Dropout reduction strategy: The school develops and implements efficient educational measures that prevent or reduce dropouts and finds new educational alternatives for disengaged learners.

5. Matching: The educational institution is capable of matching labour market skills requirements and the learners’ skills. Teachers/trainers are able to adapt their pedagogical

“For creating Inclusive Vocational Education and Training it is important to explore and to gain new teaching and learning strategies that addressed need and expectations of all learners in an effective way.”

Margarida Nunes - Teacher
Escola Profissional Val do Rio - Portugal



methods to match the employers' needs. VET programs are reviewed periodically, both internally and externally, in order to adapt to current and future skills requirements.

Support in transition: Career counsellors/officers inform and guide learners regarding employment possibilities. They facilitate and support contact with employers, provide support with job applications, offer information and assistance to employers and provide additional support to young people, etc.

Availability of staff and resources: Staff, such as job coaches, career counsellors and mentors, as well as resources are permanently available throughout the transition to work and during employment. Formal job coaching programs, career guidance and support services, including after-care and preparation of employers, are permanently available.

Follow-up: Competent staff provide follow-up support activities, for as long as required, addressing the needs of employers and young graduates in order to maintain learners' employment in companies.

Self-assessment instrument

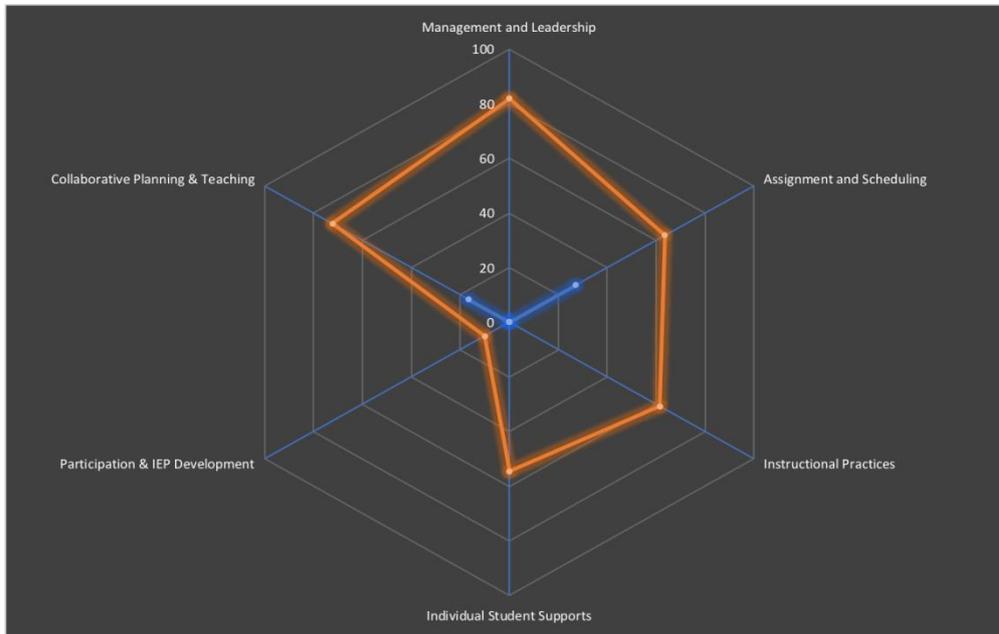
The project designed an instrument to provide the partners in the project with a self-assessment instrument to guide a review of their current practices regarding Inclusive Vocational Education and Training. All partners carried out self-evaluation on the following dimensions:

- Management and leadership
- Assignment and scheduling
- Instructional Practices
- Individual learner supports
- Participation and Individual Education Plan Development
- Collaborative Planning and Teaching

For each dimension, a number of indicators have been described. The indicators are presented as a statement about the practice of VET-provider. The statement has to be responded in 3-point scale: “Not yet going on”, “In process” and “In place”. Out of all indicators per dimension, the VET provider has to identify a priority that is most relevant for them. The self-assessment tool is filled in by the

representatives of the project partners after consulting colleges about the most appropriate answer on the statements for their organization.

The results of the self-assessment process is made visible in a spiderweb diagram. The spider web diagram shows current performance on the indicators for the 6 dimensions (blue line) and the areas



Example of outcome of self-evaluation on Inclusive Vocational Education and Training

that are 'in progress' (red line). An example of a spiderweb is shown in figure below.

Comparison of the current profiles of Inclusive Vocational Education and Training show that there is a huge variety in performance between the 10-project partners. The special VET-providers, who provide Vocational Education and Training to learners with a disability, have a relative higher score on the dimensions "individual student support" and "Participation and Individual Education Planning Development" and a relative lower score on actions that are 'in process' to contribute to Inclusive Vocational Education and Training. The mainstream VET providers, who provide Vocational Education and Training to non-disabled learners, have a relative low score of all the dimensions and a relative higher score on actions that are 'in process' to contribute to Inclusive Education and Training. The actions are mainly in the dimensions "Individual Student support" and Collaborative planning and Training". Based on the self-assessment, none of the project partners are performing as an Inclusive VET provider. The self-assessment raised awareness with all project partners to identify actions to become of to contribute to Inclusive Vocational Education and Training in their country. Based on the outcomes of the self-evaluation, the deified priorities for actions and the

specific expertise and experience of the VET providers, actions and mutual support for becoming more inclusive have been identified and agreed between VET provider form the same country.

“With the fishbone diagram we have identified the obstacles for implementing Inclusive Vocational Education and Training in our country. Based on the outcomes, actions are formulated that would contribute to the implementation and achievement of Inclusive Vocational Education and Training in our country.”

Lisa Harms – Student Counsellor / Internal Advisor
ROC Rijn IJssel – The Netherlands



Cause effect analysis on Inclusive Education

When having a challenge or a problem, it's important to explore all of the things that could cause this challenge / problem, before starting to think about a solution. Cause and Effect Analysis gives a useful way of doing this. The Cause Effect Analysis is a diagram-based technique, which combines brainstorming with a type of Mind Map. It pushes the user to consider all possible causes of a problem, rather than just the ones that are most obvious.

Cause and Effect Analysis was devised by professor Kaoru Ishikawa, a pioneer of quality management, in the 1960s. The technique was published in 1990. The diagram is known as Ishikawa Diagram or Fishbone Diagram (because a completed diagram can look like the skeleton of a fish). Although it was originally developed as a quality control tool, the technique can be used in other ways:

1. To discover and identify the root cause of the problem
2. Uncover bottlenecks in your processes
3. Identify where and why a process isn't working

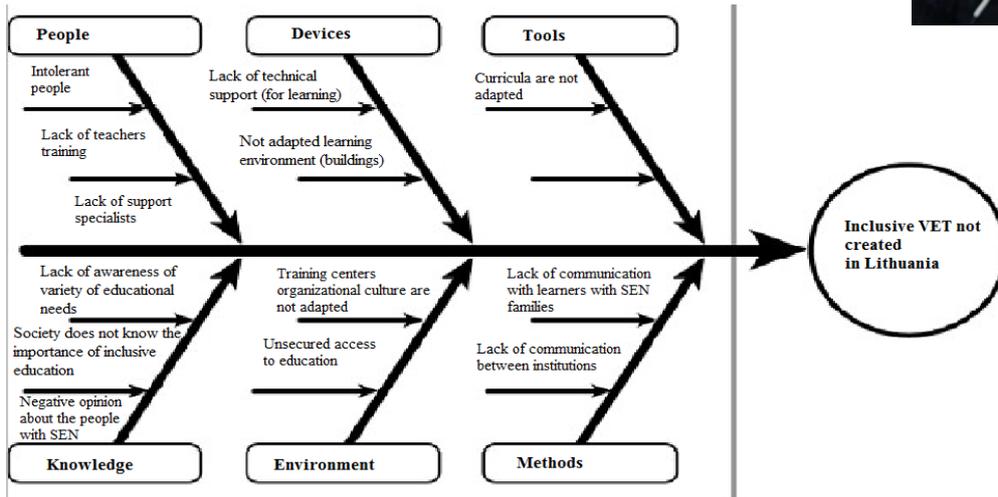
In the TVLC-project, the project partners have used the Cause Effect Analysis technique to analyse the causes of “Not having Inclusive Vocational Education and Training”. In other words: identifying the barriers for Inclusive Vocational Education and Training in the countries of the project partners.

Project partners have been trained in applying the Cause-Effect-Analysis technique. Per country mainstream VET provider and Special VET provider carried out the Cause-Effect-Analysis for their country. In other words, they have identified obstacles for implementing Inclusive Vocational Education and Training in their country.

“In the TVLC project, we have been trained in various methods and techniques on Quality Management. The training in applying the Cause-Effect-Analysis technique also helped up to identify obstacles for implementing Inclusive Vocational Education and Training in our country.”



Darjuš Tankeliun - Employment officer
Valikupia Vocational Rehabilitation Centre - Lithuania



Challenges and barriers for implementing Inclusive Education

The overview of challenges and barriers for implementing Inclusive Vocational Education and Training are derived in the group discussions between the partners. Partners from the same country identified and discussed the obstacles for Inclusive Education in VET in their country. Partners have applied the method of Cause-Effect Analysis to identify the obstacles for Inclusive Education in VET. The mainstream VET provider and the Special VET provider of the same country have carried out one Cause-Effect-Analysis on the question “Why is the implementation of Inclusive Education not successful (yet) in your country”. In the Cause-Effect-Analysis, the causes are categorized in 6 dimensions: People, Devices, Tool and Instruments, Knowledge, Environment and Methods. The overview below shows the identified obstacles for Inclusive Education in VET in each country: the Netherlands (NL), Slovenia (SLO), Portugal (POR), Lithuania (LIT) and Estonia (EST).

“It is important and crucial in the mainstream Vocational Education and Training that teachers have knowledge, skills and competences in teaching and supporting learners with a disability. Teachers are the key factor for delivering quality in Vocational Education and Training.”



Lina Butkutė - Teacher
Kaunas Food Industry and Trade Training Centre - Lithuania

	Obstacles for implementing Inclusive Education
The Netherlands	<p>Mainstream VET providers are not ready to implement Inclusive Education</p> <p>National legislation is not in line with the inclusion philosophy.</p> <p>National VET-programs are not individualized: classes with many students follow the same VET-program.</p> <p>Conflict between purposes: Purpose of mainstream VET: qualification / diploma while the purpose of special VET: employment / a job.</p> <p>Teachers in mainstream VET do not have adequate knowledge, skills and competences for teaching / supporting students with a disability.</p> <p>Students in mainstream VET are not used to be in the same classes with students with a disability.</p> <p>Facilities of mainstream VET (Buildings / locations) are not assessible and equipped for students with a disability</p> <p>The financing systems and regulation of mainstream VET and special VET are different.</p> <p>In mainstream VET: Not all students have the opportunity to be diagnosed on potential limitations / support in attending the VET-programs.</p>
Lithuania	<p>A political backbone for Inclusive Education is missing</p> <p>Legislations of mainstream VET and special VET varies.</p> <p>The financing systems and regulation of mainstream VET and special VET are different.</p> <p>The culture in mainstream VET (mentality of staff) does not encourage inclusion of students with a disability into the mainstream programs.</p> <p>There are no specific requirements and control mechanism to encourage inclusive education</p> <p>Teachers in the mainstream do not have support (assistant staff) for implementing inclusive Education.</p> <p>Teacher in mainstream education have less motivation for implementing changes (like Inclusive Education)</p> <p>Teachers in mainstream VET do not have adequate knowledge, skills and competences for teaching / supporting students with a disability.</p> <p>Facilities of mainstream VET (Buildings / locations) are not assessible and equipped for students with a disability</p> <p>Special technical equipment is not available in the mainstream facilities</p>
Slovenia	<p>There is a shortage of professionals / teachers with special knowledge of teaching and supporting students with a disability.</p> <p>Teachers in mainstream VET do not have adequate knowledge, skills and competences for teaching / supporting students with a disability.</p> <p>The cooperation between mainstream VET providers, special VET providers, Universities, Counselling agencies is poor and underdeveloped.</p> <p>Students with special needs experienced still not-being-accepted by fellow students (without a disability) and/or teachers.</p> <p>The teaching groups (number of students in a classroom) are too big for educating students with a diversity of individual needs.</p> <p>There is insufficient financial support for developing and implementing inclusive education.</p>

“Educational programs should be flexible and tailored to the needs of the students with disabilities.”



Birgit Grimbergen - Project Manager
Rea College Pluryn - The Netherlands

Estonia	<p>Insufficient preparation of teachers in mainstream VET for understanding and implementing Inclusive education.</p> <p>Personal biases of teachers do not support the implementation of Inclusive education. Average age of teachers is that high so they are not so motivated for fundamental and drastic changes of their ways of working.</p> <p>Personal biases and fears of parents do not support the implementation of Inclusive education.</p> <p>Parents have low expectations towards quality of education in mainstream VET in educating students with a disability.</p> <p>Personal biases of managers towards inclusive education do not support the implementation of Inclusive education.</p> <p>Managers are not willing and do not have the competences to implement principles of Inclusive Education.</p> <p>Physical space (accessibility of the building etc.) is not adequate for teaching students with a disability.</p> <p>Teachers and managers fear specific resources and adapted equipment.</p> <p>There is a lack of specialized staff to support the teacher and the student with a disability. Teaching materials not adapted for students with a disability.</p> <p>Data protection rules hinder communication (no sharing / access to data about students with a disability).</p> <p>The current educational model of financing does not support including students with a disability in the mainstream VET system.</p> <p>VET-providers have based their educational programs on a curriculum. (and not the needs of their students). This supports segregation;</p>
Portugal	<p>Teachers of mainstream VET-providers are not prepared to address the diversity of students deal with different needs;</p> <p>Teachers of mainstream VET-providers do not have the support specialized professional in education students with special needs.</p> <p>Teachers of mainstream VET-providers may have prejudice in dealing with the diversity of students in their calls room.</p> <p>Classrooms of the mainstream VET-provider are not adapted to students with special needs</p> <p>Teachers from mainstream VET-provider don't have the knowledge, skills and competences to educate and support students with special needs.</p> <p>The mainstream VET providers have funding restriction for gaining tools, devices and methods.</p> <p>Classes in the mainstream VET-providers have too many students so the teacher cannot apply different teaching methods and support students with special needs in an adequate way.</p> <p>VET-programs in the mainstream VET-providers are structured and organized around a curriculum and objectives. (Individual needs of the student are not taken into account)</p> <p>The VET-programs (curricula) are overloaded and don't allow teachers to spend time for developing and applying various learning strategies.</p>

“Teachers of mainstream VET-providers are not prepared to address the diversity of students deal with different needs and they would like to have the support of specialized professional in educating students with special needs”

Margarida Nunes & Ana Gomes - Teachers
Escola Profissional Val do Rio - Portugal



Recommendations for enhancing Inclusive Vocational Education and Training

Based on the results of the Cause-Effect-Analysis, actions are formulated that would contribute to the implementation and achievement of a more Inclusive Vocational Education and Training in that country. The proposed actions are categorized in 6 dimensions: People, Devices, Tool and Instruments, Knowledge, Environment and Methods.

Country	The Netherlands
People	Staff should have the opportunity and the flexibility to innovate outside the traditional legislation and rules.
Devices	The VET provider should have the availability of an IT system that supports the individual development of the student.
Tools	Staff should have sufficient knowledge and skills about specific pedagogic / didactic approaches while working with students with a disability Staff should have sufficient knowledge about assessing and serving special educational needs of students with a disability.
Knowledge	Staff should have sufficient knowledge and skills about specific pedagogic / didactic approaches while working with students with a disability Staff should have sufficient knowledge about assessing and serving special educational needs of students with a disability.
Environment	A safe environment for staff and students. The facilities (class room and school buildings) must be adapted so they are suitable for students with a disability. The facilities (class room and school buildings) must be adapted so they are manageable for teachers in teaching students with a disability.
Method	Educational programs should be flexible and tailored to the needs of the students with disabilities. Educational programs for personal development and empowerment should be available for all students.

Country	Slovenia
People	Teachers should receive specific training (Knowledge, skills and competences) in how to educate and service students with a disability. Staff should have and show more acceptance of participation of students with a disability in mainstream educational programs.
Devices	

“The current educational model of financing does not support including students with a disability in the mainstream VET system.”



Alexandre Rebello - Quality director
APPCDM - Coimbra - Portugal

Country	Slovenia
Tools	Specific learning materials should be made available and adapted.
Knowledge	Staff should have sufficient knowledge and skills about specific pedagogic / didactic approaches while working with students with a disability Staff should have sufficient and specific knowledge about their students with a disability.
Environment	The staff-student ratio should be adequate to service students with a disability. Financial resources should be made available and accessible to ensure investments in creating an optimal learning environment for students with a disability. The national educational system should provide more support to mainstream VET providers to create a more inclusive educational system.
Method	

Country	Lithuania
People	Teachers should be made more aware about the opportunities and benefits of inclusive education. Teachers should receive specific training (to gain knowledge, skills and competences) in educating and serving students with a disability. Special support of expertise / specialists should be made available for supporting teachers in educating students with a disability.
Devices	Students with a disability should have access to technical and other system that supports their learning process.
Tools	The learning curricula should be adapted to the needs and ability of the student with a disability.
Knowledge	Teachers and other staff should be more aware and have specific information of the special needs and expectations of the students with a disability.
Environment	The society should become more aware of the importance, advantage and benefits of inclusive education. School should more actively work towards changes in becoming and inclusive organizational culture. Schools should make sure that the facility is accessible (physically, mentally and psychologically) for all students with and without a disability
Method	VET providers should pay more attention to the communication between the teachers and the students with a disability and their families. Mainstream VET providers and Special VET providers should communicate efficiently to ensure an effective learning process of the student with a disability.

Country	Estonia
People	Teachers should receive specific training (to gain knowledge, skills and competences) in educating and serving students with a disability. Special support of expertise / specialists should be made available for supporting teachers in educating students with a disability.
Devices	Students with a disability should have access to technical and other system that supports their learning process.
Tools	

Country	Estonia
Knowledge	Teachers and other staff should be more aware and have specific information of the special needs and expectations of the students with a disability.
Environment	Financial resources should be made available and accessible to ensure investments in creating an optimal learning environment for students with a disability.
Method	Educational programs should be flexible and tailored to the needs of the students with disabilities.

Country	Portugal
People	Special support of expertise / specialists should be made available for supporting teachers in educating students with a disability.
Devices	Students with a disability should have access to technical and other system that supports their learning process.
Tools	Specific learning materials should be made available and adapted.
Knowledge	Staff should have sufficient knowledge and skills about specific pedagogic / didactic approaches while working with students with a disability Staff should have sufficient knowledge about assessing and serving special educational needs of students with a disability.
Environment	The national educational system should provide more support to mainstream VET providers to create a more inclusive educational system. Classes with too many students don't let teachers apply different teaching methods.
Method	The number of students in a class room should be considered and taken into account when working with student with special educational needs. Subject curriculums are too long and don't allow teachers to spend the needed time finding different strategies.

“The cross-reference study on the 20 Key Success Factors of Inclusive Education and the EQUASS Quality system learns that the implementation of the a EQAVET framework, with the support of the EQUASS as instrument for implementation, many of the key factors of Inclusive Education will be established”



Guus van Beek - Quality Expert
European Platform for Rehabilitation - Belgium

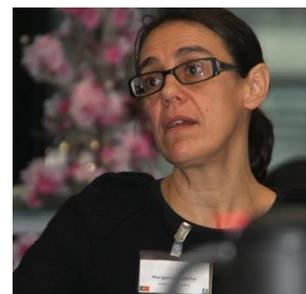
The relationship with Inclusive Education and Quality Assurance in VET

According to the outcome of the prime project (LDV) The quality assurance system of the European Quality for Social Services (EQUASS) can be considered as an instrument to show compliance and satisfactory performance on all EQAVET criteria and underlying indicative descriptors at the VET provider level. The EQUASS system is a tailor-made quality assurance system tailor made for the social sector and compliant with the EQAVET framework (at service provider level) and the European Quality Framework for Social Services (EU Social Protection Committee, 2010). A cross reference study of current EQUASS criteria (see: EQUASS 2018 system) and success factors of Inclusive Education (See; European Agency of Special needs and Inclusive Education), shows the relationship between quality assurance and the requirements for Inclusive education. The cross-reference study learns that the implementation of the EQAVET framework, with the support of the EQUASS as tool, many of the key factors of Inclusive Education can be established.

Below you will find an overview of the key factors of successful Inclusive Vocational Education and Training and its relationship with the criteria of the European Quality in Social Services.

	Key factor of successful Inclusive Vocational Education and Training	Criteria of the European Quality in Social Services
1	A legal framework on inclusive Vocational Education and training. The framework should allow VET institutions to offer different levels of apprenticeship with different curricula leading to different qualification levels.	--
2	Motivation of management and staff. A culture of commitment, together with positive attitudes, should contribute to creating equal opportunities.	EQUASS criteria no. 5: The social service provider demonstrates its commitment to social justice and active inclusion of persons served into the society. EQUASS criteria no. 6: The social service provider demonstrates Corporate Social Responsibility through its commitment to sustainable activities contributing to society.
3	Leadership. Leadership of the VET providers should be effective, distributive, appreciated and respected.	EQUASS criteria no. 2: The social service provider demonstrates its commitment to long-term quality goals, continuous learning, innovation and new technology.

“Inclusive Vocational Education and Training respects that individual learners freely pursue personal goals and aspirations in line with their choices, needs and abilities.”



Margarida Rainho - Psychologist
APPCDM - Coimbra - Portugal

4	Qualification of teachers. Teachers, staff and support personnel should have highly qualified, through formal qualifications, a vocational qualification and/or industry-based experience.	EQUASS criteria no. 7: The social service provider defines and implements a staff recruitment and retention policy that promotes the selection of qualified personnel based on required knowledge, skills and competences. EQUASS criteria no. 10: The social service provider defines and implements requirements for competences in the identified roles and functions of staff and evaluates them on annual basis.
5	Further training and educational opportunities. Further training opportunities should be offered to all educational and support staff to ensure quality in education.	EQUASS criteria no. 9: The social service provider implements measures for staff development based on a plan for personal growth, continuous learning and development.
6	Multi-disciplinarity. Staff should work in multi-disciplinary that include all professionals involved in VET.	EQUASS criteria no. 41: The social service provider delivers services to the persons served in a multidisciplinary or multi-agency setting.
7	Partnership, co-operation and networking structures The VET provider should work in strong partnerships involving all stakeholders and services are established, formalised and co-ordinated.	EQUASS criteria no. 24: The social service provider works in partnership with relevant stakeholders to ensure a continuum of comprehensive services and inclusion of person served.
8	Suitable ratios/small classes The VET provider should have a suitable teacher–learner ratio and the required broad range of support	EQUASS criteria no. 8: The social service provider operates its service in compliance with mandatory national legislation for health and safety, providing appropriate working conditions, adequate and agreed staff levels and staff ratios, and measures for rewarding employees and volunteers.
9	Assessment All learners should take part in an assessment prior to starting the VET programme. The VET programmes are selected, matching learners’ abilities and wishes.	EQUASS criteria no. 32: The social service provider has a clear concept of Quality of Life for Person Served and implements activities, which are based on a needs assessment of the person served, with the aim of improving their quality of life. EQUASS criteria no.33: The social service provider documents and reviews the planning and delivery of services based on the identification of individual needs, expectations and changing circumstances of persons served in an Individual Plan.
10	Learner-centred approaches A learner-centred approach tailors methods and materials, the curriculum, learning objectives to individual needs. The focus is on the learners’ capabilities.	EQUASS criteria no. 31: The social service provider delivers services that are responsive to individual choices, needs and abilities of the persons served in line with organisation’s mission, vision and values.

“A Person-Centered Approach, where all learners have their individual learning plan, may contribute to become more Inclusive in Vocational Education and Training.”



Linda van Silfhout - Program coordinator
ROC Rijn - The Netherlands

11	Individual plans The VET provider should develop and implement individual learners plan for education and training	EQUASS criteria no. 33: The social service provider documents and reviews the planning and delivery of services based on the identification of individual needs, expectations and changing circumstances of persons served in an Individual Plan.
12	Flexibility The VET provider should ensure a structure and duration of the VET programmes respond to learners’ needs.	EQUASS criteria no. 31: The social service provider delivers services that are responsive to individual choices, needs and abilities of the persons served in line with organisation's mission, vision and values.
13	Pathways: The VET provider should provide options to choose, to switch or to improve qualifications.	EQUASS Criteria no. 15: The social service provider respects that person served freely pursue personal goals and aspirations in line with their choices, needs and abilities.
14	Certificates The VET provider should keep records on the learners’ skills and achievements and on the support they require in the workplace.	EQUASS criteria no. 33: The social service provider documents and reviews the planning and delivery of services based on the identification of individual needs, expectations and changing circumstances of persons served in an Individual Plan.
15	Quality assurance Stakeholders are committed to quality assurance and improvement strategies. Programmes are implemented and certified to enhance VET quality and continuously improve learners’ preparation for the labour market.	EQUASS criteria no. 48: The social service provider defines and implements a system of continuous improvement of results of services, way of working and learning. EQUASS criteria no. 50: The social service provider initiates improvement initiatives by comparing and exchanging performances on approaches, results of services, activities and outcomes of person served.
16	Dropout reduction strategy The school develops and implements efficient educational measures that prevent or reduce dropouts and finds new educational alternatives for disengaged learners.	
17	Matching The educational institution is capable of matching labour market skills requirements and the learners’ skills. Teachers/trainers are able to adapt their pedagogical methods to match the employers’ needs. VET programmes are reviewed periodically, both internally and externally, in order to adapt to current and future skills requirements.	EQUASS criteria no. 49: The social service provider operates mechanisms, which provide information to understand of future needs of persons served, staff, funders and stakeholders.
18	Support in transition Career counsellors/officers inform and guide learners regarding employment possibilities. They facilitate and support contact with employers, provide support with job applications, offer information and assistance to employers and provide additional support to young people, etc.	EQUASS criteria no. 31: The social service provider delivers services that are responsive to individual choices, needs and abilities of the persons served in line with organisation's mission, vision and values. EQUASS criteria no. 40: The social service provider delivers services to the persons served in a coordinated way.

“For becoming more Inclusive in Vocational Education and Training, VET-providers should provide education and training that is more responsive to individual choices, needs and abilities of the persons served in line with its mission, vision and values.”



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19	<p>Availability of staff and resources Staff, such as job coaches, career counsellors and mentors, as well as resources are permanently available throughout the transition to work and during employment. Formal job coaching programmes, career guidance and support services, including after-care and preparation of employers, are permanently available.</p>	<p>EQUASS criteria no. 10: The social service provider defines and implements requirements for competences in the identified roles and functions of staff and evaluates them on annual basis.</p> <p>EQUASS criteria no. 36: The social service provider ensures that the person served can access a continuum of services that span from early intervention to support and follow up, responding to changing requirements over time.</p>
20	<p>Follow-up Competent staff provide follow-up support activities, for as long as required, addressing the needs of employers and young graduates in order to maintain learners’ employment in companies.</p>	<p>EQUASS criteria no. 36: The social service provider ensures that the person served can access a continuum of services that span from early intervention to support and follow up, responding to changing requirements over time.</p>

Summary and conclusions

All European countries are committed to working towards ensuring more inclusive education systems. Inclusive education systems are seen as a vital component within the wider aspiration of more socially inclusive societies. There is currently no internationally agreed definition of the concept ‘Inclusive Education’.

The European Agency of Special Needs and Inclusive Education states that ‘the ultimate vision for inclusive education systems is to ensure that all learners of any age are provided with meaningful, high-quality educational opportunities in their local community, alongside their friends and peers’ (European Agency, 2017). Such vision requires changing the educational culture in teaching and in practice the support for learners. It also requires moving away from the approach a ‘one -size-fits-all’ education and training, towards a more person centred and tailored-made approach to education and training that aims to respond to individual needs of learners.

The ten partners of the TVLC project shared the common belief that National and European educational policy should be based on principles of inclusive education and equal opportunities, availability and access for all learners. They believe that VET institutions should provide VET programs for all learners, individual with and without special educational needs. They explored the opportunities and limitations of implementing Inclusive Vocational Education and Training for all learners in their organisations / country.

Commonalities in measures to encourage the implementation of Inclusive Vocational Education and Training in the 5 countries of the project partners are:

1. Having a coherent and consistent legal and financial framework that facilitates and encourage the cooperation, exchange of expertise and practices between Mainstream VET-providers, specialized VET providers and other relevant stakeholders that contribute to a more Inclusive Vocational and Training System.
2. Raising awareness, motivation and confidence among parents of students with a disability, students without a disability, managers and teachers of the VET provider on the benefits of the implementation of an Inclusive VET system.
3. Building up a capacity of knowledge, skills and competences of teachers in VET in teaching and coaching students with special needs in the organisation of the VET provider.
4. Making financial and human resources (specialised staff) available to establish measures that support teachers and students with a disability in their learning process.
5. Increasing the flexibility of the VET provider to adapt the curriculum the VET program to the needs of the student.
6. Developing adapted learning materials for students with a disability.
7. Improving the accessibility of the learning facilities (Buildings, class rooms and locations)

Many of the requirements for Inclusive education in VET can be related to requirements of a quality assurance system. Especially, Implementing the criteria of the EQUASS system, a sector specific quality assurance system which is fully compliant with the EQAVET system at service provider level, may be helpful to guide the VET provider what to do.



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