



INCLUSION EDUCATION





Caption: Puzzle of inclusion and diversity was a part of the registration activity during the meeting.



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 Enriching lives, opening minds.

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Dear Inclusion and diversity officers, EC and NA representatives, SALTO Centres, and all dear readers,

before us is a content report from the 4th Meeting of Inclusion and Diversity Officers (ID Officers) that was organised by the [Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes](#) and [SALTO Inclusion and Diversity \(Education and Training\)](#). Meeting was organised in Dubrovnik, Croatia from March 19-21, 2024, and it gathered around 40 participants from around the EU. Participants who took part in this meeting were ID Officers and NA staff in the fields of SE, VET, HE, YOUTH and AE. The meeting was implemented using mixed methodologies such as workshops, experts' presentations, networking, sharing of good practices and study visits.

Main goal of this meeting was to provide ID Officers with knowledge, resources, and support related to promotion of inclusion and diversity in the Erasmus+ programme (Education and Training).

We would like to share with you some summarised answers from the evaluation that gives us an overview of what were the main benefits of this meeting and therefore this report:

- Contacts, ideas, and energy
- Lots of motivation to go back and start a great work
- Supporting network
- Sharing experiences
- Knowledge about inclusive tools

Intention of this report is to provide you with another layer of support, motivation, inspiration, and knowledge to continue a magnificent work you are all doing. On the other hand, it is to showcase, and celebrate a great work that has already been done across Europe.



INTRODUCTION



Caption: Part of the working atmosphere from the presentation by SALTO ID (ET)

Presentation by SALTO ID ET on its activities and plans

Petra Habulin and Tajana Krstonošić, SALTO Resource Centre ID (ET)

The SALTO Resource Centre ID (ET) implemented last year a range of activities including organisation of meetings of ID officers, creation and publication of different publications and tools, provision of services aimed at support of development and update of NAs ID strategies, etc.

For the near future, SALTO is planning to continue offering networking and learning opportunities for ID Officers focusing on different topics, and mentoring services for NAs. Also, there are some new initiatives such as creation of an e-course for external evaluators and provision of counselling support to higher education institutions who completed the online tool - Mobility Inclusion Scan for Higher Education. Below, there are some dates and information about the plan for 2024.

Meetings of ID Officers in 2024:

- 1. Onsite meeting in spring:** Date: 19-21 March; Location: Dubrovnik; Purpose: To discuss and present upcoming activities
- 2. Online meeting in autumn:** Date: To be determined; Purpose: To provide updates on progress of activities, discuss any challenges
- 3. Online meeting in winter:** Date: To be determined; Purpose: To review the achievements of the year, set goals for the upcoming year

Alongside other activities planned for 2024, Petra and Tajana presented plans for SALTOs Tools & Publications:

- **Inclusion Index for Schools** / easy-to-use tool for schools to evaluate and enhance the inclusive dimension of their Erasmus+ mobilities
- **Handout on top-ups in higher education** / summary of information on target groups eligible to receive top-ups in the field of higher education across NAs
- **ID Officer roles and responsibilities** / essential and optional job requirements, tasks, and responsibilities of the ID officer in the field of education and training
- **Guidelines on Establishment of ID Officers at HEIs** / aim: to encourage and facilitate process of appointment of ID officers at HEIs description of the steps and tips and tricks on how to successfully perform various tasks
- **Handout on horizontal priorities** / 7 SALTO centres; 4 horizontal priorities: “green”; digital transformation, participation and information and inclusion and diversity recommendations for different stages of project planning and implementation



Full presentation from this session you can access [HERE](#).

THEMATIC WORKSHOPS



Caption: Part of the working atmosphere from Inclusive index workshop

1. Inclusive index for school presentation and workshop

Ivana Majcen, Slovenian National Agency (CMEPIUS)

Ivana has presented the draft of the tool Inclusive index for schools, inspired by the tool created by [Tony Booth and Mel Ainscow - Index for Inclusion](#). Firstly, some strategic and policy background was presented:

1. [The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education](#);
 - The education 2030 initiative: Towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all
 - Erasmus+ programme: aim is to overcome labelling and categorisation and foster participation; Erasmus+ for all (is the inclusion in E+ on redistributive level only?)
2. [Tony Booth and Mel Ainscow \(2002\): Index for Inclusion: developing learning and participation in schools, CSIE](#)

Some general observations from this workshop are as following:

- It is important to understand INCLUSION as a pedagogical concept in education:
 - inclusion in education is a complex concept and can't be captured in a single sentence ("Inclusion as developing school for all", "Inclusion as a principled approach to education and society", etc.)
 - possible definition: learning and participation for everyone: children and their families, staff and governors and other community members?
- When talking about inclusion, language do matter
 - labelling and objectivization vs. non categorisation and participation
 - support is important and how we communicate inclusion and its values
- There is an indicated need to co-create inclusive Erasmus+ and inclusive educational institutions (schools in practice support inclusion mostly on declarative level, and rarely don't know what it means in implementation). HOW – by using tools such as Index for inclusion to understand, reflect and improve ourselves.



Discussion and reflection in groups on how to use and improve Inclusive index:

- general support to the creation and usage of the tool and to three dimensions (project, staff, personal one) with self-reflective questions;
- to think of the possibility of introducing the NA dimension, depending on the aim of the tool
- use easy-to-read language, if possible, to avoid misunderstandings (for example – “black-and-white” beliefs / „feedback” from colleagues who differ);
- less questions per dimension (maybe to merge similar);
- not focusing only on several barriers / groups in questions (religion, LGBTQI, disability) but put all or nothing (some general question linking it with EC barriers list or similar);
- add instructions on the beginning of each section (to whom it refers – learners/ organisations/staff; what is the purpose of these set of question, etc.)



Full presentation from this workshop you can access [HERE](#).

2. Inclusion and diversity (ID) officer role and responsibilities

Josip Luša, Head of SALTO Resource Centre ID (ET)

An ID officer role & responsibility is still something we are discussing about, and we are trying to find the most optimal model to include what is crucial but at the same time to take care of ID officers not to find themselves in a role where they are covering for all the other departments, colleagues, fields etc. Josip presented the tool developed by the [SALTO ID YOU](#) – ID Temperature Check that contains ID Officer job description for the youth field, which was an inspiration for this workshop. Through discussion participants tried to summarize what they think is very important to have on their minds.

Some of the key responsibilities of an ID officer may include:

- Developing and implementing inclusion and diversity strategies and initiatives to promote a culture of inclusivity within the beneficiaries.
- Collaborating with other departments and promote practices that are inclusive and free from bias.
- Participating in the trainings and receiving support from colleagues, institution, and other relevant stakeholders.
- Participating in conferences and other meetings/events to stay informed about best practices in diversity and inclusion from other colleagues from NA's.
- Continuously evaluating and adjusting diversity and inclusion initiatives based on feedback and data from beneficiaries to ensure their effectiveness.



The SALTO ID YOU Inclusion and Diversity Officer Job Description can be accessed [HERE](#).

3. Inclusive events in practice

Petra Habulin, SALTO Resource Centre ID (ET)

Organising inclusive events could be somewhat overwhelming. How to start, what to think of, how to be sure everything is in place? Therefore, Petra from SALTO Resource Centre ID (ET) has presented [Planning of Inclusive Events tool](#) developed by the SALTO Resource Centre ID (ET). In a nutshell, activities designed by organisations implementing Erasmus+ projects should be inclusive and accessible to all.

Tool has been designed in a way that organisation can look in three phases of event design and implementation: before, during and after the event.

1. Is there anything to add to the tool?

- the possibility to give direct feedback (on the points of the checklist and on what's missing)
- the possibility to see how many connections, how many times the checklists are downloaded
- create the tool more as an interactive pdf so info can be saved

2. What was catching for you?

- impressive level of details: you can easily make things better just by being aware of some points
- it can help anyone really to practice inclusion, so it becomes more natural to check all these points; one can build a self-confidence by practicing

3. How beneficial to your work in the NA is the tool?

- all participants agree that the tool can be very beneficial
- it could be interesting to have a version of this tools looking only at organising online events (there are links to some guidelines in the tool already)
- tool could be tested on a small-scale event before using it for bigger events

Main recommendations that came out of this workshop are as following:

- I. To organise inclusive events, it is not necessary to implement every recommendation provided in this tool. You can start by introducing those that align with your event's objectives and audience, before gradually incorporating additional recommendations as resources and capacity allow.
- II. It would be helpful if the tool is keeping track of the entries, so organisations don't have to start from the scratch each time. Downloaded pdf version of the tool could be improved in this way to.
- III. Many participants have argued that it would be great if the tool would be upgraded so it keeps track of statistics so organisations can get a full picture of their progress in implementing inclusive events.



Full access to this tool could be found [HERE](#). Please feel free to use and share it among your networks.

PRESENTATIONS

1. Research on the needs of beneficiaries on the topic of inclusion and diversity in the Erasmus+ programme

Monika Auzinger, 3s Management Consulting GmbH

Key challenges experienced by beneficiaries:

- funding
- awareness & outreach
- partnering
- family
- resourcing
- economic
- cultural
- student motivation & readiness
- identification
- accessibility

Topics, formats, and activities for support:

- identifying mobility partners
- financial mechanisms
- training and exchanging good practices
- knowledge on ID issues
- outreach to people with fewer opportunities
- designing projects with inclusive approaches
- travel and accommodation requirements
- Erasmus+ documentation requirements
- involvement of accompanying persons
- need for adapted equipment and /or learning material



Caption: Presenter Monika Auzinger from 3S

Recommendations:

- structures to facilitate sharing of good practice
- opportunities for peer learning and exchange
- opportunities to facilitate finding partnerships
- training opportunities for participating staff
- training opportunities for receiving companies
- more clarity on administrative guidelines, eligibility, documentation, preparatory visits
- opportunities for more actively involving families in the mobility process
- capitalising on existing creative practices to mitigate challenges

2. Interim evaluation of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes period 2021-2023

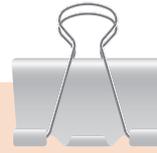
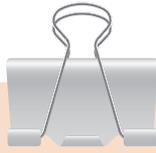
Henrique Goncalves, SALTO ID YOUTH



Caption: Visual summary of SALTO ID YOU research

Research by SALTO ID YOU can be found [HERE](#).

In the context of the new generation of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programs for the period 2021-2027, inclusion and diversity have been identified as key priority. As part of the ongoing monitoring and evaluation process, an interim evaluation of the programs for the period 2021-2023 is scheduled to be conducted in 2023/2024. The findings of this evaluation will be published in December 2024. Overall, the SALTO ID Youth research project focuses on evaluating the effectiveness of inclusion and diversity initiatives within the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes. By identifying strengths and areas for improvement, the project aims to contribute to the development of more inclusive and diverse future youth programmes. The research also aims to provide support and recommendations for advancing inclusion and diversity in the youth sector.



Main and General Recommendations:

Changes in the approach and evaluation of the programmes:

- need for more emphasis on developing and supporting inclusive initiatives and projects, rather than focusing on the number of YPWFOs involved

Understanding and addressing barriers to inclusion:

- although there is nowadays a better understanding of the barriers to inclusion & diversity, more effective support mechanisms, efforts, and resources, are needed

Structural change vs. individual “integration”:

- conflict between addressing individual needs and fostering structural changes
- emphasis on developing inclusive, diversity-sensitive structures that remove barriers from the beginning, rather than solely concentrating on “individual integration” or participation

Evaluation and monitoring:

- despite the progress in addressing ID and in reaching more marginalised groups, additional evaluation and analysis of their effectiveness and efficiency are required.
- go beyond the current tools employed by the EC, with the development of new tools for NAs and SALTO RCs

A more sensitive approach to labels:

- organisations' reluctance to use “inclusion labels” or label participants as “YPWFOs” for ethical and moral concerns
- national regulations make some NAs dive into the personal details of potential “YPWFO” participants to justify extra funding, a practice that should be minimized or reduced

Revision of inclusion budgets:

- NAs face pressure to secure additional budgets for inclusion projects without reducing the overall number of funded projects
- need for revision of budgets allocated to NAs and adjustments to lump sums and maximum grants, to better align with the high costs of inclusion projects, including the necessary human resources



The Presentation from this online session, please find [HERE](#).



SECTORIAL WORK SHOPS

First part of the workshops was focused on participants who were asked to answer self-directed questions for different sectors:



ACCESSIBILITY

How challenging is supporting accessibility of diverse participants in mobility programs especially when dealing with mental health, trauma and abuse, or physical mobility challenges? What ways of effective communication with applicants and beneficiaries could be used in this respect?



TARGET GROUPS

How could you help beneficiaries to gain more clarity on the type of documentation required for proving eligibility? What kind of support do you need? What do you think how could target group categorisations, that differ among states, can be addressed?



MOTIVATION

How could young persons and learners be more motivated to participate in mobility? What can be done to address concerns of their families and ensure their support for the mobility?



PARTNERS

What kind of support can be provided to beneficiaries in relation to finding partners with matching profiles, values, and mobility projects? What challenges do the beneficiaries have when working with partners?



After this exercise participants were divided into small sectorial working groups and each group looked deeper into the topic answering the additional questions:

Accessibility - Higher education

- Is staff in HEIs adequately trained to work with these persons before, during and after the mobility? What could you, your NA or SALTO do? Do you have some concrete participation initiatives to share? Could blended mobility or short-term mobility be a solution?

After interesting discussion, the group brought some recommendations or suggestions to take it into consideration. They agreed that it is important to provide training and resources for staff in HEIs, facilitate networking events and on-site visits, support the creation of support materials, collaborate with authorities to garner support, and promote communication on all levels. Concrete participation initiatives could include organizing training sessions for staff, creating support materials for international offices, and facilitating networking events between NAs and coordinators. Blended or short-term mobility programs could also be a solution to improve communication and collaboration at the institutional level. Overall, collaboration between NAs, SALTO, HEIs, and authorities is essential to adequately support persons with fewer opportunities before, during, and after mobility experiences.

Target groups - Vocational education and training

- What could you, your NA or SALTO do? How could this issues be addressed through Erasmus+ programme- more flexible activities, etc.?

There has been indicated in the vocational education and training group that beneficiaries need to understand different types of barriers even better. Sometimes barriers are hidden, and not visible and awareness, knowledge and know how should be raised.

Some of the main recommendations are as follows:

- To understand barriers even better could be done through: - publications, webinars, best practice examples, and trainings. There has been an example shared from Lithuania: publication in English for organisations how to be more inclusive
- In addition, it has been recommended that understanding the purpose of preparatory visits and using them accordingly could support the process of understanding barriers even better

Here is a short overview of more programme related recommendations that have been indicated on how to support beneficiaries to access program easier:

- When it comes to accessibility for organisations it has been indicated that eligibility period for accredited projects is not convenient for many VET institutions (summer internships!), and this asks for more flexibility.
- Many colleagues from the field agree to not limit KA122 projects to 3 applications but to leave it open so smaller organisations with less mobility that can participate long term without the accreditation
- It has been concluded that many of these topics can be addressed through TCA/LTA (e.g. study visits)



Motivation – ADULT & YOUTH

- How can their fear of stigmatisation and low self-esteem be tackled? How could organisation be motivated to host participants with fewer opportunities in the adult education field? What could you, your NA or SALTO do?

After interesting discussion, the group bring some recommendations or suggestions to take it into consideration: to share good practices and discuss common challenges and solutions, Create a mentorship program where experienced organizations can offer guidance and support to those new to working with participants with fewer opportunities, Provide funding and resources specifically designated for inclusive projects, Develop a recognition system or awards for organizations that excel in inclusivity and share their success stories to inspire others.



Partners finding - School education

- What could you, your NA or SALTO do? As most of beneficiaries deal with economic barriers, do you think it could be related to challenges with partner finding?

In general school education, group had a feeling that economic barriers are not directly connected to the partner finding but there are many other barriers that are more linked to the economic factors. For example, general participation barrier is bigger than a partner finding because many times, Erasmus+ support is not enough so many people have to top up on their expenses. Therefore, some data could be collected on the NA and SALTO end to understand how much resources people are spending to subsidize extra costs. In addition, many times people are going to a homestay rather than paid accommodation. But this comes with emotional/relational, and cultural exchange, and in this case economic barrier becomes social or health barrier and it does streamlines to other barriers too.

Some of the main recommendations to tackle economic barriers in the school education sector are:

→ INFORMATION

There is a huge problem about information sharing and accessibility to information for the students and much more should be done in this way. Pay more emphasis on promotion and communication on all levels to have more quality and inclusive projects/mobilities.

→ ACCREDITATION

Accreditation in a long run makes it much easier for schools to navigate the economic and planning process. and it allows networks to emerge. This is integrated educational process, and it is about forming personalities of the young people, where the program is just a part of the holistic educational process. To focus more on accredited or schools that are awarded to be more inclusive in the selection process. To have a monitoring list or a check in list what are mandatory questions for the inclusion during the implementation. This is linked to the fact that a support system should be in place as this work could be exhausting.

→ SUCCESS STORIES

There could be more success stories as people do not follow impact and always fall short in understanding how much has been done. NAs should streamline it more, share it and bring those stories alive. It has been concluded that all NA's now good stories. There is also a SALTO role in this to bring it even more, include it in the events, promotions etc. in addition, SALTO could integrate more success stories in the events like this one, and streamline it in all aspects of work, communication, advocacy etc.



The Draft Report on Padlet, from all sectorial workshops, please find [HERE](#).



STUDY VISITS

A Bonsai

Association for Civil Society Development Bonsai is a non-profit, non-governmental organization, a Volunteer Centre building a society of equal opportunities for all and enhancing personal and social development through connecting communities, raising awareness on the importance of active participation and non-formal education.

During the study visit, the representatives of Bonsai presented the “Dubrovnik Support Team - ESS - local initiatives for persons with disabilities & sports”. City of Dubrovnik shows commitment to inclusion with a budget allocation of 60,000 EUR. Bonsai also presented some recommendations for inclusive volunteering, developed through the project:

- Remove barriers
- Provide support
- Support national organizations
- Measure impact
- Unity strengthens us



Caption: Study visit to Bonsai

 The Presentation from study visit in Bonsai is [HERE](#).

B University of Dubrovnik

The University of Dubrovnik is the newest university in Croatia. It was established in 2003, on the foundations of a very long tradition which goes back to the 17th century, but also on decades of modern higher education. By its programs, its organisation and its technical equipment, the University of Dubrovnik stands among very modern educational institutions. University has twelve university and six professional courses in the following fields: science of navigation, marine engineering, marine electrical engineering and communication technologies, business and applied information technology, aquaculture and mariculture, economy and business studies, tourism, and mass communication.



Caption: Study visit to University

During the study visit, the representatives of the University presented the history of the University, its structure and vision, inclusion related activities and structures created to promote and implement inclusion (ID officers, coordinator for students with disabilities, office for professional orientation and counselling, etc.). They presented in details mobility programmes run by the University and related statistical data, as well as data for top-ups for HE. Also, they presented the work of National Group for Enhancing the Social Dimension of HE, and the INNOSID Project (Innovative Solutions based on Emerging Technologies for Improving Social Inclusion of People with Disabilities) where they were partners. Their guests were the ESN Dubrovnik, who presented their activities that have major social impact on the community, such as inclusive communication workshops and the Manual, Erasmus+ Street With a Twist project, and other activities.



The Presentation from study visit to University of Dubrovnik is [HERE](#). In addition, ESN presentation on social impact you can access at the following [LINK](#).



Maritime and Technical School Dubrovnik

Maritime and Technical School Dubrovnik is a vocational high school offering 4-year education to students in departments: seafarer, maritime engineer, IT mechanical engineer, and electrical engineer. The school has a rich history and was founded in 1852. In addition to regular classes, there are also practical classes, extracurricular activities and optional robotics classes which have been taking place at school. In 2018 school started its Erasmus+ adventure with the project “Foreign Traineeship of the students of Maritime-technical school” in partnership with the Italian companies Evolve and Nuzzo Robotics. A year later, a “Cybernetic advanced technology” project was realized with the Slovenian partner School Centre Ptuj. Since February 2023, the school has been the holder of Erasmus+ accreditation for vocational education and training.

During the presentation, participants were informed about the importance of inclusion and diversity, as an aspect of school's Erasmus+ projects. These projects include initiatives such as foreign traineeships for students of Maritime-technical school, cybernetic advanced technology programs, and learning experiences like “Learning is a journey!”.



Caption: Study visit to Maritime and Technical School



The Presentation from study visit to Maritime and Technical School Dubrovnik is [HERE](#).

Currently ongoing projects include "The Yellow Dwarf Star," "#Grin - Green is in!" and an accredited project for the mobility of students and teachers in vocational education and training. These projects aim to promote diversity, inclusivity, and cultural exchange among students and educators.

Other school activities mentioned during the study visit that encourage empathy and facilitate inclusion among students are collaborations with Red Cross, participation in the projects "Schools for Africa, Living Library and Croatia volunteers", organization of robotics workshops for elementary school pupils led by older students from Maritime and Technical School Dubrovnik.



Caption: Joint photography of all participants

Wishing you once again all the best in your work and looking forward to the next opportunity to connect, share and learn together!



networking like minded people
 network energy new friends
 partners
recharging
 information
inspiration
support
 the sun
 group therapy
 collaboration
motivation
 solidarity
 peace
 friends

Caption: Takeaways from the training expressed during the evaluation stage



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