DISSEMINATION & EXPLOITATION PLAN

The EESI-DIGI Erasmus Project is dedicated to improving the lives of Persons with Disabilities (SwD), by addressing the skills gap, promoting inclusivity, and enhancing employment opportunities. This groundbreaking project not only recognizes the unique needs of SwD but also leverages the power of new technologies to empower them with the skills and qualifications necessary to thrive in an ever-evolving digital world.

Dissemination and the General Public

Creating a Shared Vision

One of the central objectives of the EESI-DIGI Project is to stimulate European awareness about the challenges faced by disabled students and to empower them as successful innovators within their local communities. This vision is not confined to the project partners alone but extends to the general public. By actively engaging with the broader audience through targeted dissemination efforts, the project aims to build empathy and solidarity.

Through a mix of traditional and digital communication channels, the project will share compelling stories of SwD who have overcome obstacles, showcasing the transformative potential of new technologies.

Online Presence

The heart of the dissemination plan is the project's website (www.eesidigi.com), which serves as a hub for information, resources, and updates. This online presence is the cornerstone of reaching out to the general public. Regular blog posts, news articles, and multimedia content will keep the website vibrant and informative. It will not only provide updates on the project's progress but also offer valuable insights into the lives of SwD and the impact of digital

Empowering Educators

Digital Accessibility Tools

Educators can take the lead in ensuring digital materials are accessible to all students. Utilizing screen readers, voice recognition software, and accessiblelearning management systems (LMS), educators can ensure that SwD have equal access to course content. This not only assists SwD but also sets an example for the general public regarding the importance of digital inclusivity.

Assistive Technology Integration

Educators should familiarize themselves with a variety of assistive technologies, such as text-to-speech software, speech recognition software, and note-taking apps. By incorporating these into their teaching strategies,educators can provide tailored support to SwD.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

Adopting the principles of UDL means creating content and curriculum that are accessible to everyone from the outset. Educators can use multimedia, digital textbooks, and interactive online platforms to cater to diverse learningstyles and abilities. This not only benefits SwD but also raises awareness about the benefits of adaptable educational materials.

Understanding the Challenge

The Digital Divide

The digital divide is a multifacetedissue that encompasses disparities in access to technology, internet connectivity, and digital literacy.

For SwD, this divide takes on added complexity, as it includes access to assistive technologies and software designed to accommodate their specific needs.

Barriers Faced by SwD:

SwD face unique challenges in traditional educational settings that often go unnoticed. These challenges can encompass difficulties in communication, limited mobility, and restricted access to information. New technologies have emerged as powerful allies in addressing these challenges. By highlighting the transformative role of technology in removing these barriers, we can promote a more inclusive and equitableeducational landscape for all students.

Assisting Students with Disabilities Through New Technologies

In recent years, the integration of new technologies into educational practices hasushered in a transformative era for students with disabilities (SwD). These technologies offer innovative solutions to longstanding challenges, providing SwDwith opportunities for enhanced learning, communication, and independence.

Assistive Technologies

Assistive technologies encompass a wide range of devices, software, and applications designed to cater to the unique needs of SwD. These tools assist withtasks such as reading, writing, communication, and mobility. Examples include screen readers, speech- to-text software, and communication devices with built-in augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) features.

Accessibility Features

Many mainstream devices and operating systems now include built-in accessibility features. These features make it easier for SwD to access and interact with digital content. For instance, smartphones and computers offer screen magnification, voice commands, and customizable font sizes, enhancing the user experience for SwD.

Inclusive Learning Platforms

Educational institutions are increasingly adopting inclusive learning management systems (LMS) and platforms. These systems offer features like closed captions for video content, alternative text for images, and adaptable course formats, ensuring thatSwD can access educational materials seamlessly.

Online Resources

The internet provides a wealth of accessible educational resources. Digital libraries, interactive simulations, and multimedia content enable SwD toengage with information in diverse formats, accommodating various learning styles and preferences.
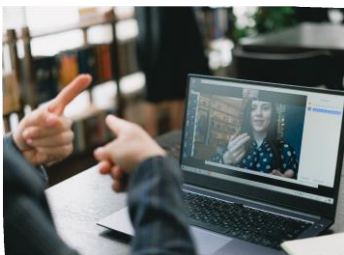
Customized Learning

Technology allows for personalized and adaptive learning experiences. SwD can benefit from tailored curricula and digital tools that cater to their specific strengths and challenges, fostering a more supportive learning environment.

Communication Aids

For SwD with communication impairments, augmentative and alternative communication (AAC)devices and software enable them to express themselves effectively. These tools can range from simple picture exchange systems to advanced speech-generating devices.

Independence and Mobility

Mobility aids like digital braille displays and navigation apps empower SwD to navigate physical spaces independently. Mobile devices with accessibility features provide real-time information on accessible routes and public transportation options.

Digital Collaboration

Technology facilitates collaborative learning experiences. SwD can engage in group projects, virtual classrooms, and remote learning opportunities, breaking down geographical barriersand enhancing social interactions.

Data Accessibility

Accessible data visualization tools and software assist SwD in comprehending and analyzing complex data, empowering them in fields such asscience, mathematics, and statistics.

Empowerment & Inclusivity

Beyond the functional benefits, new technologies promote empowerment and inclusivity. They fosterindependence, self-advocacy, and a sense of belonging among SwD, enabling them to reach theirfull potential in education and beyond.

Introduction and Brief Project Description:

This Dissemination and Sustainability Plan outlines our strategies to maximize the impact of our project, which focuses on addressing the challenges faced by students with disabilities (SwD) in higher education and their transition to the labor market. It also aims to create a framework for the sustained use of project outcomes and their transferability to a broader range of beneficiaries, including people with disabilities (PwD) in various contexts.

The significant number of people with disabilities (approximately 650 million) creates challenges for students in higher education due to inadequate infrastructure, limited mobility, and a lack of tailored teaching methods. This project's goal is to help students with disabilities complete their studies and gain essential digital skills to bridge skill gaps worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The EESI-Digi project aims to:

Developing training content and effectively communicating results to distribution channels and relevant stakeholders. Education plays a vital role in providing individuals with disabilities increased qualifications and access to the job market. To achieve this, it's crucial to enhance pedagogical methods that empower students with disabilities (SwD) to acquire the essential skills and incentives needed to secure decent employment.

The results of the project are:

1. Needs analysis. Identification of custom learning needs and individualities of SwD. First and basic step to identify and record the real needs of target group.
2. Learning units. Curriculum of the e-learning tool and training courses both for trainers and trainees, Framework for the design of a learning unit and assessment.
3. Digital Tools Development - Interactive Web platform, Collaborative platform - Databank and e-modules. Technical guide, mobile application, review E-book Multi-component program.
4. Sustainability network. Frameworks for the sustainability strategy, launching events, publications, presentations, Good practices.

Sustainability of EU project

Key factors for the sustainability of EU project results

The successful exploitation of project results in terms of sustainable use and the permanent further development of results and outputs, especially after the funding for the development and pilot implementation of the outputs has ended, is highly dependent upon a number of crucial key factors and criteria, which should be presented as the basis for the sustainability strategy. From our experience, we consider the following key factors to be relevant:

a) Output quality: To achieve a certain degree of value for sustainability and further use, the outputs produced need to be of very high quality. It is important to pay considerable attention to the output quality during the entire project development, and therefore it is always advisable to introduce procedures and responsibilities for quality management in project processes in order to guarantee a high quality final output. Outputs must be up-to-date and appealing to the customers, otherwise exploitation and further use cannot be expected.

b) Adaptability of outputs to the specific circumstances of the countries and organizations involved, rispectively University of Patras (Greece), COCEMFE (spanish NGO), IERFOP onlus

(italian nonprofit VET institution), Vilniaus Kolegija/University of Applied Sciences (Lithuania), Eötvös Loránd University" (Hungary): From our point of view it is an important precondition that the results and outputs of the project are highly adaptable to the circumstances of different countries and companies. This is particularly important as the developed materials and approaches should be relevant to different types of companies and target groups. We need to be aware that the results must have the necessary methodological and content flexibility to be adaptable to different backgrounds. A major problem concerning European project outputs and results, that is frequently encounterd, is that they are not adaptable enough to country specific conditions and requirements.

c) Clear definition of advantages for users: A high degree of usability is, in our opinion, mainly dependent upon the capacity of the project and the partnership to clearly show the advantages of using the instruments and outputs for the final target group. For this reason, all the partner institutions should always try to make the advantages of the project and its results transparent and evident, in relation to all events and possibilities. The project website (https://eesidigi.com/) in particular should express very clearly the added value of the outputs and its use to the potential customer.

d) Early identification of stakeholders and potential users: It is vital that relevant stakeholders and potential users (customers) of the project results are clearly identified and defined at a very early stage in the project's life. It is not advisable to change user groups when the project is already in process. Identified stakeholders were contacted and kept informed throughout the whole project process in order to ensure the sustainable use of the results after the project ends.

Target Audiences:

Our primary target audiences encompass a wide range of stakeholders:

I.Students with Disabilities (SwD)
II.Educators and Teachers
III.Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)
IV.Local and Regional Authorities
V.Associations
VI.Communities of People with Disabilities
VII.Disability Sector Scientists and Practitioners
VIII.Multipliers (e.g., trainers, educators)
IX.Policy Makers

Dissemination aims and strategies:

Our dissemination strategies are designed to maximize reach and impact:

- Online Channels: We will prioritize online means such as project websites, e-newsletters, social media, and network channels to engage with SwD, the educational community, and relevant associations.

- Press Releases and Mass Media: We will use press releases for mass media to raise awareness and stimulate interest among a broader audience.

- Events: When possible, direct and interactive events such as info-days, conferences, seminars, and meetings will be organized to share project results.

- Scientific Publications: We will publish research findings in scientific journals to disseminate knowledge within academic circles.

- Multilingual Approach: Ensuring project materials are available in multiple languages to reach a diverse international audience.

  Moreover, the present Dissemination Plan will ensure that all communication and dissemination needs from various activities, results and the project in general are considered and coordinated.

  The main goal of the communication and the dissemination is The dissemination process aims at stimulating the interest and attention of the main end users the SwD, the educational community as well as the related associations and the policy makers both at regional, national and European level.

Sustainability of EESI-Digi project

The sustainability strategy of the EESI-Digi project presents a comprehensive approach to ensure the long-term impact and continued utilization of the project's outcomes. This strategy outlines our commitment to addressing the challenges faced by students with disabilities (SwD) in higher education and their transition to the labor market. It also focuses on creating a sustainable framework for the extended use and broad applicability of our project results, benefiting not only SwD but also a wide range of stakeholders in diverse contexts.

Project Overview:

The EESI-Digi project centers on the goal of enhancing the educational and employment opportunities of students with disabilities. This endeavor recognizes the global issue of

inadequate infrastructure, limited mobility, and the absence of tailored educational methods, which hinder SwD from realizing their full potential. By providing tailored training and essential digital skills, we aim to empower SwD to bridge the skill gaps exacerbated by the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Key Objectives:

Needs Analysis: The first step in addressing the needs of SwD is to conduct a comprehensive analysis, identifying the specific learning requirements and individual characteristics of the target group.

Learning Units: This involves the development of a curriculum for an e-learning tool and training courses, catering to both trainers and trainees. The framework for designing learning units and assessing progress is a critical aspect of the project.

Digital Tools Development: The project includes the creation of interactive web platforms, collaborative platforms, a databank, e-modules, technical guides, mobile applications, and a review e-book, all designed to support SwD's educational and skill development needs.

Sustainability Network: Building a network to sustain the impact of the project, organizing launch events, publishing results, and presenting best practices are essential components of our sustainability strategy.

Sustainability Strategies:

Exploitation of Project Results: To ensure the project's sustainability, it is vital to continue to exploit the results even after the funding period ends. This includes providing recommendations and guidelines for the ongoing use of the project's outcomes. Exploiting the project results is also a means to promote them to a broader audience and increase the project's impact by reaching out to multipliers.

Networking and Partnerships: Building partnerships with national and international networks and initiatives that align with our project's goals is crucial for sustaining the project's impact. These partnerships facilitate the dissemination and utilization of project outcomes.

Continuous Dissemination: To maintain awareness and interest, the project will employ a variety of dissemination channels, including online platforms, press releases, events, scientific publications, and a multilingual approach. These strategies are designed to

engage SwD, the educational community, relevant associations, and policy makers at regional, national, and European levels.

Stakeholder Engagement: Regular feedback and involvement of stakeholders, including SwD, educators, and policy makers, will be a fundamental aspect of our sustainability strategy. Their input will guide the continued development and adaptation of project outcomes.

In summary, the sustainability strategy of the EESI-Digi project aims to create lasting benefits for students with disabilities, educators, and various stakeholders by ensuring the continued use and impact of project outcomes well beyond the project's funding period. It underscores the importance of exploiting results, networking, continuous dissemination, and stakeholder engagement in achieving sustained positive change for SwD in higher education and the labor market.

Strategy of activities:

Dissemination & Exploitation activities will address the following target groups and be organized as follows: - Event-based dissemination. The project will organize at least 3 annual dissemination workshops in the countries of the organizations involved (Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Spain, Hungary)to inform and engage with the national academic communities. The final project conference will address a broader audience bringing together additionally policy makers, NGOs, education authorities, other stakeholders important to the best practice proliferation in the countries of the Consortium.

Web-based dissemination. The project website will serve a major interface and community building platform. In addition to be a repository to all tangible outcomes (training and teaching materials, webinars, results of the Feasibility Study, Repository entry point, methodological materials, reference materials, etc.), it will enable community activities (blogs, social networks interface, FAQ, etc.). On top of that, all partners will use other available web-based dissemination channels (own websites, mailing lists, community resources). All target groups will be addressed.

Traditional dissemination. The project will produce the set of traditional promotional materials, it will publish major results in media (general public) and professional journals (academic community). Additionally, the project will organize several briefing meetings with policy making stakeholders to enable a multiplier effect.

Dissemination and Outreach Strategy for the EESI-Digi Project

In this section, we outline our comprehensive dissemination and outreach strategy to maximize the reach and impact of the EESI-Digi project, which aims to address the challenges faced by students with disabilities (SwD) in higher education and their successful transition to the labor market. Our goal is to ensure that project outcomes are widely disseminated, utilized, and continue to benefit SwD and other stakeholders well beyond the project's duration.

Project Consortium and Partnerships:

The EESI-Digi project involves a consortium of universities and non-academic partners committed to its success, ensuring the project's outcomes are disseminated effectively.

Project Website and Networking:

A central project website has been developed (https://eesidigi.com/) to serve as a hub for project information and updates. To maintain its relevancy and currency, each university and organization will assign a responsible person and a "blogger" to regularly update the website.

Publication Plan:

The consortium have developed a publication plan, with the goal of publishing at least one publication every three months. These publications will take various forms, including traditional print media, university websites, and social media platforms. All publications will include a link to the project website, https://www.eesidigi-project.org/, and will be shared with the central coordinator, University of Patras.

Coordinated Content Sharing:

Partners responsible for website development will collaborate in sharing content and preparing posts, ensuring that the project's progress is well-documented and disseminated.

Blogging and Social Media:

Regular posts on Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100083190549608) and other social media platforms will be used to update the public about project events and activities, maintaining an engaged and informed audience.

Student/Graduate/Undergraduate Awareness Questionnaire:

We will develop a questionnaire to gauge the awareness of the EESI-Digi project among university students, graduates, and undergraduates. The results will guide our dissemination efforts.

Contact Database:

We will create a database of contact persons responsible within each partner organizations for content collaboration and promotion. This will facilitate effective communication and information sharing.

Newsletter:

A mailing list will be created for project newsletters (https://eesidigi.com/blog/) , which will be released three times a year. The newsletter will include project updates, outcomes, and related global developments, ensuring that stakeholders remain informed.

Dissemination Events:

We will prepare presentations for dissemination events, including info-days, conferences, seminars, and meetings, when possible. These events will provide opportunities to share project results and engage with stakeholders.

Minutes, Press Releases, and Brochures:

Minutes of meetings and press releases from dissemination events will be prepared and shared. Additionally, we will create brochures, leaflets, and flyers highlighting project outputs.

Memorandum of Continued Cooperation:

To ensure the long-term sustainability of project results, we will develop a memorandum of continued cooperation among project consortium partners, committing to supporting and utilizing the project's outcomes for a minimum of three years.

Our comprehensive dissemination and outreach strategy will help us reach a wide audience, raise awareness, and ensure the continued utilization of the EESI-Digi project's results, benefitting SwD and a diverse range of stakeholders.

Innovation:

We acknowledge that traditional dissemination and marketing techniques may not be as effective when supporting SwD and PwD. Our innovation lies in showcasing successful cases

and the feasibility of solutions, empowering beneficiaries to become multipliers and communication actors. Through online means and training, they will actively participate in disseminating the project's results.

Impact:

The impact of our dissemination and sustainability activities is expected to be measurable and immediate. Our target is to reach over 50,000 end users at the outset, starting with our partners' networks and expanding to associated partners, regional authorities, associations, and more. One year after the project's completion, we anticipate that more than 10 universities and institutions in Europe will implement EESI-Digi results, thanks to our successful dissemination activities. This broad accessibility of project materials will provide benefits throughout society.

Transferability:

The sustainability analysis and dissemination activities can serve as a blueprint for the exploitation of project results by any of the partners or other associates who wish to join this initiative. For example, the Social Welfare Services of a Municipality or an association of young children with learning disabilities can adopt the results, as this project lays the groundwork for extending support to PwD beyond the SwD stage.

Indicators:

The target is to reach more than 50000 end users.

1 year after the completion of the project, it is expected that > 10 universities and institutions in Europe will make some use of EESI-Digi results

Annex II

- Stakeholder plan