Tempus

sinc@he

Support and Inclusion of students with disabilities at Higher Education Institutions in Montenegro

WP5 Training of university staff for working with students with disabilities

Evaluation report on Training

Prepared by

Lefkothea Kartasidou, lefka@uom.gr, UOM

Elisavet Pavlidou, elsa.paulidou@gmail.com, UOM

Catia Giaconi, catia.giaconi@unimc.it UNIMC

Laura Fedeli laura.fedeli@unimc.it, UNIMC

Date 19/10/2014

1

Tempus

Content

Introduction

This document is intended to provide results on evaluation of the training both from trainers and from trainees of SINC@HE and the training effects after the piloting year.

The integration of students with disabilities in higher education requires both a deep knowledge about the different disabilities and the awareness about the main supports that, in their synergy, can guarantee an adequate participation in the training path of the student with disability. The training was organized in two levels (see Table 1 & 2):

1. Basic Training on inclusive practices and support services for students with disabilities

Basic training aims to provide to participants basic concepts of disability, approach towards different kind of disabilities, basic support services as well as basic concepts of sign language and Braille. Very important part of the basic training will be inclusive education, where will be covered roles of all different stakeholders in the inclusive system of education, as well as the importance of inclusive education for students with disabilities and their families but also its value for all others involved in it. Basic training will be a base line for the further development of all teaching and administrative staff from the Universities, and peer support students groups for better support of students with disabilities in HE Institutions.

Table 1
Modules of the Basic Training
- Basic concepts of disability
- Inclusive education – theory and practice
- Support services for students with disabilities in HEIs
- Braille I
- Sign language I

2. Advanced Training on inclusive practices and support services for students with disabilities

Aim of this training is to provide participants who will be actively involved in providing different kind of services and support to persons with disabilities with necessary tools and knowledge. Beside general themes regarding disability, they will be trained on Assistive technologies for work with students with disabilities- using different types and kind of teaching materials and on everyday work with students with disabilities (counseling, technical and psychological support).

Table 2
Modules of the Advanced Training
- Inclusive education practices in HE
- Braille II
- Work with students with disabilities (counseling, technical and psychological support)
- Sign language II
- Sign language III

Tempus

- Assistive technologies for work with students with disabilities- using different types and kind of teaching materials

Further under WP6, DEV6.4 an activity took place in order to assess the effects of trainings of academic, administrative and other trained staff at partner universities. The extensive evaluation on several levels (personal approach to students with disabilities, equipment and teaching aids usage, service adopted and used, etc.) done by different instruments and surveys are performed.

The results of the evaluation from trainers and trainees and from the training effect is discussed at the end of this document as a suggestion used for improvement of future trainings as well as an aspect of overall evaluation of the project and its goals.

1. Evaluation and results

1.2 Trainees evaluation

All the trainings have been evaluated by participants based on the written form what have been submitted to them at the end of each training. They should evaluate atmosphere in the group, the method of the training, the provided materials and if training objectives have been acheived.

Concerning the group dynamic the trainees mentioned the the work was interactive and although sometimes the group was small all participants were open and they participated in the discussion by raising a lot of questions. It was interested for them when they had to participate in workshops and when the training was more empirical based on experiences.

The methods of training were found excellent with significant explanations and very food orgnanized. The trainers gave a lot of explanations and had a vrey good approach which helped participants to follow all delivered information. All trainers have used an empirical approach, shared they experiences and tried to interact with the group. According to the trainees all goals were achieved through active participation of the trainees and the materials that have been used were very useful since they helped participants to understand the topic. The materials were accessible, excellent prepared and were adapted accordingly to the needs of the participants. Especially what was delivered through guidelines and instructions was very useful and good linked to the content of each module.

1.2 Trainers' evaluation

Also the trainers filled in an evaluation form at the end of their session. They were required to assess 5 indicators: the level of satisfaction according to the available time; the level of satisfaction of the achieved objectives fixed at the begininning of the training; the level of satisfaction of the participation of the trainees and the use of materials during the course. Trainers were also asked to identify a percentage of the

achievement of the objectives they fixed and a percentage about the adaptation of the initial plan to satisfy the learners' needs (see Table 3).

Table 3
Trainers evaluation

Questions	Mean Score
How satisfied are you with the materials you could use during the training? (i.e. Have you used all planned materials?)	4,6
How satisfied are from accomplishing the learning goals you have set at the beginning of the training?	4,2
How satisfied are you with the time plan of your training?	3.9
How satisfied are you with the participation of the trainees?	3,8
Questions	**%**
Please give the % of the learning goals you have accomplished according to you initial planning	88,8
Please give the % of the changes you had to make during the training in order i.e. to adapt to the needs of the trainees.	39,5

Overall trainers were satisfied (see Table 3) with the results of the training, because the participants adopted the new knowledge and left the training with more understanding of issues and approach to the students with disabilities. Several trainees were very interested in topics and actively involved.

Generally trainers were satisfied of both the achievement of the objectives that identifies with a percentage of 90% (see Table 3) and of the use of materials during the course. For what concerns the participation of the trainees, the trainers is moderately satisfied and states that he made some adjustments during the session in a percentage of 40%. The positive aspect is that the small group of trainees has fostered the interaction and the trainer succeeded in replying promptly to the questions asked by learners. The critical issue during the session was represented by the difficulty shown in exploring the different potentialities of the technologies considering the competencies of the trainees in this field. Among the suggestions for the future training sessions the trainer states that a small money contribution by the faculty could have motivated a bigger participation of the trainees.

It should be underlined that the number of trainees in some cases was smaller than the first prevision and that among the group there were learners who showed to be not so motivated. Among the suggestions made for future training sessions the trainer states that the university should foster the motivation of the participants.

The future training actions could provide learning platforms to discuss case studies and to create tools able to foster the study of students with disabilities.

The training could be improved proposing the creation of digital documents taking into account the accessibility and usability criteria. It would also be relevant if trainees could make experiences of both creation of documents and reading documents using the screen reader.

Generally the organization of the classroom and the technical support were excellent and showed to be able to solve any technical problem due to unexpected issues. Finally the trainers believes that the seminar was a relevant opportunity to share and compare participants' perspectives.

Tempus

2. Training effect

The results of the survey of training effect during the piloting year has shown

- Both administrative and academic staff are well trained on the basic level regarding different kinds of disabilities and the most staff members expressed their willingness and readiness to work more in practice regarding different kinds of disabilities.

  Action: More frequently organize practical workshops where staff members will exercise with some students/pupils with disabilities.

- Staff members have not experienced several groups of disabilities (Epilepsy, Dyslexia, hearing and speech impairment, etc) but they expressed interests to be skilled and educated about those disabilities.

  Action: Continue with monitoring of newly enrolled students and their disability and organize appropriate trainings and workshops prior to each academic year.

- Some staff members have not participated to any training

  Action: Invite all academic and administrative staff to meet their own needs to provide full support to SwDs and organize more intensive workshops and trainings.

Those survey analyses irrefutably showed that trainings organized as a part of SINC@HE project highly improved skills and knowledge of both, academic and administrative staff, at HEIs in Montenegro. Furthermore, it is clear that the basis is established and staff members as the society as a whole need more usual activities at daily basis to become more aware, skilled and educated to work with disabilities. The need for communication and collaboration at daily basis is proved by making the same analyses during teaching process (prior after organized trainings) and after examinations (almost 3 months have passed between the surveys) and data showed improvement in students' satisfaction by their staff members.

However, organization of trainings showed to be planned carefully and systematically by listening, current and prospective students with disabilities and their needs, as well as daily allowances for workers to participate on trainings, their motivation and capabilities to participate. Trainings organized and planned during SINC@HE project shall be used as a basis and template for further planning and implementation.

Tempus

3. Indicators

Most important is to mention also the indicators related to the training. In total 252 teaching, non teaching staff and students were trained. Exact distribution of the function and the gender can be seen in Tables 4 and 5. An initiative also has been discussed and implemented from the coordinators and subcotractors Prof Dragana Bjekic and Svetlana Obradovic in order to increase the number of participants during training. This initiative includes the creation of an emoodle platform were some of the training material was included in order to be available to all after the end of the training period (see Table 6).

Table 4
Basic Training indicators

Total Nr of trainees	92
Teaching staff	30
Non teaching staff	58
Students	4
Gender	
Male	24
Female	68

Table 5
Advanced Training indicators

Advanced Training	134
Teaching staff	45
Non teaching staff	85
Students	4
Gender	
Male	50
Female	84

Table 6
Distance Training indicators (via emoodle)

Trainees e moodle	26
Non teaching staff	10
Teaching staff	16

Tempus

7

4. Conclusion

Main conclusion is that we had good response from teaching and nonteaching staff from the Universities during the project life time.

This has ensured that significant numbers of employees at the Universities have increased knowledge on disability issues and they are able to provide necessary support to students with disabilities.

On the other hand these trainings have shown us that there is a need to constantly work with employees at the Universities and to increase their sensibility toward students with disabilities.

The training process has, in fact, provided not only knowledge, but a further input on strategies and tools useful to improve the method of study of students with disabilities.

This action has given the opportunity to structure a space organized for students with disabilities with specific equipment and technological devices.

If there is such a need, we strongly recommend repeating some of the trainings in next period. Specifically, the further training should address both the new resources coming from neurosciences and the new technologies for disabilities.

Based on the reports what Association got from all trainers we consider that we can be satisfied with the active participation of involved participants from the Universities, quality of the performed trainings and the quality of knowledge they gained during trainings.

The assessment of the training process by both the trainees and the teachers was very useful specifically the sharing process of the results for a reciprocal growth was relevant for the project itself.

The project in its general development has activated significant reflection tools on educational practices that have fed the discussion and the collaboration both among participants in the training and the trainers, and the different International universities that participated in the project.

Tempus