# Accessible EU: Your role in making Higher Education more accessible and inclusive

Working together to build a more accessible European Union for persons with disabilities

**Typology:** Workshop and Mutual Learning

**Venue:** Centre de Colloques du Campus Condorcet, Paris

**Date:** 29th August 2023

**Duration:** 4 hours

**Format:** Hybrid

**Number of participants:** 200 participants

**Registration form:** https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/AAATE

**Consortium composed by:**

# Content

# 1. Context

AccessibleEU, within the framework of the 17th International Conference of the Association for the Advancement of Assistive Technology in Europe (AAATE) has organised a workshop that aims to be a space for exchanging knowledge and good practices to advance the implementation of accessibility in Higher Education.

Specifically, the workshop will provide the different actors within the educational institutions with the required tools and knowledge to comply with the fundamental principles of Design for All (Universal Design) required by European rules. The goal is to enable educators to train future representatives of society on how to address the challenges people with disabilities may face in their professional activities.

# 2. Workshop objectives

- To offer knowledge about the necessary tools and actions that must be taken to guarantee accessibility in Higher Education;
- To share experiences and expertise that facilitate the implementation of accessibility in all aspect of Higher Education including built environment, ICT infrastructure, support/services, and curricula.
- To offer knowledge on how to create inclusive and accessible classrooms for a range of students with disabilities in Higher Education;
- To obtain the necessary tools to include the topic of accessibility in the university curricula to teach students and to build a community of accessibility scholars.

Additionally, the different panels will address the rights and needs of people with disabilities, their daily challenges, as well as, the available solutions and the advances achieved. Special attention will be given to the role of the different actors within the university in implementing accessibility rules.

# 3. Provisional Agenda

## Opening session

**9.30 Introduction to AccessibleEU Centre and its role in promoting accessibility in Higher Education at European level**

Presentation of Accessible EU Centre, as one of the flagship initiatives proposed by the European Commission's Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021–2030. In this panel the goals of the Centre in making Higher Education more accessible will be explained.

**Chair: Jesus Hernández.** AccessibleEU Director

- **Inmaculada Placencia.** Senior Expert in Disability and Inclusion. European Commission.
- **Georgios Kouroupetroglou.** AAATE President. Greece
- **Pierre Crescenzo.** APACHES President. France

## Panels

**10.00 - Panel 1:** *Ensuring inclusive education for all.*

This panel will discuss the considerations that must be taken into account to ensure the inclusion of university students with disabilities. For example, the importance of implementing accessibility in different areas of university life such as in management, support services available for students, built environment, classrooms as well as the importance of assistive technologies.

**Chair: Katerina Mavrou.** European University of Cyprus.Cyprus.

- **Marie- Pierre Toubhans.** Institut national supérieur de formation et de recherche pour l'éducation des jeunes handicapés et les enseignements adaptés (INS HEA). France.
- **Alice Ribeiro.** Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto (FLUP). Head of  Inclusion Office. Portugal.

## 11.00 Coffee break

### 11.30 - Panel 2:  *Accessibility in university institutions. Good practices.*

The correct implementation of accessibility in the university environment requires a transversal approach in all university policies and practices (built environment, teaching methodologies, virtual platforms, assistive technologies, mobility programmes, etc). To this end, this panel will present inspirational experiences and projects of inclusive universities.

**Chair: Dominique Archambault.** University Paris 8. Paris

- **Gerald Craddock and Donal Fitzpatrick.** Centre for Excellence in Universal Design (CEUD). Ireland.
- **Boris Janča.** MUNI TEIRESIÁS . Support Centre for Students with Special Needs. Czech Republic.
- **Pierre Crescenzo.** APACHES . Vicepresident of University Nice-Cote d'Azur. France.

### 12.30 - Panel 3: *Implementing accessibility in university curricula.*

The participation of professionals from different fields is essential to achieve the full implementation of the principles of Design for All in society. This panel aims to provide a methodology that will enable universities and other Higher Education institutions to assess their level of involvement, as well as to take actions to increase their commitment.

**Chair: Klaus Miesenberger.** ATHENA Project. Johannes Kepler Universität Linz. Austria

- **Silvio Pagliara.** AAATE. Warwick University. England.
- **Cesare Sangiorgi.** University of Bologna (UNIBO). Italy.
- **Richard Manton.** Registrar at Professional Body for Engineers in Ireland. Ireland.

## 13.30 Lunch

# 4. Collaborating organisations, entities and projects

*The collaborating organisations participating in this workshop are University Paris 8, AAATE, GAATO and ENTELIS and APACHES.*

**AAATE**. The Association for the Advancement of Assistive Technology in Europe (AAATE) is a non profit membership organisation that aims to advance the knowledge on assistive technology in all its forms. It also seeksto enhance the role of technology enabling citizens with disabilities to be active and to participate in all realms of society and to have a higher quality of life. The association has institutional and single members in almost all European countries and is part of various international collaboration frameworks, such as the **GAATO** and **ENTELIS**. Global Alliance of AT professional organisations (GAATO) and the ENTELIS Network (together with other European umbrella organisations). Since 1990, AAATE organises every two yearsa major international conference on assistive technology and publishes the journal Technology and Disability. *https://aaate.net https://www.gaato.org/ ; https://www.entelis.net/*

**APACHES** is the Association of Professionals for Disability Support in Higher Education. Created in 2013 in France, it aims to federate the various structures supporting students with disabilities in Higher Education in order to enable them, within their institutions, to better meet the obligations of the law of February 11, 2005 on "equal rights and opportunities for people with disabilities." The main objective of this association is not only to create a place for exchanges, information and thinking practices between its members, by valorising the experience of each one to increase the efficiency of all, but also to collaborate with the ministry of supervision and to establish partnerships with the actors

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working in the field of the handicap. Apaches is organising professional trainings for support centres staff members. *https://asso-apaches.fr/*

*The entitie participating in this workshop is* the Centre for Excellence in Universal Design (CEUD)

The **Centre for Excellence in Universal Design** (CEUD) is part of the National Disability Authority in Ireland. The centre's role is to promote the universal design of the built and digital environments including services and systems so that they can be easily accessed, understood and used by everyone, including persons with disabilities. The centre works closely with the people with disabilities and a range of stakeholders on developing guidance and advise to inform Government policy in Ireland. The centre also collaborates with the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) in the development and promotion of accessibility standards at national, European and International levels. *https://universaldesign.ie/home*

*The projects participating in this workshop are EUni4All-Network, ATHENA, and Educa4All.*

During this workshop, the Erasmus+ project *European Network of Inclusive Universities*, **EUni4All-Network,** will be presented. This project is led by Fundación ONCE, the European Disability Forum (EDF) and 7 European universities. Currently, 64 European universities from 26 countries are involved and the aim is to further develop this network.

In addition to consolidating the network, the project has developed three key resources: 1) An automated self-assessment questionnaire that allows universities to review their culture, policies and practices for the inclusion of people with disabilities. 2) A guide containing the main results of the self-assessment, an analysis and a list of participating universities. 3) A web platform to facilitate the information provided by these universities in an agile and accessible way for students with disabilities.

*https://www.euni4all-network.com/*

Project **ATHENA** responds fully to one of the main Erasmus+ programme priorities: Inclusion and Diversity. By developing a set of recommendations on how to integrate accessibility and design for all into the HE curricula, the project aims to make another step forward in promoting equal opportunities, access and social inclusion of people with disabilities.

The leading principle of Erasmus+ is to address "equal opportunities and access, inclusion, diversity and fairness across all its actions". *ATHENA* addresses this objective for one of the most marginalised and excluded groups over the last centuries - people with disabilities. The potential of digital technologies for personalisation and adaptation of interaction opens a unique possibility for people with disabilities.To exploit the digital potential for equal opportunities and access, inclusion, diversity and fairness across all actions, accessibility has to be treated as a basic human right in the digital society.

The project is led by European Disability Forum (EDF), working together with Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB), MUNI TEIRESIÁS, Johannes Kepler Universität Linz (JKU) and European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE).

*https://athenaproject.eu/*

Project **Educa4all** consists in addressing the challenges faced by people with disabilities by ensuring the learning of the social competencies that the university student must acquire for the exercise of each profession in its relationship with the "design for all - D4ALL" principles and with people with disabilities, their rights, needs, how to solve them and how to investigate in this matter.

Educa4all Project has implemented a process that focuses on incorporating the principles of Universal Accessibility and Design for All into the curricula of Architecture and Civil Engineering. This process commenced with a self-assessment to gauge the initial state of universities, followed by instructor training to ensure the high quality of implementation and appropriate student education. Subsequently, the Educational Program modified its study plans by integrating

new learning capabilities on UA&D4ALL. To effectively integrate these concepts into university curricula, the Project members worked on identifying specific learning capacities. These competencies have been categorized into various groups, namely Basic Abilities, Humanistic Abilities, Urban Abilities, Construction and Systems Abilities, Project Abilities, and Cross Abilities. Moreover, this methodology was tested among partner universities of Educa4all, and the results, along with successful instances of other educational initiatives such as Experiential Summer Courses on Design and UA&D4ALL or Applied Research Projects, have been documented.

The project is led by Fundación ONCE, working together with the University College of London (UCL), Brunel University London (BUL), Universidad Francisco de Vitoria (UFV), and the University of Bolonia (UNIBO).

http://www.educa4all.es/