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**Deliverable 1.2**

# Analysis & Master-Plan to Address the Needs & Wants of Accessible Higher Education in the Western Balkans



**TIRANA 2021**

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# 1. Research Methodology:

For the purpose of researching a complexx matter of the sort a mixed methodological design was deemed to be more appropriate for the purpose of this study.

## 1.1. Desk Research:

In order to analyse the current situatuion of inclusive educxation in the Western Balkans the group engaged in literature review. In its frame we reviewed a variety of reports on the challenges of inclusive education in general and higher education in particular compiled by universities and/or NGOS (e.g. Duci et al. 2016), the European Commission's annual national reports (*Albania 2019 Report*; *Kosovo 2019 Report*; *Montenegro 2019 Report*; *Albania 2020 Report*; *Kosovo 2020 Report*; *Montenegro 2020 Report*), the concluding observations on the initial country reports by the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of the UN's Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (2019), as well as strategies (Ministry of Social Well-Being and Youth. 2016; Ministry of Education & Youth 2021), documents in pursuiit thereof (cf. Sulaj et al. 2021) and the legislative framework in each participating WB country (Law No. 04/L-037, 2011; Law No. 04/L-092, 2012; Law No. 05/L-067, 2016; Law No. 93 / 2014; Law No. 80 / 2015; Official Gazette of Montenegro, 44 / 2014), alongside critical studies thereof (Cf. Demi 2013; Sulaj et al. 2021). A significant portion of desk-research's time was devoted to the study of past projects related to Inclusive Education in Europe and elsewhere, such as the MUSE Project (2015), the project "Ensuring Access and Quality Education for Students with Disabilities in Indonesian Universities" (INDOEDUC4ALL 2017), as well as the PACES project (2019) (Progression of Accessibility Centres in Higher Education for Students with Disabilities in North Africa).

## 1.2. Survey:

A questionnaire was developped and tested within U_POLIS (**Annexes 1-3**). Pursuant its standardization, each partner institution was asked to contribute with particular data, which were then processed on a country basis (**Annexes 4-6**). This survey was subsequently followed by a concrete needs questionnaire, whose initial responses were then synthesised (**Annex 7**). In the case of Albania, such data were thereafter compared with data provided by the Ministry of Education's 'Disability Coordinators' and Statistics Office (**Annex 8**). The absence of such data for Kosovo and Montenegro was recovered by data provided by the project's partners either through direct communications with their respective Ministry of Education (Montenegro, **Annex 10**), or though empirics and alternative ways of getting data (Kosovo, **Annex 9**).

## 1.3. Interviews:

To triangulate findings, a series of semi-structured interiews were conducted with students with disabilities (Mëhilli 2019), as well with partner NGOs. It is worth mentioning that, after communicating findings from interviews to partner institutions, they decided to reverse their initial statements regarding aspects in which they initially thought they needed no training.

## 2. Problem Identification:

The absence of specialized and elaborated statistics, as well as major difficulties (in some cases impossibility) to find appropriate datasets already sets the tone of the problems' identification to be followed. The problem identification below is a distilation of analysis of research data with regards to the normative framework of students with disabilities in the Western Balkans, combined with major issues identified from the elaboration of the collected statistical data and the their triangulation made through interviews (cf. Mëhilli 2019). The identification of problems is not preceded by any introduction to the structure of the respective, Albanian, Kosovar and Montenegrin educational systems, which is pre-requisite knowledge, as this report's target groups is academics with significant exposure in the Western Balkans Educational Area.

### 2.1. ALBANIA:

#### 2.1.1. Normative Framework:

A September 2019 concluding remarks account of UN's Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2019), also quoted in the *EC's Albania 2020* annual progress *report* (35) expresses concerns in a number of areas, including: "the lack of harmonised concept of disability, the absence of disability-specific services and the lack of consultations with organisations of persons with disabilities." Legislation on Higher Education (HE), in particular, is only implicitly assuming the responsibility to guarantee HE to PwD who fulfill admission criteria, i.e. by combination of the Law No. 80 / 21.05.2015 "On Higher Education in the Republic of Albania", Article 4.3, with the provisions of Law No. 93 / 24.07.2014, "On Inclusion and Accessibility of Persons with Disabilities", especially Articles 5.1-2 and 6.2.b specifying that state policies support Persons with Disabilities (PwD)'s access to all spheres of life. To this end, the state sets particular admissions quota for PwDs and vaguely envisages that by 2020 "the number of disabled youth attending ... higher education increases" [Ministry of Social Well-Being and Youth 2016, 3]. Data collected last year only from partner institutions in the frame of this project proposal indicates that they enrolled 57 SwD. Juxtaposed with data from 2014-2015 (*op. cit.*, 31, Table 2), this figure indicates that this very modest vision has been accomplished (Ministry did not send me quotas data to date in spite of my request).

Yet, the reality of PwD's accessibility at all levels of education is rather unfit for jubilations. As Stenaldo Mëhilli, a blind student who pursues a Bachelor's degree at the University of New York Tirana states, in his admission English exam he was assigned a tutor who could barely understand English; as a consequence, the time required for him to advise her how to record his response made him leave many blank questions at the end of the exam, thereby getting a lesser grade. His account is encapsulated in EC's *Albania 2020 Report* conclusion that PwD "continue to face difficulties in accessing education" (29).

As a confirmation thereof, the "National Education Strategy 2021 - 2026" (Ministry of Education & Youth 2021) does not provide an action plan for accessibility and development of facilities in higher education institutions in relation to students with disabilities. There is also a lack of harmonization of educational and social policies (outreach mechanisms) to enable the mapping, tracking and integration of SwD from lower education to higher education system.
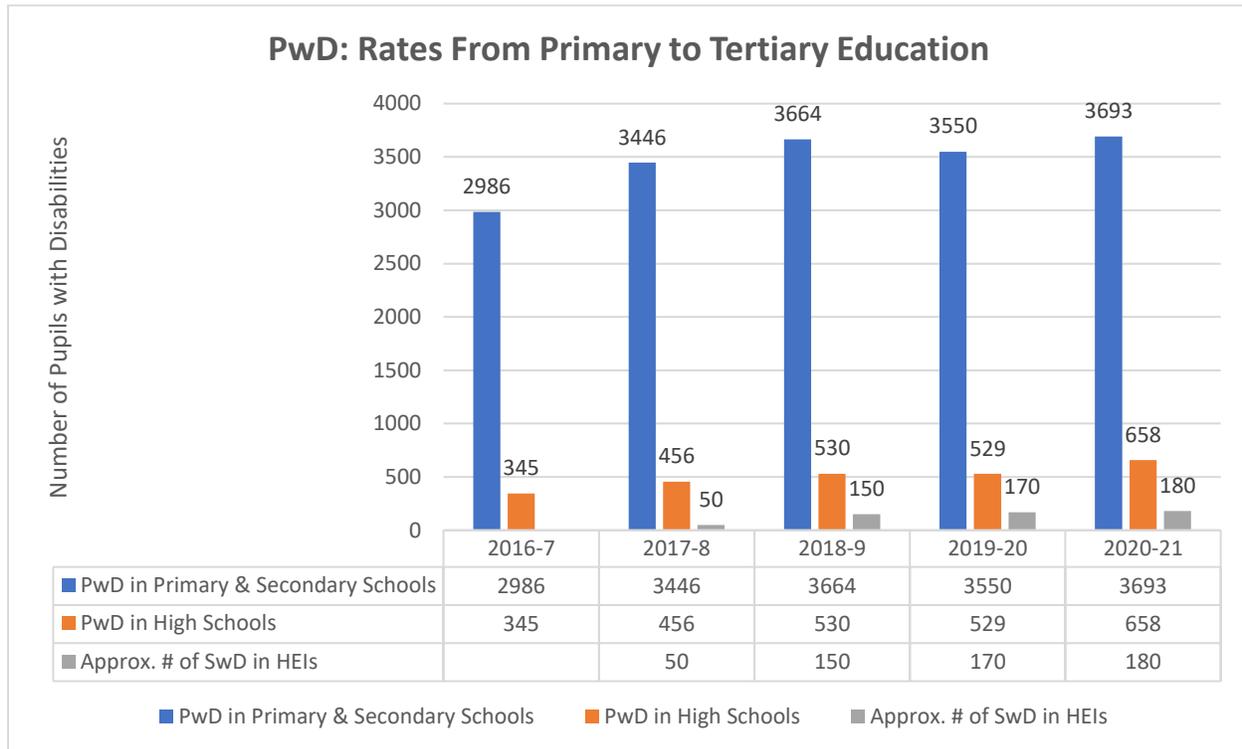
### 2.1.2. Low Advancement Rates & Lack of Sufficient Resources:

The following table (**Table 1**) was generated on the basis of data supplied by the Statistical Office of Albania's Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, acquired also thanks to the support of the Ministry's coordination in matters related to disability and inclusive education. Data shows that only an average of ca. 15% of pupils from primary and secondary schools advance to High Schools and, among those who make it to High School, less than one in three would actually make it to the university.

|  | **2016-7** | **2017-8** | **2018-9** | **2019-20** | **2020-21** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PwD in Primary & Secondary Schools | 2986 | 3446 | 3664 | 3550 | 3693 |
| PwD in High Schools | 345 | 456 | 530 | 529 | 658 |
| Approx. # of SwD in HEIs |  | 50 | 150 | 170 | 180 |
| **Rate of P&S2H pupils** | 11.55% | 13.23% | 14.47% | 14.90% | 17.82% |
| **Rate of H2U students** | 0.00% | 10.96% | 28.30% | 32.14% | 27.36% |

*Table 1:* Progression of Primary & Secondary School Pupils to High School and to Higher Education in Albania.

From the analysis of these numbers and the visualization of their respective rates (**Graph 1**) one discerns an issue related to very high drop-out rates. Combined with the state provision of a disability fee creates pre-conditions for institutionalization and counter-incentives for inclusion and integration of pupils with disabilities with pupils without disabilities, after Stenaldo Mëfilli.

## PwD: Rates From Primary to Tertiary Education

| | 2016-7 | 2017-8 | 2018-9 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PwD in Primary & Secondary Schools | 2986 | 3446 | 3664 | 3550 | 3693 |
| PwD in High Schools | 345 | 456 | 530 | 529 | 658 |
| Approx. # of SwD in HEIs | | 50 | 150 | 170 | 180 |

*Y-axis: Number of Pupils with Disabilities*

Legend: PwD in Primary & Secondary Schools, PwD in High Schools, Approx. # of SwD in HEIs

**Graph 1:** Number & Rates of Pupils with Disabilities advancing from Secondary Schools to High School and from High School to Higher Education Institutions in Albania.

Beyond any shadow of doubt, the situation above is also related to the lack of investments and appropriate support technology and systems in Albanian language that discourage the pursuit of further studies for pupils with disabilities. There are other systemic issues that point to inclusion challenges. Certain statistical data for pupils/students with disabilities are aggregated together with data from other sensitive social groups with totally different inclusion issues, such as members of ethnic, lingual or cultural minorities (e.g. Roma and Egyptians). In addition, data on pupils with disabilities do not specify the sort of disability. Some partner institutions reported different data from differet offices related to discrepancies between how disability is identified and officially recognized. An interviewee stated that the lower grade received in the maturation exams in English was not deserved, as the pupil was assigned a teaching assistant to help in writing responses who could barely communicate in English, especially in writing, thereby spoiling the time available for the exam.

The limited statistical data, which come mainly from various non-governmental organizations, depict a stark reality for children/students with disabilities *(the 2015 Report "Profile of Persons with Disabilities" commissioned by UNDP and funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC: the 2016 Report "Persons with disabilities in the Albanian context", Teleseict - KA2 Erasmus +)*:

   **a.** 6.2% of the population or 137435 individuals aged 15 and over live with some kind of disability.

IDEA
Inclusive Tertiary
Education in WBs

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Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

b.  Working aged people with disabilities are five times more likely to stay out of work than people without disabilities.

c.  80% of people with disabilities (15 years and older) are unemployed.

d.  Mobility difficulties constitute the most important disability at national level and only 50% of children with mobility difficulties attend school (this is associated with a high degree of illiteracy).

e.  Only 3% of PWDs attend higher education, while this figure for people without any disabilities is 12%.

## 2.2. KOSOVO:

### 2.2.1. Non-Effective Implementation of Existing Legislation:

Kosovo has a solid legal basis for inclusive HE. This is evidenced by Law No. 04/L-037, 2011 "On Higher Education in the Republic of Kosovo", Article 2.1.3, Law No. 04/L-092, 2012 "On Blind Persons", Article 10, Law No. 05/L-067, 2016 "On the Status and Rights of Paraplegic and Tetraplegic Persons", Article 12 and the Strategic Objective No. 3 (and its limitations) of the 2013-2023 Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Office of the Prime Minister 2013). Yet, as stated in the *Kosovo* EC *2019* Country *Report*, the implementation of these laws is limited.

### 2.2.2. Low Advancement Rates & Lack of Sufficient Resources:

Accordingly, HEIs in Kosovo are overall lacking policy framework, know-how, infrastructure, equipment, technology, as well as education and training to facilitate inclusive education of students with disabilities, according to a 2019 survey administered by U_POLIS (cf. **Annexes 5 & 9**). As a consequence, more often than not, high school pupils with special needs are not only discouraged to continue their studies in Higher Education, but also those enrolled are often forced to drop out at the absence of appropriate support systems. Kosovo is thus losing an important social and intellectual capital.

Data provided by partner institutions (**Table 2**) portray this situation in numbers:

|  | **2016-7** | **2017-8** | **2018-9** | **2019-20** | **2020-21** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PwD in Primary Schools | 2420 | 2328 | 1591 | 1259 | 0 |
| PwD in Secondary Schools | 2100 | 1492 | 1284 | 1257 | 0 |
| PwD in High Schools | 621 | 526 | 503 | 545 | 0 |
| Approx. # of SwD in HEIs |  |  | 33 | 33 | 35 |
| **Rate of P2S Pupils** | 86.78% | 64.09% | 80.70% | 99.84% | - |
| **Rate of S2H students** | 29.57% | 35.25% | 39.17% | 43.36% | - |
| **Rate of H2U students** | 0.00% | 0.00% | 6.56% | 6.06% | - |

*Table 2: Progression of Primary & Secondary School Pupils to High School and to Higher Education in Kosovo.*

Data analysis and visualization of their respective rates (**Graph 2**) point to the accute issues of very high drop-out rates. Note that the footprint of the mere 6% to 6.5% of High School pupils

making it to higher education is almost inconspicuous. It is also interesting to notice that, contrary to the tendency in Albania, Kosovar private higher education institutions, though equally lacking appropriate know-how and support structures (**Annex 7**), seem to be much more willing to accommodate diversity stemming from disability than the state university partner (cf. **Annexes 5 & 9**).

**PwD: Rates From Primary to Tertiary Education**

| | 2016-7 | 2017-8 | 2018-9 | 2019-20 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ■ PwD in Primary Schools | 2420 | 2328 | 1591 | 1259 |
| ■ PwD in Secondary Schools | 2100 | 1492 | 1284 | 1257 |
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| ■ Approx. # of SwD in HEIs | | | 33 | 33 |
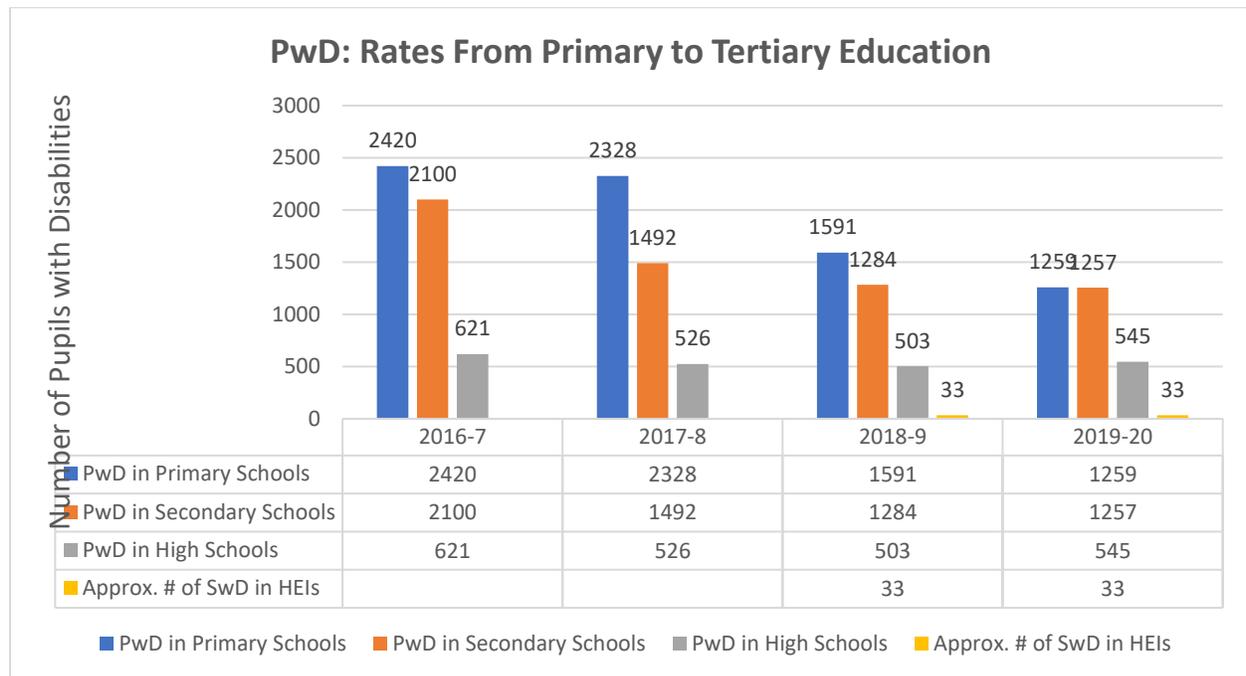
**Graph 2:** *Number & Rates of Pupils with Disabilities advancing from Secondary Schools to High School and from High School to Higher Education Institutions in Kosovo.*

The partners from Kosovo, including the NGO Handi-Kos, also refer to issues also encountered in Albania, most notably the lack of investments and appropriate support technology and systems, the absence of detailed statistics distinguishing different categories of disabilities, as well as systemic issues. It was also rather disappointing to notice that a 2012 initiative from a group of researchers from the University of Prishtina to generate software that would generate speech from text (cf. Dika et al. 2012 a; Dika et al. 2012b), as part of a project financed by national funds, reportedly seems not to have produced a sustainable and difference-making outcome.

## 2.3. MONTENEGRO:
### 2.3.1. Normative Framework:
Montenegro has regionally the most solid legal basis for inclusive HE. This is evidenced by Articles 6, 23.3, 90, 93 and 99 of the consolidated Law on Higher Education (Official Gazette of Montenegro 2014-7), and Task 2.B of the Montenegro 2019-2025 Inclusive Education Strategy (Nikolić Vučinić et al. 2019), which targets the establishment of 5 types of services and 5 resource centres at university faculties by 2022. Yet, as stated in the *Montenegro* EC *2020* Country *Report*, "children with disabilities experience barriers in accessing quality education" (39). Education

legislation is still not fully aligned with the CRPD, especially in use of definitions of disability and persons with disabilities and presence of discriminatory practices related to school enrolment of children with disabilities. Support services for students with disabilities at tertiary education level are not prescribed by the laws, and therefore not provided, except by NGOs, on the project basis, in limited duration and for limited number of users, and many faculties stay inaccessible for SwD.
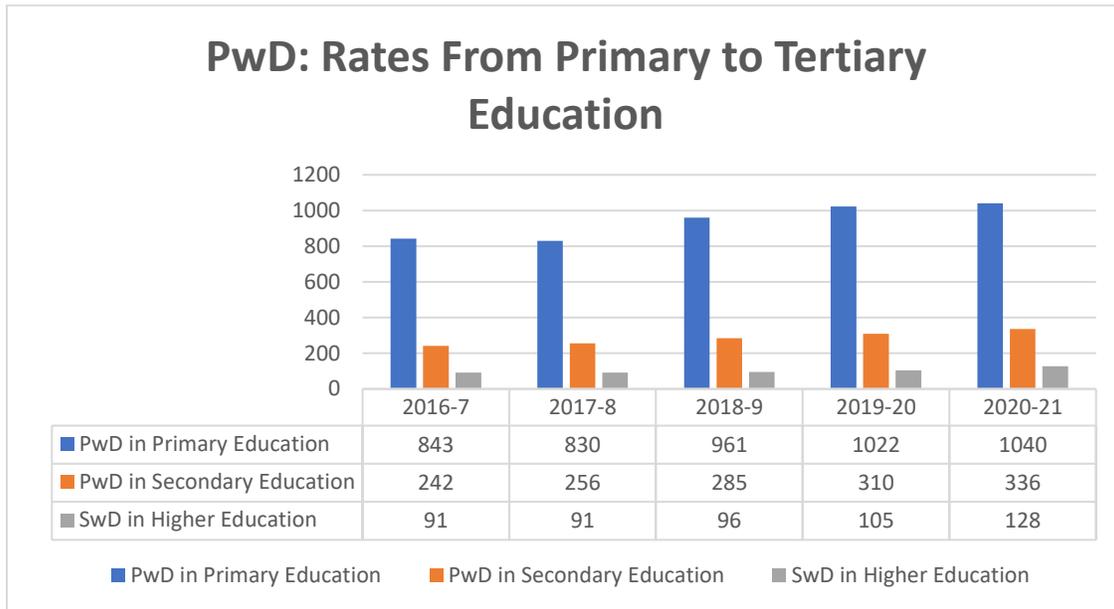
### 2.3.2. Low Advancement Rates & Lack of Sufficient Resources:

The suggestions mentioned above seem to be supported from the research data gathered by the two partner institutions from Montenegro and elaborated by the U_POLIS team. Data (**Table 3**) indicate that less than one in three pupils advance from Primary to Secondary Education, yet, slightly more than one in three pupils with disabilities make it to Higher Education Institutions:

|  | 2016-7 | 2017-8 | 2018-9 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Rate of PwD entering education system** | 45.57% | 44.62% | 47.60% | 46.35% | 46.70% |
|  | **2016-7** | **2017-8** | **2018-9** | **2019-20** | **2020-21** |
| PwD in Primary Education | 843 | 830 | 961 | 1022 | 1040 |
| PwD in Secondary Education | 242 | 256 | 285 | 310 | 336 |
| SwD in Higher Education | 91 | 91 | 96 | 105 | 128 |
| Rate of P2S Pupils | 28.71% | 30.84% | 29.66% | 30.33% | 32.31% |
| Rate of S2HEI students | 37.60% | 35.55% | 33.68% | 33.87% | 38.10% |

*Table 3: Progression of Primary & Secondary School Pupils to High School and to Higher Education in Montenegro.*

An image of balance is presented by way of visualization of this data (**Graph 3**). The situation in Montenegro is indeed far better than in Kosovo and considerably better than Albania, as the comparative **Graphs 4 and 5** indicate for both, advancement from Primary and Secondary School to High School (**Graph 4**) and from High School to tertiary education (**Graph 5**).

**PwD: Rates From Primary to Tertiary Education**

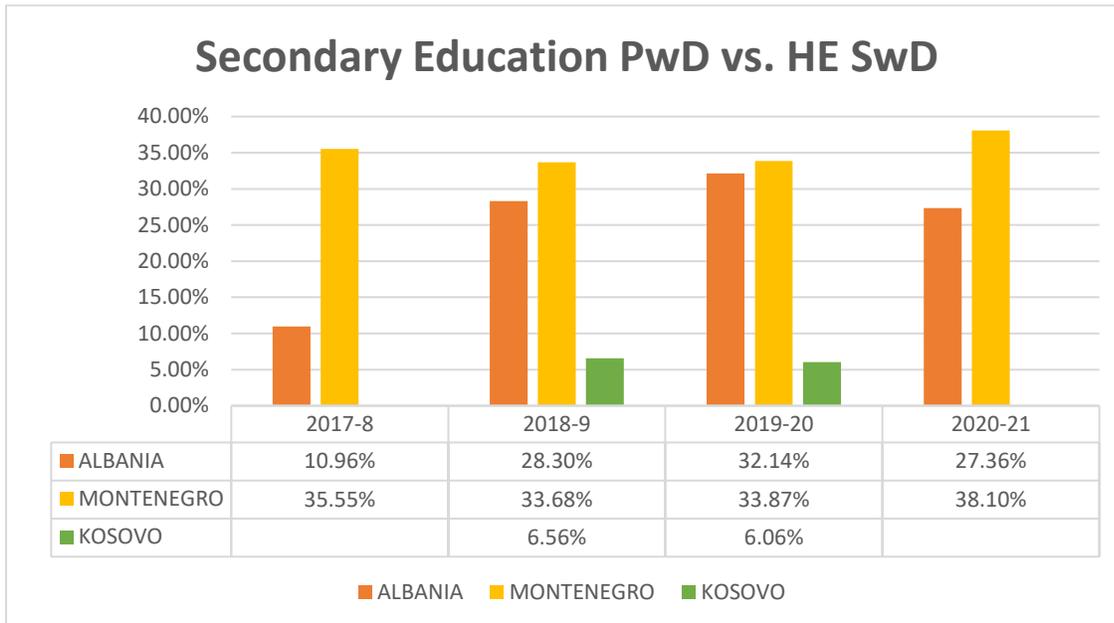| | 2016-7 | 2017-8 | 2018-9 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PwD in Primary Education | 843 | 830 | 961 | 1022 | 1040 |
| PwD in Secondary Education | 242 | 256 | 285 | 310 | 336 |
| SwD in Higher Education | 91 | 91 | 96 | 105 | 128 |

*Graph 3: Number & Rates of Pupils with Disabilities advancing from Secondary Schools to High School and from High School to Higher Education Institutions in Montenegro.*



**Primary & Secondary School PwD vs. High School PwD**

| | 2016-7 | 2017-8 | 2018-9 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ALBANIA | 11.55% | 13.23% | 14.47% | 14.90% | 17.82% |
| MONTENEGRO | 28.71% | 30.84% | 29.66% | 30.33% | 32.31% |
| KOSOVO | 13.74% | 13.77% | 17.50% | 21.66% | |
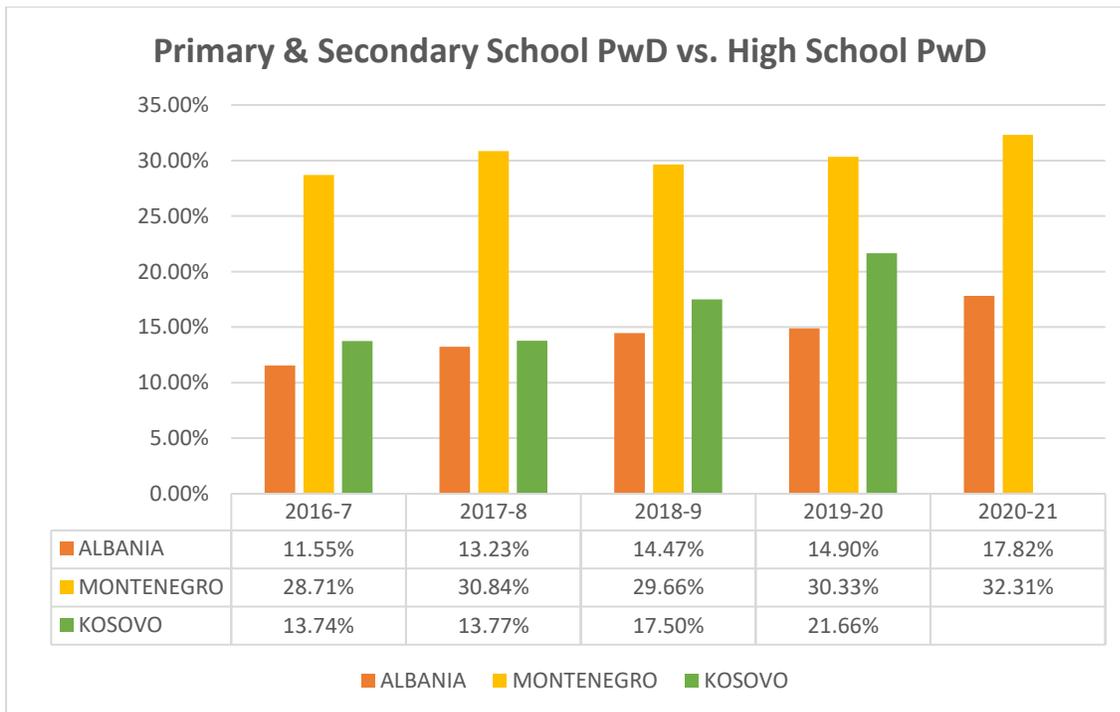
*Graph 4: Comparative Progression Rates of Pupils with Disabilities from Primary & Secondary Schools to High School in the Western Balkans (2016-2021).*

## Secondary Education PwD vs. HE SwD

| | 2017-8 | 2018-9 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ALBANIA | 10.96% | 28.30% | 32.14% | 27.36% |
| MONTENEGRO | 35.55% | 33.68% | 33.87% | 38.10% |
| KOSOVO | | 6.56% | 6.06% | |

■ ALBANIA ■ MONTENEGRO ■ KOSOVO

**Graph 5:** *Comparative Progression Rates of Pupils with Disabilities from High School to Higher Education in the Western Balkans (2017-2021).*

Still, as the partners from Montenegro alert us not to make any mistake about this. The situtioan on the ground is far from jubilations and there is still much to be done to reach European standards.

# 3. Needs Identification:

As we hope to have demonstrated above, the reality on the ground in the Western Balkans with regards to the educational advancement of pupils with disabilities to Higher Education is one of common challenges. As demonstrated in the final version of **Annex 7 (cf. Table 4**, below**)**, besides common challenges, the inclusive Higher Education in the Western Balkans also has similar needs.

The needs analysis of the HEIs participating in this project proposal are codified after the following list of SwD services:

1 = Training in statutory and regulatory adaptation in support of inclusiveness and accessibility of its services.
2 = Training in establishing a Student Access and Inclusion Unit to support SwD.
3 = Training on the processes and procedures of recording the needs of SwD.
4 = Training and equipment on how to provide accessible textbooks for SwD (accessible documents of the .docx type, accessible .pdf, digital talking book (Daisy-3), Audio-MP3 textbooks, Braille-ready textbooks, and Large-print-ready textbooks).
5 = Training and equipment to provide access to Assistive Technology (AT) Solutions (open-source or freeware) for SwD.
6 = Training and equipment to provide accessibility guidelines and tools.
7 = Training on how to establish a Volunteers Unit for SwD.
8 = Training and equipement to provide Video Relay Services to SwD.
9 = Training and means to provide special transportation service to SwD.
10 = Training on how to operate Psychological Counselling services to SwD, and other students including students with learning difficulties (SwLD).
11 = Training on how to provide Exams Accommodation facilities and services.
12 = Means to improve its physical infrastructure in support of accessible HE (ramps, handrails, Accessible toilets, special signs for visually impaired people and water coolers for SwD).
13 = Training on how to offer SwD specialized Career Office information and services.
14 = Training on how to raise awareness of accessible HE and inclusiveness culture.
15 = Training of trainers for the sustainability of these services.

- POLIS University (U_POLIS): U_POLIS has enrolled 2 SwD and is rather dissatisfied with its overall services to SwD. To improve, it needs support in the following sectors (numbers corresponding to the aforementioned services): 1-15. For Service No. 12, U_POLIS would only need special signs for visually impaired people and water coolers for SwD.

- The "Aleksandër Moisiu" University of Durrës (UAMD) has enrolled the greater number of SwD (47) and is somewhat satisfied from its services to SwD. The official number of students who receive financial assistance on account of disability is significantly less, 4 students (2018-9), 0 students (2019-20), 10 students (2020-21; Mërhori 2021). Yet, as its survey responses reveal, it

has several needs for which support is solicited in the following sectors: 1-15. For Service No. 12, UAMD would need ramps, special signs for visually impaired people and water coolers for SwD.

- The Medical University, Tirana (MedUT) has enrolled no SwD and acknowledges that much more is needed for it to offer accessible HE services. It thus solicits support in all 15 sectors.

- The University of Shkodra, "Luigj Gurakuqi" (UniShK) has enrolled 5 SwD and is somewhat satisfied with its services to SwD. Indeed, this is the sole HEI in this pool that provides some accessible textbooks to SwD. Yet, it would need support in Sectors 2-10, 12 and 14-15. For Service No. 4, UniShK would only need accessible documents of the .docx type, Braille-ready textbooks, and large-print-ready textbooks, while for Service No. 12, special signs for visually impaired people and water coolers for SwD.

- Catholic University "Our Lady of Good Counsel" (UZKM) has no SwD enrolled and, even though it offers Counselling Services for students, it is rather dissatisfied with its services to SwD and would thus welcome training in all sectors. For Service No. 12, UZKM would only need special signs for visually impaired people and water coolers for SwD.

- EPOKA University (EPOKA) has 3 SwD enrolled and is somewhat satisfied with its services to SwD. Yet, it would need training in Sectors 3-6 and 8-15. For Service No. 12, EPOKA would only need handrails, special signs for visually impaired people and water coolers for SwD.

- The University of Prishtina, Kosovo (Pristina): has enrolled 2 SwD and recognizes it should do much more to offer accessible HE services. It thus solicits support in all 15 sectors.

- Universum College, Kosovo (Universum): has enrolled 15 SwD, yet, it is rather dissatisfied with the accessible HE services it offers. Hence, it solicits support in all 15 sectors, although, it reported that the aforementioned legal provisions are included in its statutory and regulatory documents.

- International Business College, Mitrovica, Kosovo (IBC): has not enrolled any SwD and is rather dissatisfied with the accessible HE services it offers. Hence, it solicits support in all 15 sectors.

- The University of Donja Gorica (UDG): has enrolled 22 SwD and, although it is rather satisfied with services rendered for SwD, it recognizes it should do more. It thus solicits support in all 15 sectors.

| Need Code | P1 | P2 | P3 | P4 | P5 | P6 | P7 | P8 | P9 | P10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | √ | √ | √ | X | √ | X | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| 2 | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | X | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| 3 | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| 4 | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| 5 | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| 6 | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| 7 | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | X | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| 8 | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| 9 | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| 10 | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| 11 | √ | √ | √ | X | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| 12 | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| 13 | √ | √ | √ | X | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| 14 | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| 15 | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |

| | |
|---|---|
| P1 | POLIS University |
| P2 | Aleksander Moisiu University, Durres |
| P3 | Medical University of Tirana |
| P4 | Luigj Gurakuq University, Shkodra |
| P5 | Catholic University "Our Lady of Good Council", Tirana |
| P6 | EPOKA University |
| P7 | University of Prishtina |
| P8 | Inteernational Business College, Mitrovica |
| P9 | Universum College |
| P10 | University of Donja Gorica |

**NEED CODE EXPLAINED**

1 = Training in statutory and regulatory adaptation in support of inclusiveness and accessibility of its services.

2 = Training in establishing a Student Access and Inclusion Unit to support SwD.

3 = Training on the processes and procedures of recording the needs of SwD.

4 = Training and equipment on how to provide accessible textbooks for SwD (accessible documents of the .docx type, accessible .pdf, digital talking book (Daisy-3), Audio-MP3 textbooks, Braille-ready textbooks, and Large-print-ready textbooks).

5 = Training and equipment to provide access to Assistive Technology (AT) Solutions (open-source or freeware) for SwD.

6 = Training and equipment to provide accessibility guidelines and tools.

7 = Training on how to establish a Volunteers Unit for SwD.

8 = Training and equipement to provide Video Relay Services to SwD.

9 = Training and means to provide special transportation service to SwD.

10 = Training on how to operate Psychological Counselling services to SwD, and other students including students with learning difficulties (SwLD).

11 = Training on how to provide Exams Accommodation facilities and services.

12 = Means to improve its physical infrastructure in support of accessible HE (ramps, handrails, Accessible toilets, special signs for visually impaired people and water coolers for SwD).

13 = Training on how to offer SwD specialized Career Office information and services.

14 = Training on how to raise awareness of accessible HE and inclusiveness culture.

15 = Training of trainers for the sustainability of these services.

**Table 4:** *Finalized Needs Assessment Grid for Inclusive Education in the Western Balkans.*

# 4. Master Plan

## 4.1. Aims and Objectives

As shown above, HEIs in the Western Balkans region are lacking policy framework, know-how, infrastructure, equipment, technology, as well as education and training to facilitate inclusive education and equity of HE access for SwD and students with learning difficulties. As a consequence, more often than not, high school pupils with disabilities are not only discouraged to continue their studies in Higher Education, but also those enrolled are often forced to drop out at the absence of appropriate support systems. Empirical data gathered from the participating institutions also indicate a rather high drop-out rate among students countering learning difficulties. The Western Balkans region is thus losing an important social and intellectual capital, and is also lagging behind EU developments in equity of access to HE services.

In view of this acute issue, the proposed project master plan's overall aim is to improve accessibility, establish inclusive education learning conditions and develop employment opportunities for SwD and students with learning difficulties in the Western Balkans. The means to accomplish this overarching aims is building capacities of the Student Service Units, faculty, administration, students and governing bodies of the partner countries' collaborating HEIs and their respective Ministries of Education, developing modern inclusion practices, assistive technologies and networking, which will also benefit disadvantaged groups in lower educational levels (primary and secondary education).

In order to improve its equity of access overall aim, the master plan below strives to address the following project objectives:

I.   Create and/or enhance institutional support structures and protocols to enable access to Higher Education and foster the consolidation of a social integration and accessibility culture within partner universities.

II.  Enhance the managerial and administrative staff capacities of partner HEIs dealing with and implementing inclusive education practices.

III. Equip the Disability Support Units with effective and relevant assistive technology.

IV.  Increase external relations cooperation to improve Higher Education access and employment of disabled students.

V.   Increase public and students' awareness and understanding on the importance of inclusive education within HE for the society.

To this end, the mast plan at hanjd has been driven and informed by the following principles:

- Equity, i.e. equal participation in education by passing by inequalities due to social barriers on disability and/or learning difficulties.

- Relevance, meant as HE learning attuned to the particular characteristics, abilities and needs of SwD who have special needs in education.
- Access, implied as the principle by which every SwD or SwLD participates with the same rights and conditions with their peers, through adequate, targeted services.
- Effectiveness, i.e. improving SwD & SwLD HE participation, achievements, graduation rates and gradually removing barriers of biases and stereotypes beliefs in the course of learning.
- Efficiency, meant as the development of individuals and communities appreciating diversity.

Having outlined the general aims and objectives of the project, as reflected in the present master pan section, we shall detail below how they address the problems set forth in the previous section.

### 4.1.1. Albania

In the process of creating and/or enhancing institutional support structures and protocols to enable access to Higher Education, the project will produce concrete policy and normative recommendations to the Ministry whose adoption will fill the normative lacuna regarding the accessibility obligations of HEIs towards SwD. The establishment of complementary units of student access and inclusion in partner HEIs will enable them to address the aforementioned principles, systematically record the needs of SwD and identify the needs of SwLD, supply accessible textbooks and assistive technology solutions to SwD in need of them, accessibility guidelines and tools for academic staff, administrative personnel, HEI governors and SwD. The establishment of volunteer units for SwD is expected not only to provide support, but also enhance the culture of accessible education and inclusiveness overall. Furthermore, the creation of psychological counselling units will enable the proper diagnosis of SwLD, whose vast majority remains undiagnosed in the Albanian HE, and help address their needs. The provision, establishment and operationalization of exam facilitation services shall address the need for SwD and SwLD to be tested in an equitable, accessible and effective manner. The infrastructure interventions of this project will address a number of accessibility wants of the campuses of the partner universities, while training of their International Relations Office and Careers Office will improve mobility and employment opportunities of SwD.

The objectives set for Albania are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound, as will also be shown in subsequent sections. First, because the involvement of the Ministry of Education & Sports as partner, both towards completion of implementation of National Plan of People with Disabilities, will guarantee that policy recommendations will be aligned to their priorities. Second, because all three European partner HEIs have long-standing expertise in offering services to SwD and experience in knowledge-transfer. Third, because there are already some managerial and administrative capacities in the Western Balkan partner HEIs, who lack

proper training in dealing with accessibility services and are willing to cooperate to maximize benefits and contain costs. For example, UZKM already has a Psychological Counselling Unit which, with the appropriate training, will serve as coordinating institution to guide similar units to be established in all other partner institutions, as U_POLIS, with its expertise on architecture and urban planning, will, with appropriate training, serve as institution sharing its expertise for necessary accessible infrastructure interventions to be made during and after the project. Training existing personnel, or additional, where necessary, will thus guarantee good use of the equipment and technology to be purchased in the frame of the project.

### 4.1.2. Kosovo

Though the normative framework in Kosovo is rather more specific than that of Albania, the policy and normative recommendations to be developed for Albania will also be given to the homologue Ministry in Kosovo. Besides, given the similar nature of issues HEIs in Kosovo face to HEIs in Albania, the project's objectives address them in a manner similar to Albania's. The objectives are also both realistic and feasible in the context of Kosovo, because, as in the context of Albania, the project will utilize existing administrative and managerial resources to build up accessibility services. In addition, some of the services to be developed for Albania (e.g. accessible textbooks, text to voice application, etc.) will also be used in Kosovo, on account of the same language.

### 4.1.3. Montenegro

Though the normative and strategic framework in Montenegro is more advanced than that of Albania or Kosovo, its implementation remains yet to be accomplished. Yet, the policy and normative recommendations to be developed for Albania and Kosovo will also be given to the homologue Ministry in Montenegro. Besides, given the similar nature of issues HEIs in Montenegro face to HEIs in Albania and Kosovo, the project's objectives address them in a manner similar to Albania's and Kosovo's. The objectives are also both realistic and feasible in the context of Montenegro, because, as in the context of Albania, the project will utilize existing administrative and managerial resources to build up accessibility services. It is also expected to meet the strong support of the Ministry of Education, as the project is within the Ministry's top strategic priorities.

## 4.2. Identified Needs & Project's Master Plan Activities

This master plan was compiled in consultation with the European partner universities. Their concrete engagement set forth in the following sections has been calculated to a total of 243 human-days. The mater plan envisages the implementation of the following project activities:

1. The establishment of Accessibility Units in all partner HEIs or the enhancement of such units wherever they exist with this or another name/form. This activity entails a number of visits to the European partners for the purpose of studying best practices and models and creating protocols enabling the operation or enhancement of services of the Accessibility Units. To this end, appropriate equipment, aids and apps will be put in place.
2. Training of all stake-holders involved in the teaching and learning process in HE, such teaching faculty and such administrative staff as librarians, registrars, career officers and international relations officers, as well as maintenance staff in matters of maintaining accessibility and safety throughout the campus. Training will also be provided for staff to later assume the role of trainers.
3. Establishment and operation of Counselling Centres.

This group of activities meets a number of needs of both target groups. In particular the primary need to be met is to gain independent access to interpersonal communication with the university administration and/or academic staff members, to various campus facilities, like the Library; amphitheatres and classrooms; laboratories; staircases; elevators; toilets; secretaries and registrars; refectories / restaurants. Such access will also necessitate providing braille orientation labels throughout the campus for blind students. Another set of needs to be met is the access to learning materials, to classroom blackboards and projections, aid in developing notes from lectures, papers and in participating in exams in a fair and equitable manner, the access of information, internet content and ICT applications in the local languages (Albanian, Montenegrin, Serbian).

In support of SwD's interpersonal communication with the university administration and/or academic staff members, in the course of their studies, a trained academic advisor and a substitute advisor will be arranged at the level of a Department, a Faculty/School or at the level of HEI (depending on their own size and/or policies), with whom SwD can communicate. In the partner HEIs Registrar Offices an officer will be trained to support SwD. Specialist advisors and registrars with the help of the Counselling Units will also establish directions of examining SwD.

After recording the particular needs of SwD, depending on the nature of disability, their abilities and the types of study activities provisioned in specific study programmes, an accurate recording of the individual needs of each SwD and the possible problems likely to be encountered in the course of academic studies will be made. Then, international practices and protocols, alongside experimental trials will be pursued to identify potential solutions, including individualized TA solutions, such as Relay Services for students with hearing impairments.

In partner universities' Libraries accessible stations will be established enabling access of library holdings and other learning materials, including the world-wide web, to students with various visual impairments and upper limbs' disabilities. Such access is facilitated in diverse forms (printed, digital or sonar) using, where needed, usual applications of office automation. Such stations will also deal with the conversion of conventional of textbooks from a conventional to an accessible format.

To meet the coordination challenges of systematic accessibility services to SwD volunteer groups of fellow students will be trained. In addition, applications will be developed or customized to serve the needs of converting text to voice, for the production of talking books, or text to the Albanian braille writing. Also, the training of specialists in architectural design will aims at guaranteeing accessibility parameters in all edifices under construction, as well as accessibility intervention plans to provide accessibility to current campus infrastructure.

The establishment/or enhancement of Counselling Centres (with this or other) at the six partner universities, each of similar or different types of services, working synergically on the basis of a mutual agreement, will provide support to SwLD. As mentioned, some students experience a variety of problems when dealing with the newness and the demands of studying at a university level along with trying to balance academic performance with extracurricular activities and social life outside of the classroom. These problems become especially prominent when considering that students may come from a high school experience where they have lacked the time management and study skills that are necessary for success un the university setting. SwLD are not only persons with psychosocial challenges, but also others in need of support as they face issues in time management and procrastination, effective writing, textbook reading, note taking, critical thinking, memory skills, and test taking.

In this context, the services to be established shall provide assistance to any student who would like help in developing the tools necessary for success in the university setting. The goal of these Services is to help students achieve their full academic potential. The initial group of beneficiaries of these services will be students that are facing academic difficulties, such as students who are under academic probation, dismissal warning and the like or students referred to by their academic advisors or class instructors. Gradually, the services can expand to all interested students.

## 4.3. Master Plan's Concrete Activities and Methodology

This is virtually a knowledge transfer project, in which the "adapt & modify" method is to be applied. The project activities & their respective methodologies which can be grouped in this current master plan are as follows:

1. <u>A Detailed Study of Needs & Wants</u>: This is the document at hand.

2. <u>Study Visits to Programme Countries</u>: To draw models from good international practices, after studying the needs & wants of each partner country & HEI therein, a representative from each participating partner country HEI will conduct field visits to the three programme country participating HEIs to study how their Accessibility units operate (normative & regulatory, HR, infrastructural, technological, operational, governmental & managerial) & collect relevant materials. A report on these study visits is a major milestone for the following two activities.

3. <u>Policy Paper</u>: The comparison between the current situation & the models studied in field visits will then be utilized to produce a policy paper on the normative interventions deemed to be necessary for each partner country, as well as the regulatory interventions necessary for the adoption of fully-fledged accessibility unit services in each partner country participating HEI. The major deliverable here is a policy paper, whose measurable indicator is the acceptance of adoption of the normative framework by the respective Ministries of Education & the inclusion of regulatory provisions by all HEIs in all study phases of SwD: admission, study (provision of accessible learning materials, opportunities for mobility) & employment after graduation (facilitation of internship & employment).

4. <u>Establishment/Enhancement of Accessibility Units</u>: The needs & wants identified, the best practice models drawn from field-visits, the expert advice of the specialists to meet in them, as well as the master plan of synergies to be developed will then determine the kind & number of equipment to be purchased & installed for the establishment of accessibility units in participating partner countries' HEIs where such units do not exist, or the enhancement of such units where they are existent. A measurable indicator here is that equipment to be purchased target the needs of all kinds of disability. The completion of this activity is also a major milestone towards the operationalization of accessibility units.

5. <u>Training of E-Accessibility & Library Services' Coordinators</u>: Each partner country's participating HEI will appoint one or two E-Accessibility & Library Services coordinator, who, after the installation of the purchased equipment, will be trained by an expert from the University of Athens in Albania on how to use the equipment, how to convert learning

materials to accessible learning materials & how to serve the particular study needs of SwD, including communication needs through relay services.

6. <u>Training of Built Environment Accessibility Consultants</u>: Three built environment accessibility consultants will be appointed from the ranks of their staff members by three universities in Albania offering study programmes in Architecture (POLIS, EPOKA & UZKM), the University of Prishtina from Kosovo & the University of Donja Gorica from Montenegro. These five consultants will be trained in Albania by their homologue from the University of Athens on how to guarantee campus accessibility of the partner countries' HEIs. The measurable indicator here is the number of trained consultants.

7. <u>Training of Counselling Centre Officers</u>: Each partner country HEI will have its counsellor trained in Kosovo by the specialist counsellor of the University of Athens. Similarly to synergies provisioned for the activity above, HEIs offering specialized Counselling Centre psychological support will also be trained to offer services to students from HEIs not offering such specialized services. The measurable indicator here is the number of trained officers.

8. <u>Training of Voluntary Support Services' & Transport Services' Coordinators</u>: Each partner country HEI will have one or two coordinators appointed for these services to be trained in Albania by the specialist counsellor of the University of Masaryk. The measurable indicator here is the number of trained coordinators.

9. <u>Training of Academic Advisers</u>: Each partner country HEI will nominate a chief advisor to then train other advisors on a per-Faculty basis or for the entire HEI (depending on the size of HEI), who will be trained in Montenegro by the competent specialist of the University of Masaryk. The measurable indicator here is the number of trained advisers. The training will also extend to inclusive tertiary education teaching & evaluation methods.

10. <u>Training of Int'l Relations & Career Offices Personnel & Training of Trainers</u>: Each partner country HEI will nominate an IR & Career Officer & a principal trainer, who will be trained in Limerick by the competent specialist of the University of Limerick. The measurable indicator here is the number of trained staff.

The end of the training phase will mark a major milestone towards the operationalization of the Accessibility Units. The operationalization measurable indicator is the number of services operating in each partner country participating HEI.

11. To guarantee sustainability, a <u>Piloting & Road-Mapping document</u> will record processes & procedures towards the establishment of the Accessibility Unit, to be reviewed by two European partners.

12. <u>Quality Assurance</u>: QA is to be entrusted primarily to programme countries HEIs & the participant NGOs with tools involving feedback from SwD.

13. <u>Management & Dissemination</u>: To be coordinated by the lead applicant. Measurable indicators here include funds disbursed, number of SwD to be served and number of dissemination activities to be organized, while milestones include mid-term and final reports.

The role & participation of the Programme Countries' partners extends to all project phases. The University of Athens, the University of Masaryk and the University of Limerick will lead the study visits by academic & administrative representative of the partner countries' HEIs in the programme countries: The University of Athens in Athens, Greece, the University of Masaryk in Brno, Czech Republic & the University of Limerick in Limerick, Ireland. Specialized staff members from these institutions, with inputs from participating NGOs, will conduct the knowledge-transfer, hands-on trainings, using the equipment to be purchased to demonstrate practices, as well as incentivizing trainees to learn by doing. They will also consult with the partners from the West Balkans on the sort & content of legislative & regulatory interventions necessary for the decisive & sustainable promotion of inclusive HE in the WB. The University of Athens, the University of Masaryk and the University of Limerick will also play an important role in the project's management & quality monitoring. Last but not least, given that the leaders of the University of Athens & the University of Masaryk staff teams share a scientific interest in human-computer interaction, their involvement is expected to trigger interesting cases for research & publications, thereby fostering potential relations with faculty from the WB sharing similar interests, as well as building research-related ties that would help in the project outcomes' sustainability.

In particular:
The University of Athens will transfer relevant know-how, skills, experience & expertise from its: a) 20-year-old "Accessibility Unit for Students with Disabilities"; b) "Speech & Accessibility Laboratory" with long-time research activity in Computer Accessibility; c) courses provided by SAL: "Computer Systems for SwD" & "Advanced Computer-based Assistive Technologies for the Disabled".

The University of Masaryk will transfer know-how, skills, experience & expertise from its long experience in special education & technology services to over 30% of Czech SwD.

The University of Limerick will train relevant officers on the SwD journey from undergraduate to postgraduate studies or employment, including the exploration of the skills & supports required for student success. Training on the 'skill set' required by SwD including the use of assistive technology hardware & software & the delivery of skills-based programmes to develop practical coping skills, problem-solving skills, self-advocacy skills, organisational skills, independent learning skills, & social skills. It will also train the trainer on the practical challenges Swd face when navigating college life, study abroad or Erasmus placement & employment. University-specific disability awareness training may also be useful. P13 will give case-studies which highlight good practice for inclusion, showcasing own facilities in their service on campus.

## 4.4. Anticipated Results after the Master Plan

1.  **Analysis of Needs & Wants & Study Visits:** Result No. 1 (R1): Document detailing the particular needs & wants of Albanian HEIs participating in the project, together with a master plan on how to best address them, based on the best practice models experienced in the course of study visits.

2.  **Policy Paper:** R2: Document of normative interventions suggested to the Albanian Ministry of Education & Sports. R3: Pack of developed & approved customized statutory & regulatory provisions regulating the operations of the accessibility units to be established or enhanced in the Albanian HEIs participating in the project.

3.  **Services for SwD**: The project envisages the establishment of 12 accessibility services for SwD. R4: The Accessibility Units in the participating Albanian HEIs (hereafter: AU) implement processes & procedures of recording the needs of SwD. R5: AU provide accessible textbooks for SwD (accessible documents of the .docx type, accessible .pdf, digital talking book (Daisy-3), Audio-MP3 textbooks, Braille-ready textbooks, & Large-print-ready textbooks). R6: AU provide access to Assistive Technology Solutions (open-source or freeware) for SwD. R7: AU provide accessibility guidelines & tools for all stake-holders dealing with SwD, including SwD. R8: AU provide Video Relay Services to SwD. R9: AU operate a Volunteer Unit for SwD within the HEI, in which fellow-students, in their conviction to a culture of inclusiveness, serve in full awareness of accessible HE requirements. R10: AU facilitate, to the degree that this is possible, the special transportation needs of SwD. R11: AU provide Exams Accommodation facilities & services for SwD. R12: AU provide special student mobility, internship & career placement opportunities for SwD. R13: Participating Albanian HEIs operate counselling services for SwLD. R14: Participating Albanian HEIs have trainers to guarantee sustainability of AU & Counselling services.

## 4.5. Anticipated Work Plan

**Work Package (WP) 1.** 1.1. Launch the project. 1.2. Master-plan of Needs & Wants of Accessible HE in WB.

**WP2.**1 - 2.1.1 Study-Visits to draw best practice models. 2.1.2. Drafting 3 policy papers (green papers) with normative suggestions (for Albania, Kosovo & Montenegro). 2.1.3. Drafting 3 new protocols of processes & procedures in service of SwDs (one / country). 2.1.4. Organize the tendering process, purchasing the equipment setting up & establishing the Accessibility Units.
WP2.2 - 2.2.1 Training of E-Accessibility & Library Services' Coordinators. 2.2.2. Training of Built Environment Accessibility Consultants. 2.2.3. Training of Registrar Office, Voluntary Support & Transport Services' Coordinator. 2.2.4. Training of Counselling Centre Coordinators. 2.2.5. Training of Academic Advisors on inclusive teaching, learning and assessment methods in HE. 2.2.6. Training of trainers, IR & Career Officers. 2.2.7. Piloting and Road-mapping of processes & procedures for the establishment of Accessibility Units.

**WP3** - 3.1 Development of a Quality Monitoring Action Plan; 3.2. Subcontraction of an external auditor. 3.3. Mid-Term Quality Monitoring Report & Recommendations. 3.4. Quality assessment of training activities, policy & protocol papers & the Piloting & Road-Mapping processes & procedures. 3.5. Drafting, validating & submitting Final Quality Monitoring Report, submission of external expert's Quality Monitoring Report.

**WP4** - 4.1. Develop a Dissemination Strategy; 4.2. Design dissemination products & project website; 4.3.1. Define agenda & logistics for the International Day of Disabled Persons, awareness-raising campaigns in High Schools and civil society, & implement related dissemination planning; 4.3.2. Organize the project's final conference; 4.3.3. Prepare dissemination report (mid-term & final).

**WP5** - 5.1. Project Management; 5.2. Mid-Term Report; 5.3. External evaluation & audit; 5.4. Final Project Report.

| Ref.nr/ Sub-ref Nr | Title | Total duration (No. of weeks) | M1 | M2 | M3 | M4 | M5 | M6 | M7 | M8 | M9 | M10 | M11 | M12 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Activities** | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WP1.1 | Launching the Project | 6 | 3x | 3x | | | | | | | | | | |
| WP1.2 | Master-Plan of Needs & Wants for Accessible HE in the Western Balkans | 6 | 4x | 2x | | | | | | | | | | |
| WP2.1.1.1 | Study visits to draw best-practice models | 8 | | 1= | 4= | 4= | | | | | | | | |
| WP2.1.1.2 | Drafting three policy papers | 10 | | | | | 4x | 4x | 2x | | | | | |
| WP2.1.1.3 | Drafting three new model protocols of processes & procedures in service of SwD (1/partner country). | 10 | | | | | 4x | 4x | 2x | | | | | |
| WP2.1.2 | Purchasing the equipment, setting up & establishing the Accessibility Units. | 12 | | | | | 4x | 4x | 4x | | | | | |
| WP2.2.1.1 | Training of E-Accessibility & Library Services' Coordinators | 12 | | | | | | | | 4x | 4x | 4x | | |
| WP2.2.1.2 | Training of Built Environment Accessibility Consultants | 12 | | | | | | | | 4x | 4x | 4x | | |
| WP2.2.1.3 | Training of Registrar Office, Voluntary Support & Transport Services' Coordinator. | 12 | | | | | | | | 4x | 4x | 4x | | |
| WP2.2.1.4 | Training of Counselling Centre Coordinators | 12 | | | | | | | | | 4x | 4x | 4x | |
| WP2.2.2 | Training of Academic Advisors on Inclusive Teaching, Learning & Assessment Methods in HE. | 12 | | | | | | | | | 4x | 4x | 4x | |
| WP2.2.1.5 | Training of Trainers, International Relations Offices' Coordinators & Career Officers. | 12 | | | | | | | | | | 4= | 4= | 4= |
| WP3.1 | Development of a Quality Monitoring Action Plan | 6 | 3x | 3x | | | | | | | | | | |
| WP3.2 | Subcontract an external auditor. | 6 | 3x | 3x | | | | | | | | | | |
| WP3.3.1 | Quality assessment of training activities, policy & protocol papers... | 8 | | | | | 1x | 1x | 1x | 1x | 1x | 1x | 1x | 1x |
| WP4.1 | Develop a Dissemination Strategy | 4 | 1x | 1x | 1x | 1x | | | | | | | | |
| WP4.2 | Design Dissemination Products & Pilot Website... | 36 | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= |
| WP4.3.1 | Define agenda & logistics for the Int'l Day of Disabled Person, the inclusive education awareness-raising campaign in High School & civil society, & implement the planned activities. | 4 | | | | | | | | | | | 2x | 2x |
| WP5.1 | Project Management | 24 | 2x= | 2x= | 2x= | 2x= | 2x= | 2x= | 2x= | 2x= | 2x= | 2x= | 2x= | 2x= |

*Table 5:* *Activities anticipated in Project Year 1 after the Master-Plan.*

| Ref.nr/ Sub-ref nr | Activities Title | Total duration (number of weeks) | M1 | M2 | M3 | M4 | M5 | M6 | M7 | M8 | M9 | M10 | M11 | M12 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WP2.2.3 | Piloting and Road-Mapping of Processes and Procedures for the Establishment of Accessibility Units. | 48 | 4x | 4x | 4x | 4x | 4x | 4x | 4x | 4x | 4x | 4x | 4x | 4x |
| WP3.3.2 | Mid-Term Quality Monitoring Report delivery. | 12 | | | | | 4x | 4x | 4x | | | | | |
| WP3.4 | Quality assessment of training activities, policy & protocol papers, as well as the Piloting and Road-Mapping of Processes and Procedures for the Establishment of Accessibility Units (cont.). | 7 | | | 1x | 1x | | | | 1x | 1x | 1x | 1x | 1x |
| WP4.2 | Design Dissemination Products & Pilot Website | 36 | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= |
| WP 4.3.3 | Prepare the mid-term dissemination report | 6 | | | | | 2x | 4x | | | | | | |
| WP4.3.1 | Define agenda and logistics for the International Day of Disabled Person, the inclusive education awareness-raising campaign in High School and the civil society & implement the planned activities. | 4 | | | | | | | | | | | 2x | 2x |
| WP5.1 | Project Management (cont.) | 24 | 2x | 2x | 2x | 2x | 2x | 2x | 2x | 2x | 2x | 2x | 2x | 2x |
| WP5.2 | Mid-Term Managerial Report | 12 | | | | | 4x | 4x | 4x | | | | | |

**Table 6:** *Activities anticipated in Project Year 2 after the Master-Plan.*

| Ref.nr/ Sub-ref nr | Title | Total duration (number of weeks) | M1 | M2 | M3 | M4 | M5 | M6 | M7 | M8 | M9 | M10 | M11 | M12 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WP2.2.3 | Piloting and Road-Mapping of Processes and Procedures for the Establishment of Accessibility Units (cont.). | 24 | 4x | 4x | 4x | 4x | 4x | 4x | | | | | | |
| WP3.3.3 | Quality assessment of training activities, policy & protocol papers, as well as the Piloting and Road-Mapping of Processes and Procedures for the Establishment of Accessibility Units (cont.). | 8 | | | | | | 4x | 4x | | | | | |
| WP3.4 | Drafting, validating & approving Final Quality Monitoring Report & external expert's Quality Monitoring Report. | 10 | | | | | | | | 2x | 2x | 2x | 2x | 2x |
| WP4.2 | Design Dissemination Products & Pilot Website (cont.) | 36 | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= | 3x= |
| WP4.3.1 | Define agenda and logistics for the International Day of Disabled Person, the inclusive education awareness-raising campaign in High School and the civil society & implement the planned activities. | 4 | | | | | | | | | | | 2x | 2x |
| WP4.3.2 | Organize and host the project's final conference | 8 | | | | | | | | | 2x | 2x | 2x | 2x |
| WP 4.3.3 | Prepare the final dissemination report | 6 | | | | | | | | | | | 2x | 4x |
| WP5.1 | Project Management (cont.) | 24 | 2x | 2x | 2x | 2x | 2x | 2x | 2x | 2x | 2x | 2x | 2x | 2x |
| WP5.3. | External Evaluation & Audit | 8 | | | | | | | 4x | 4x | | | | |
| WP5.4 | Final Project Report | 10 | | | | | | | | | | 2x | 4x | 4x |

*Table 7: Activities anticipated in Project Year 3 after the Master-Plan.*

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## ANNEX 1
## INCLUSIVE HIGHER EDUCATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
## NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

Date: __.__.____

Higher Education Institution: _____

Respondent's Name & Surname: _____

*Please tick what applies*

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1.** | Has your HEI employed any staff with some form of officially recognized disability? | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **2.** | Is your HEI interested in recruiting students with disabilities and special needs (SDSN)? | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **3.** | *If YES, please continue…* has your HEI admitted any SDSN? | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| | *If YES …* How many? *If NO, please proceed to Question No. 4.* | **Number:** | | | |
| **4.** | Is your HEI familiar with the provisions of Law No. 93 / 24.07.2014, "On Inclusion and Accessibility of Persons with Disabilities", especially Articles 5.1 and 6.2.b, in conjunction with Law No. 80 / 21.05.2015 "On Higher Education in the Republic of Albania", Article 4.3? *If NO*, please proceed to Question No. 6. | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **5.** | Does your HEI translate these legal provisions in its statutory and regulatory documents? | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **6.** | Does your HEI have a Student Access and Inclusion Unit to support SDSN? | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **7.** | Does your HEI record the needs of SDSN? | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **8.** | Does your HEI provide accessible textbooks for SDSN? | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| | *If NO, please proceed to Question No. 10.*          *If YES, what kind?* | | | | |
| **8.1.** | Accessible Document (DOCX) | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **8.2.** | Accessible PDF | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **8.3.** | Digital Talking Book (DAISY 3) | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **8.4.** | Audio-MP3 textbooks | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **8.5.** | Braille-ready textbooks | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **8.6.** | Large-print-ready textbooks | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **9.** | Does your HEI provide access to Assistive Technology (AT) Solutions (open-source or freeware) for SDSN? | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **10.** | Does your HEI provide any accessibility guidelines and tools? | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **11.** | Has your HEI created any Volunteers Unit for SDSN? | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **12.** | Does your HEI provide a Video Relay Service for SDSN? | **YES** | | **NO** | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **13.** Does your HEI provide special transportation service to SDSN? | | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **14.** Does your HEI have a Psychological Counselling unit? | | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **15.** Does your HEI provide any Exams Accommodation facilities and services? | | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **16.** Has your HEI provided for Built Environment Accessibility to accommodate SDSN? | | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| *If NO, please proceed to Question No. 17*        *If YES, what kind?* | | | | | |
| **16.1.** | Ramps | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **16.2.** | Lifts | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **16.3.** | Handrails | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **16.4.** | Accessible Toilets | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **16.5.** | Special Signs for Visually Impaired People | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **16.6.** | Water Coolers for People with Disabilities | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **16.7.** | Car parking for SDSN? | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **17.** Does your HEI have an International Student Relations Office (ISRO)? | | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| *If NO, please proceed to Question No. 18*        *If YES…* | | | | | |
| **17.1.** Does the ISRO provide ERASMUS+ SDSN Mobility opportunities? | | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **18.** Does your HEI have a Careers Office (CO)? | | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| *If NO, please proceed to Question No. 19*        *If YES…* | | | | | |
| **18.1.** Does your CO provide special services and information to SDSN? | | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **19.** How satisfied are you with the inclusiveness and accessibility culture in your HEI? | | | | | |

| **Very Satisfied** | **Somehow Satisfied** | **Rather Dissatisfied** | **Much More Is Needed** |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |

**Thanking you for your participation**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Assoc. Prof. Konstantinos Giakoumis, Ph.D.** | **Elona Karafili, Ph.D.** | **Flora Krasniqi, MSc** |
| Deputy Dean, Faculty of R&D | Vice Rector | Head of Int'l Unit & Projects |
| POLIS University | POLIS University | POLIS University |

# INCLUSIVE HIGHER EDUCATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
## NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

Date: __.__.____

Higher Education Institution: _____

Respondent's Name & Surname: _____

*Please tick what applies*

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **20.** Has your HEI employed any staff with some form of officially recognized disability? | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **21.** Is your HEI interested in recruiting students with disabilities (SwD)? | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **22.** *If YES, please continue…* has your HEI admitted any SwD? | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| *If YES … How many? If NO, please proceed to Question No. 4.* | **Number:** | | | |
| **23.** Is your HEI familiar with the provisions of Law No. 04/L-037, 2011, On Higher Education in the Republic of Kosovo, Article 2.1.3, Law No. 04/L-092, 2012, On Blind Persons, Article 10 and Law No. 05/L-067, 2016, On the Status and Rights of Paraplegic and Tetraplegic Persons, Article 12 and the Strategic Objective No. 3 (and its limitations) of the 2013-2023 Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities? *If NO*, please proceed to Question No. 6. | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **24.** Does your HEI translate these legal provisions in its statutory and regulatory documents? | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **25.** Does your HEI have a Student Access and Inclusion Unit to support SwD? | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **26.** Does your HEI record the needs of SwD? | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **27.** Does your HEI provide accessible textbooks for SwD? | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| *If NO, please proceed to Question No. 10.*          *If YES, what kind?* | | | | |
| **8.1.** Accessible Document (DOCX) | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **8.2.** Accessible PDF | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **8.3.** Digital Talking Book (DAISY 3) | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **8.4.** Audio-MP3 textbooks | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **8.5.** Braille-ready textbooks | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **8.6.** Large-print-ready textbooks | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **28.** Does your HEI provide access to Assistive Technology (AT) Solutions (open-source or freeware) for SwD? | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **29.** Does your HEI provide any accessibility guidelines and tools? | **YES** | | **NO** | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **30.** Has your HEI created any Volunteers Unit for SwD? | | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **31.** Does your HEI provide a Video Relay Service for SwD? | | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **32.** Does your HEI provide special transportation service to SwD? | | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **33.** Does your HEI have a Psychological Counselling unit? | | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **34.** Does your HEI provide any Exams Accommodation facilities and services? | | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **35.** Has your HEI provided for Built Environment Accessibility to accommodate SwD? | | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| *If NO, please proceed to Question No. 17* | | *If YES, what kind?* | | | |
| **16.8.** | Ramps | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **16.9.** | Lifts | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **16.10.** | Handrails | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **16.11.** | Accessible Toilets | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **16.12.** | Special Signs for Visually Impaired People | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **16.13.** | Water Coolers for People with Disabilities | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **16.14.** | Car parking for SwD? | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **36.** Does your HEI have an International Student Relations Office (ISRO)? | | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| *If NO, please proceed to Question No. 18* | | *If YES…* | | | |
| **17.1.** Does the ISRO provide ERASMUS+ SwD Mobility opportunities? | | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **37.** Does your HEI have a Careers Office (CO)? | | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| *If NO, please proceed to Question No. 19* | | *If YES…* | | | |
| **18.1.** Does your CO provide special services and information to SwD? | | | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **38.** How satisfied are you with the inclusiveness and accessibility culture in your HEI? | | | | | |

| **Very Satisfied** | **Somehow Satisfied** | **Rather Dissatisfied** | **Much More Is Needed** |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |

**Thanking you for your participation**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Assoc. Prof. Konstantinos Giakoumis, Ph.D.** | **Elona Karafili, Ph.D.** | **Flora Krasniqi, MSc** |
| Deputy Dean, Faculty of R&D | Vice Rector | Head of Int'l Unit & Projects |
| POLIS University | POLIS University | POLIS University |

## ANNEX 3
# INCLUSIVE HIGHER EDUCATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
## NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

Date: __.__.____

Higher Education Institution: _____

Respondent's Name & Surname: _____

*Please tick what applies*

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **39.** Has your HEI employed any staff with some form of officially recognized disability? | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **40.** Is your HEI interested in recruiting students with disabilities (SwD)? | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **41.** *If YES, please continue…* has your HEI admitted any SwD? | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| *If YES* … How many? *If NO, please proceed to Question No. 4.* | **Number:** | | | |
| **42.** Is your HEI familiar with the provisions on students with disabilities set forth in Articles 6, 23.3, 90, 93 and 99 of the consolidated Law on Higher Education (Official Gazette of Montenegro, 44 / 21.10.2014, 52/16.12.2014, 47/18.08.2015, 40/30.06.2016, 42/30.06.2017), and Task 2.B of the Montenegro 2019-2025 Inclusive Education Strategy? *If NO*, please proceed to Question No. 6. | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **43.** Does your HEI translate these legal provisions and strategic dispositions in its statutory and regulatory documents? | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **44.** Does your HEI have a Student Access and Inclusion Unit to support SwD? | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **45.** Does your HEI record the needs of SwD? | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **46.** Does your HEI provide accessible textbooks for SwD? | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| *If NO, please proceed to Question No. 10.*      *If YES, what kind?* | | | | |
| **8.1.** Accessible Document (DOCX) | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **8.2.** Accessible PDF | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **8.3.** Digital Talking Book (DAISY 3) | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **8.4.** Audio-MP3 textbooks | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **8.5.** Braille-ready textbooks | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **8.6.** Large-print-ready textbooks | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **47.** Does your HEI provide access to Assistive Technology (AT) Solutions (open-source or freeware) for SwD? | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **48.** Does your HEI provide any accessibility guidelines and tools? | **YES** | | **NO** | |
| **49.** Has your HEI created any Volunteers Unit for SwD? | **YES** | | **NO** | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **50.** Does your HEI provide a Video Relay Service for SwD? | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **51.** Does your HEI provide special transportation service to SwD? | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **52.** Does your HEI have a Psychological Counselling unit? | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **53.** Does your HEI provide any Exams Accommodation facilities and services? | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **54.** Has your HEI provided for Built Environment Accessibility to accommodate SwD? | **YES** | **NO** | |
| *If NO, please proceed to Question No. 17*        *If YES, what kind?* | | | |
| **16.15.**   Ramps | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **16.16.**   Lifts | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **16.17.**   Handrails | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **16.18.**   Accessible Toilets | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **16.19.**   Special Signs for Visually Impaired People | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **16.20.**   Water Coolers for People with Disabilities | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **16.21.**   Car parking for SwD? | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **55.** Does your HEI have an International Student Relations Office (ISRO)? | **YES** | **NO** | |
| *If NO, please proceed to Question No. 18*        *If YES…* | | | |
| **17.1.** Does the ISRO provide ERASMUS+ SwD Mobility opportunities? | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **56.** Does your HEI have a Careers Office (CO)? | **YES** | **NO** | |
| *If NO, please proceed to Question No. 19*        *If YES…* | | | |
| **18.1.** Does your CO provide special services and information to SwD? | **YES** | **NO** | |
| **57.** How satisfied are you with the inclusiveness and accessibility culture in your HEI? | | | |

| **Very Satisfied** | **Somehow Satisfied** | **Rather Dissatisfied** | **Much More Is Needed** |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |

**Thanking you for your participation**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Assoc. Prof. Konstantinos Giakoumis, Ph.D.** | **Elona Karafili, Ph.D.** | **Flora Krasniqi, MSc** |
| Deputy Dean, Faculty of R&D | Vice Rector | Head of Int'l Unit & Projects |
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