



# Univers'Emploi

*Developing a support methodology for disabled students  
allowing to conjugate effectively academic success and access to employment*

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**Leonardo da Vinci**

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## Editorial: Univers'Emploi, the project

The growing number of students with disabilities in tertiary education has only a limited impact on their employment rate that has lowered in many EU states over the last years. Paradoxically many enterprises seeking to hire people with disabilities face difficulties in finding people with a university degree corresponding to their recruitment level. This is why it is of crucial importance to develop a pedagogical device for efficiently assisting people with disabilities in academic success and access to employment. That is why the "Univers'Emploi" project, led by the INS HEA institute (France), in collaboration with Savoir et Compétences Formation (France) for the implementation, and with the partnership of the University of Aarhus (Denmark), Trinity College Dublin (Ireland) and the University of Rome "Foro Italico" (Italy), is an innovative transfer project that builds on the strategy developed by the University of Aarhus (Denmark). This strategy includes support toward and within the employment of disabled students at the heart of its teaching. The expected gain from the implementation at the European level is found in the complementarity of a successful Danish experiment enriched by the French, Italian and Irish models.

So, the aim of this project, in each partner country, is to create a methodological guide and tools helping Universities to include the employment prospects of people with disabilities and to develop strategies allowing students to reconcile learning, employment and social life. As for enterprises, this project will allow creating University- Enterprise bridges via a better linkage between general education and professional education. To achieve these goals, this project will compare the Aarhus model with the practices of other partner countries and thus build a scalable and transferable methodology according to national contexts from an experiment with 20 students per country that mobilizes actors in the University, the world of business and, if necessary, the sector of vocational rehabilitation. The main products of this project will be: a methodological guide for volunteering Universities; training sessions for their staff involved; a pedagogical pack at the disposal of the organisations of enterprises that support students with disabilities; and a spreading out of documents and of the methodology.

**Bernadette CÉLESTE**  
Director of the INS HEA

## Programme of the project

### 1. End of 2010 – June 2011: "Modelization"

Analysis of the Danish model & adaptation to the other countries.

### 2. June 2011 – June 2012: "Experimentation"

Experiment of the support methodology in each of the 4 countries with the support of 20 disabled students per country.

### 3. October 2011 – September 2012: "Dissemination"

Capitalization & dissemination of the methodology in the national networks.

# Presentation of the partners

## INSHEA (France): Project Manager

INSHEA (National Higher Institute for Training and Research for the Education of Young Disabled Persons and Adapted Teaching) is an institute under the twofold supervision of the Ministries of National Education and Higher Education and Research in France. It works for the prevention of school difficulties and education of children, adolescents and adults with special educational needs. Its missions are:

1. Research on the education and schooling of pupils in a situation of disability or severe learning difficulties.
2. Training of the personnel working either for the National education system, special schools, the health sector, local authorities, disability counselling units, companies, members of associations or parents.
3. Expertise for the elaboration and implementation of educational and training policies.
4. Information on educational adaptation and disability gathered and distributed by the resource centre.

INSHEA Dean, Mrs Céleste, represents France within the European agency for development in special needs education,



whose mission is to promote research and innovation in this field.

INSHEA provides training programmes to teacher trainers, teachers and generally most people whose work is connected with the inclusive education of children or students in a situation of disability (Lebanon, Morocco, Russia, Haiti, etc.)

With the arrival of Prof. S. Ebersold, sociologist and specialist of the inclusion of disabled adults in France and abroad, INSHEA has recently developed research on the accessibility of disabled students

in higher education and occupational inclusion.

Faithful to its approach based on exchanges and international cooperation since the first European programme (Helios), INSHEA has managed several action research projects with a European dimension, such as the Leonardo project "Univers'Emploi".

For the INSHEA, the transnational project "Univers'Emploi" brings added value in terms of knowledge of other experiences and approaches, of the strengths and weaknesses of the national programmes that this analysis and the development of common and shared tools can improve.



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## Savoir et Compétence (France): Joint Manager

Association based in Alsace, the activities of Savoir et Compétence Formation (SCF) revolve around the following purpose: to support any initiative to promote the professional integration of disabled people and/or those



with a low level qualification. Manager of a centre for training, skills assessment and support of job seekers in their project of access to qualifications and employment, it has welcomed more than 800 people every year since 1990. In



parallel, the activity of social engineering has led SCF to initiate and sustain several action research projects with a European dimension, such as CERTIFIED EQUAL, INTERREG Demeter then CERTIRHIN or PROGRESS Lucus, and Univers'Emploi projects.

Collaboration with INS HEA, initiated through the project Univers'Emploi Racine (2010) has enabled the SCF team to provide its expertise in support of a public with disabilities, as well as 'in project engineering, and benefit from the expertise and knowledge of the INSHEA teams.

Through the Leonardo project Univers'Emploi opens the possibility for the team of SCF to go further

in developing a methodology to accompany the student with a disability into employment. The partnership built with the University of Strasbourg and in particular the "Mission Handicap" team and the orientation service "Espace Avenir", the INS HEA, the experiences of partners in Denmark, Italy and Ireland are an inexhaustible source of inspiration for developing an innovative methodology in France.

Besides, SCF is also a member of a social cooperation group, "Autonomie, Savoir et Compétences", and also administrator of a company of insertion, an adapted company and a centre of information and advice on technical aids.

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## Aarhus University: Key Partner

The mission of the Counselling and Support Centre is to facilitate learning oriented inclusion in education and society. In practice the Centre works as a service to students at Aarhus University with special needs in terms of counselling, guidance and support. Furthermore, the Centre has a contract with the University of Southern Denmark in Odense and also provides services

to a number of higher education institutions in

Denmark. Over the years, the Centre has created a professional environment with research based competencies within special educational counselling and teaching with a view to promoting the inclusion of students with study related difficulties in higher education.

The target group of the special educational effort is students with study related difficulties linked to physical disabilities, dyslexia, developmental disorders (ADHD, Asperger's syndrome, etc.), mental disorders, neurological disorders, ethnic background, as well as difficulties regarding the transition from education to the labour market. The basis of the

assessments is a concrete and specific estimation of the

possible support for the individual student with an eye to ensuring that the support effort is exhaustive individual and adjusted to the relevant subject and level.

The Centre has developed a special approach called academic support which has been applied since 2001. The concept



has been conceived as way of supporting students who experience difficulties with the academic learning required because of a physical, mental or psychosocial disability. The purpose is to improve the students' learning as well as to increase their learning competency.

The participation of our centre in the Leonardo project is an opportunity to strengthen the development of methods within professional special educational counselling and support targeted students with a disability in the transition from education to the labour market and in society in general.

This happens through active participation in a discussion of methods in which the CSC model and the experience and methods of the involved partners mutually qualify each other with a view to developing new methods in a European context. The development of strategies in terms of guidance, counselling and support as well as strategies for creating a necessary cooperation between universities and important stakeholders, including companies, NGOs, public employment services, etc constitute important elements in this process.

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## Trinity College Dublin: Partner

Trinity College Dublin (TCD) is recognized internationally as Ireland's premier university and is ranked in 52nd position in the top 100 world universities and 14th



**TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN**  
COLÁISTE NA TRÍONÓIDE, BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH

THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN

in Europe <sup>1</sup>. There were 16,807 registered students in 2009/10. TCD disability service was established in 2000. Numbers grew rapidly over the decade (circa 30%



a year) and in 2010, 800 students with disabilities attended TCD.

Trinity College Dublin now has the highest number of students with disabilities of any higher education college in Ireland (unpublished AHEAD survey, 2009). The TCD Disability Office employs seven full-time and two part-time staff. Its staffing includes an educational psychologist who provides a full screening service for students with learning disabilities and an AT Officer. Disability support officers work closely with academic liaison officers. Trinity College Dublin is engaged to developing the diversity and inclusiveness of its student body. The College facilitates access to its programmes by students from under-represented groups through its outreach activities, its foundation courses, and through its operation of alternative admissions routes.

The aims and objectives of the Disability Service (DS) are to:

- Embed disability issues into the culture of the University, thereby influencing the development of policies and practices.
  - Address the delivery of specific supports to students and staff with disabilities.
- TCD is committed to doubling the number of students with physical and sensory disabilities over the lifetime of the College Access Plan (2009-2013) and actively wants to develop clear transition strategies for students entering, progressing within and out in to the world of work. Trinity College Dublin will collaborate with a national strategic partner University College Cork in identifying the transition to employment model, which will work best for the Irish context. This will be trialed with twenty students from both Universities and the outcomes will be evaluated against the Leonardo criteria used with participating countries set.

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1. Position in the top 200 European universities by the QS World University Rankings 2010

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## University Foro Italico (Rome): Partner

In Italy, the reflection regarding the access to university of people with disabilities is developed more widely since the Public Law n. 104 of 1992, which established the importance of considering the life project of a student based on his school life.

But it's mainly in this last decade, spurred by the Public Law n. 17 of 1999, that the index of this segment of the

population in tertiary education has increased. In consequence of these measures, respecting the perspective of life project, in the same year, the Public Law n. 68 was fixed, which guaranteed

the placement of people with disability in the work market, abandoning the purely logic assistance and care of the Public Law 482 (1968) and setting a series of technical tools and supports for the persons with disabilities in workplaces.

The delegates of Italian Universities responsible on matters relating to persons with disability have developed guidelines that, among the several themes regarding their academic formation (Specialized Tutoring, Information Technology, Management of Students with Disability Centre,



Sensitization, Counselling, Pairs Tutoring, International Mobility), worried about their job placement process through the initiatives of universities themselves, namely: a) create a complete database about the students with disabilities enrolled; b) to organize meetings with the aim of empowering; c) stimulate the acquisition of professional skills; d) to organize internships in universities and regional companies; e) contacting employment services and regional companies; f) to verify the accessibility of the companies and provide consulting about necessary adaptations in the work place; g) meet the demand and supply of work.

The University of Rome "Foro Italico" intends to show, with this project, how

to tackle the problem of work inclusion of students with disabilities through a plan of scientific research which since 2000 has started at this same university with an educational focus centered on the person and not on the disability.

The laboratory of Didactics and Special Education, Internship Projects, Erasmus Placement (with scholarships abroad), through the "Tutorato Specializzato" has allowed to begin an individualized planning, able to promote the skills of the students and enable them to learn through the experience gained, in a wider working context, supported by an inclusive vision that the university aim to create and transfer into the territory.

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