



2017-1-FR01-KA202-037386

Participation in the local community. Key to inclusion

Focus Group - Palau de Pedralbes

There was from the beginning of the group meeting a general consensus in that the main barrier to a professional life for persons with disabilities start in their cultural and social environment.

Although all agreed in the skills and competences pointed out by the focus group questionnaire, they were very keen in suggesting others which they believe must be essential for professional careers to have in order to give the quality care the project proposes. And above all; induce disabled persons to the conviction that they can have a professional career or activity as part of the holistic life.

On the other hand they believe that the family environment attitude is essential for the professional growth and talent development without any type of complex. They propose further research which should be proposed to ERASMUS+ project to analyse the route of this influence, as well as to develop mechanism to reach the social network that surrounds disabled persons and transform their present behaviour. In order to open the way for disabled persons to enjoy on equal basis, a professional life.

Conclusions of the Focus Group

The participants are members of the board of Artistas Diversos. Therefore their experience in the promotion of artists with disability make this group a very competent one to evaluate the skills and abilities of the professionals that care for members of this community.

Another important profile of this group is that two of them have disabled son and daughter, which make their opinions and comment have a very deep understanding of the proposed objective of the CLAP HANDS project

The situation for the disabled community was highlighted in order to focus on the importance that the development of this population has for the sustainability of the social, political and economic environment.



2017-1-FR01-KA202-037386

Evaluation of Technical Competences and Social Skills by focus group participants.

In general the participants found very important for professionals that care for disabled persons to have. As well as the need to develop these skills and abilities in time

So the items proposed by the project were mainly evaluated very highly.

Social Skills

Attitude is a social skill that participants understand must be key characteristic of all professionals and careers that give support to disabled persons. They must truly have the attitude that disability features can be taken care off in order to improve quality of life of members of this community. But above all they must have the sincere attitude and belief that most difficulties of certified disabled persons do not stop them completely for developing a talent they make have. Develop an activities they particularly like. And develop this activity or talent as a profession. The participants believe that transmitting this attitude and belief is key to the promotion of a full life which includes the capacity to work or at least to have a profession they can focus in doing.

Getting to know the persons they give support to through evaluating them through their own nearness and experience, is a standard basic ability these professional must have in order to connect with the persons they give support to in a professional manner.

Treat and value persons with mobility or mental problems in the same manner as any other person because they have the right to be respected and appreciated. Very often persons with disabilities have other abilities which are more relevant than ordinary people have. Now is the time that society is understanding the possibility for these persons to develop a professional ability. And to do so, self confidence on the part of the professionals and well as of the disabled persons is vital.



2017-1-FR01-KA202-037386

Although not all are optimistic regarding this advance. And denounce the existing gap in including disabled persons disregarding their limitations in some areas. And not allowing recognitions of their exception abilities in other areas of behavior.

There is a slow but growing awareness that persons with disabilities make the environment richer as they bring new ways of thinking and acting. Make evident new needs is the area of accessibility for example. Accessibility that not only them, but also help other profile of society. Taking care of the needs of this community is a source of economic groups as new organizations and new companies must grow to service their needs, and create needs of other sectors of the population.

Other social skills are patience, constant effort and spirit of sacrifice in the rout to achieve this shared objective. Shared by the professional as well as by the disabled person they are guiding into labor life .

Participants find compulsory for professional careers to have self-confidence emotional ability. The capacity to control and regulate their emotions when reacting to the progress of the persons they care for, as well as regulate their feeling in moment of lack of progress.

Self-confidence has to be transmitted to the disabled person they care for in order to really give quality support to their life progress.

There is an important need for disabled persons to incorporate in the social network of their environment. But this they cannot do it by themselves. Is the responsibility of the professionals that give them support to channel their inclusion into society. And bring them out of the closed world that historically has been reserved for persons with different profiles and problems who have been considered not capable of leading a full life. Today technology, medicine, education, communications is opening a new world for members of this community. Join sport teams or art groups, or other networks depending on what they life and can do.



2017-1-FR01-KA202-037386

A rare combination of empathy, understanding, personal development that make a unique combination to enjoy their work helping persons that need their help and depend on their abilities to develop professional abilities in life and not simply wait for carers to give them basic help. Their work must be vocational in order to transmit the true believe that these persons can develop beyond what they do not even have hoped for.

It would be ideal for these professionals to truly love their work and give professional care to members of this community

It is vital to create a professional itinerary and of labor insertion, in the same manner that the rest of the population does to plan their life and development. Evidently not all can develop professionally and join a company and earn a salary or get an income from the work they do. But it is desirable that disabled persons are helped to find their way to development activities for which they have capabilities and aspire to have income from their work. The point is that they feel useful in society, that they make a contribution and this contribution is appreciated.

Another key issue deeply shared is that the base of all the present attitude toward disability is the family. The social culture of the family and the stereotype of normal and disabled that is transmitted. The question is how to reach the families with this message. Probably not through a training program as they may consider that they do not have to attend.

The suggestion is to propose a research under a new ERASMUS+ project to study the behaviour of the family towards this issue, that will allow organisations to develop effective project to help family member to assume that their relatives with disabilities can have the possibility to develop a professional life. And to promote the participation of disabled persons in the community activities. Creating a network of support beyond their usual carers..



2017-1-FR01-KA202-037386

Technical competences

Participants of the focus group also agreed in that the 4 technical competencies singled out by the questionnaire were essentially- and not simply important - for a professional caring for disabled persons must have and acquire.

The participants share the opinion that mentoring the disabled persons into a working environment is essential. Helping them to understand the new environment they incorporate into as they join an organization with other workers. But even more important is to help the fellow workers to accept, include and value the contribution that a colleague with physical or mental problems can give to the group.

The objective is teaching how to **focus on the VALUE** the disabled candidate and contribute to the group from the perspective of his/her diverse profile; rather than **focus on the disability** trait a one that impedes the persons from any type of contribution to the organization.

Therefore participants find fundamental to have the right attitude of development and not overprotecting; take care of all the elements necessary in their surroundings; and carry out all treatments in a professional manner.

Therefore the importance of professional mentoring to give them support if the development of skills and competences; in the inclusion into working environments; and above all sustain this mentoring support and the life venture takes them from one type of activity to another so that they do not lose their self-confidence.

It is key for these professionals to transmit self confidence to the disabled persons they care for. And develop training skills that these persons must acquire in order to learn how to “sell themselves and their unique contributions and value” when applying for a job, or when interacting in the organizations where they work.

Organizations must select and reward on the basis of talent and not discriminate on the basis of any type of diversity profile. And when recruiting a candidate with disability to work in the company they must fo



2017-1-FR01-KA202-037386

so with the objective of bringing into the organization the talent that they can contribute to the company and their workers And not as a Social Corporate Responsibility issue.

How to reach organizations with this message is vital to achieve professional inclusion of disabled persons into the work market

A suggestion is for media to create 15 seconds video clips with striking cases that become viral in the social and professional networks and create the desired awareness

Another suggestion to reach parents and the society in general is to create a communication campaign is to promote and give visibility to the conduct of well known personalities of the cultural and business world that treat their disabled children in a very standard manner. Consider them champions of disabled diversity. Proud of their possibilities to develop and making them visible wherever they go. This conduct emulates other parents to start treating their children on equal terms as they do other daughters and sons they may have. With a demanding attitude that gives them the belief that they can and will progress in life.

A unanimous proposition on the part of the group is the need to activity address the Administration to change the pension system for persons with certified disabilities in Spain. Maybe it is not the case in other EU countries. But the pensions this community receives in Spain is a major barrier for the professional development of persons with disabilities. The pensions are very low, which do not guarantee a sustained quality of life to these persons if this is their sole income. And on the other hand the system does not allow they have extra incomes beyond 11.000€ a year including the pension they receive If this is the case, the disabled pensionist loses his/her pension. And this is something that the family is not prepared to sacrifice even if it is a small amount (180€ a month, or 389 € a month the highest, except for those who receive pension for total irreversible disabilities which can reach 500€ or more depending on the health problem and the family income)



2017-1-FR01-KA202-037386

The proposal is to sponsor a campaign to force the administration to modify the system which presently is a major barrier. It is also the cause of 1.800 unemployed in the labor market. Persons that really are not looking for a job because they are not prepared to loose their pensions, no matter how small it is. The suggestion is for the administration to allow all

disabled persons to have limited extra incomes without loosing their pension. The argument is that this community will grow, will contribute to the social security system as self employed or employed by companies, and of course will pay income tax on their earnings.

General comments and contribution on the part of the focus group participants

Again it is import to emphasize that the participants opinion is that all the subjects brought up in the focus group to be evaluation are all of basic importance for any professional that care for disabled persons must equally have.

There is a general consensus in that they would like to participate in a follow –up of the theme and objectives of this project

Professional that care for persons with disabilities must carry out their work with patience, conviction, attitude and passion for what they do and can achieve. With the contextual understanding of the social, political and economic impact that this population has in the country and European scenario. A scenario with dramatic generational curve, Europe cannot afford not leveraging the capabilities and contributions of 13% of its population. And Spain cannot afford disregarding 14.5% of its population.

Education is a core issue to be addressed urgently in order to achieve total inclusion of the disabled community into social and professional life in the country. When addressing this issue there is a classification that should be considered.



2017-1-FR01-KA202-037386

The project addresses the care that must be given to persons with disabilities or reduces abilities or mobilizes, not to persons who having the potential capacity to carry out in life, do not advance for lack of interest, personal effort or negative culture.

In spite of the fact that all participants are highly involved in the promotion of disabled persons through the arts as a profession; all admit that the focus group content and exercise has been for them a learning process.

Education, as the participants emphasis, is set by the family environment. Accepting and inclusive disabilities is learned early in life as the family sets stereotype of what is right or wrong in their environment . therefore adult education is critically needed. School education is basic. As in school children and later students of upper grades must learn not only geography and mathematics, but more important, to communicate and interact with classmates of all different profiles. Bulling is a disease of this era in the education system. Where discrimination against disabled classmate is the cause of lack of progress of members of this community. Therefore teachers and professors must play a critical role in educating the art of inclusion of all profiles, particularly the less favored which are the children with disabilities.

Disabled persons should be involved in working with training to make more effective the message and learning process of the training programme. As well as they could act as mentors whenever possible particularly if they have had a professional inclusion experience.

Learning to value what persons with disability can offer is of extreme importance. Just take as example Steven Hopkins. The most brilliant brain in the world capable of understanding and explaining to the rest of humanity the genesis the universe. Trapped in the most disabled body. Persons with autisms to who extraordinary in mathematics. Mobility disabled professional in information technology. The most brilliant artists in history have been disabled: Leonardo da Vinci, Beethoven, Mozart, Munch, Van Gogh, Goya, Cervantes.....

The group insists in that persons considered disabled by society can have extraordinary talent which should be recognized and respected.



CLAP HANDS
ACCESS TO PROFESSION FOR PERSONS WITH HANDICAP

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



2017-1-FR01-KA202-037386