

## Activities Completed During the PACES Project

The overall aim of the PACES project was to progress and set up a programme of initiatives in universities in Egypt and Morocco to support the modernisation of higher education by developing Accessibility Centres (physical, mobile and virtual) that will enable students with disabilities to access assistive technology and support services such as counselling and peer support. Through these centres and the national employer/university networks, students with disabilities will be able to gain employability and transition skills in order to move forward into employment.

This document summarises the activities completed within each work package of the project.

### Work Package 1: Needs Analysis and Transfer of Knowledge

- 1.1 A needs analysis was completed, including focus groups held with students with disabilities in the Egyptian and Moroccan universities.
- 1.2 All partners shared knowledge about good practice in supporting students with disabilities.
- 1.3 The report PACES – Needs Analysis Report and Examples of Good Practice was written using data from the needs analysis and the knowledge sharing events.
- 1.4 The relationships between universities and employers at the start of the project was mapped and used as a starting point for network activities.

### Work Package 2: Establishment of Accessibility Centres

- 2.1 Partner universities designed new Accessibility Centres, and progressed/improved existing Centres, for their students with disabilities.
- 2.2 The Accessibility Centres were equipped with assistive technology, trained staff, and support services.

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2.3 A Virtual Accessibility Centre was created and integrated into the main project website.

2.4 Mobile/pop-up Accessibility Centres were developed in Egypt and Morocco, which visited other campuses, community spaces, and schools to publicise the work of PACES.

### **Work Package 3: Progression of Training**

3.1 Designed a training handbook, used as the framework for the development of training sessions in partner universities in Egypt and Morocco.

3.2 Train-the-trainer workshops were held at EU partner universities. These trainers adapted the guidance to make it relevant to their own institutions, and cascaded the training to teaching and administrative staff, students and employers.

3.3 Students, both with and without disabilities, were trained using the handbook. Some of these students also signed up as peer support volunteers (see below).

3.4 Training was provided to employers to help them to improve the working environment for people with disabilities.

3.5 A quantitative evaluation of all training provided in partner universities was completed.

### **Work Package 4: Network of Universities and Employers**

4.1 Employment Accessibility Mentors were recruited in Egypt and Morocco, to support the development of relationships between universities and employers.

4.2 Round Tables and Employability Workshops were held in partner universities with employers from industry, charities, and government.

4.3 National networks of universities and employers were created in Egypt and Morocco. As part of this, a guidance document (charter) for the employment of people with disabilities was developed and shared with regional and national employer organisations.

4.4 Partner universities have worked with employers to build lists of work placements for students with disabilities, and organisations which will be potential employers after graduation.

### **Work Package 5: Student Supporters Scheme – Peer-to-Peer**

5.1 New policies for peer-to-peer student support schemes were developed, tailored to each university's context, and ratified by university management.

5.2 Volunteer student supporters, both with and without disabilities, were recruited in each university and provided with information and training on how to best support their peers.

5.3 Each university has developed individual student peer support pages, accessible by students with disabilities and by the student support volunteers.

### **Work Package 6: Quality, Monitoring and Sustainability**

6.1 An internal quality group was set up to monitor the ongoing quality of the project and its management.

6.2 Internal quality reports have been produced, based on feedback from all partners.

6.3 An external quality expert was engaged and has completed two detailed evaluation reports on the quality, sustainability, and management of the project.

6.4 All partners have contributed to planning for the sustainability of the project, working to ensure that the positive impact which has been delivered can be continued beyond the life of the project.

### **Work Package 7: Dissemination and Exploitation of the Project**

7.1 A project website was created and will continue to be maintained as part of the project's sustainability, showcasing events and resources relevant to people with disabilities in education and employment, university staff, and employers.

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7.2 A web library of resources has been included as part of the website; combined with the virtual accessibility centre, this page provides a range of resources including information about software, support organisations, and training materials.

7.3 Several national and international events took place as part of the project, focusing on the technology and legislative support available for people with disabilities in education and employment. Two final conferences took place in Morocco and Egypt, which were very well attended by employers, charity organisations, and government representatives.

7.4 A variety of dissemination materials were created, including banners, leaflets, and social media accounts.

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