

2nd International Conference for Persons with disabilities: the role of entrepreneurship, Accessibility Centers and assistive technologies towards full inclusion

(IC-PACES) – Hybrid Edition Conference – 6th & 7th of March 2021

This edition of the Conference with Persons with Disabilities is an output from the PACES Project which was built upon the SWING project. The first conference was held on November 2015 at [AASTMT](#) Alexandria Main Campus under the title of “**the International Conference for Sustainable Ways on Integration of Persons with Disabilities in the Labor Market using Assistive Technologies: (IC-SWING)**”. The first conference was organized by [AASTMT](#) in partnership with the [Egyptian Ministry of Communications and Information Technology](#) and in cooperation with the SWING project that was funded by the EU and the British Consulate-General.

The 2nd International Conference for Persons with disabilities (PwD) under the slogan of the role of Entrepreneurship, Accessibility Centers and Assistive Technologies towards Full Inclusion, (IC-PACES), is organized by the [Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport \(AASTMT\)](#), under the patronage of the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, the [Egyptian Ministry of Education and Technical Education](#), [Egyptian Ministry of Social Solidarity](#), [Egyptian Minister of Youth and Sports](#), and within the framework of the PACES Project: **Progression of Accessibility Centres in higher Education for Students with disabilities in North Africa**, which is co-funded by the European Commission under the Erasmus+ Programme for Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE).

This hybrid edition of the conference focused on:

- 1.** Knowledge building and launching awareness campaigns for all the stakeholders concerned with the inclusion of students with disabilities (SwD) and the rights of persons with disabilities (PwD).
- 2.** Raising awareness about the Accessibility Centres (AC) in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), Assistive Technologies (AT) and the Employers’ Network.
- 3.** The necessity of training for employment and entrepreneurship for SwD.

IC-PACES Conference Themes:

1. The rights for Persons with disabilities (PwD) in the legal legislations and international covenants.
2. Disability between genetics and medical interventions.
3. Media strategies for handling the PwD issues.
4. The role of assistive technology in inclusive education for the PwD.
5. Social responsibility towards PwD.
6. Success stories from Students & Persons with disabilities.

The conference was held in a Hybrid Edition (On-Campus & Online through Zoom Platform), on **6th & 7th of March 2021**. During the conference, there was be many sessions - presented by Keynote speakers from Europe, Egypt and Morocco - related to disability issues and good practices. Likewise, there was many Panel Discussions about the role of civil society, corporate social responsibility towards PwD, success stories from SwD/PwD, an Assistive Technology Exhibition and Work Groups (Round Table Discussions) for exchanging ideas for collaboration, education, and employment opportunities, as well as disseminating the PACES project results.



Written by: Dr. Ahmed Khalifa Mehanna

Based on the IC-PACES [Conference Agenda](#) that published on the [conference website](#) the program of the IC-PACES conference started with the Registration Process at 10:00 AM Cairo Time as indicated below,:



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IC- PACES Conference Summary Report

Day 1: Saturday 6th of March 2021

<u>Place:</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The speeches were held online through Zoom Platform Offline in the Conference Hall Presidential Building - Abu Qir in AASTMT, Alexandria, Egypt
<u>YouTube</u>	<p><u>Zoom Recording Link:</u> The Zoom recording link of the first day;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> https://youtu.be/Jx-lHn0wChA <p><u>Conference Hall Recording Playlist Link</u> The Hall recording Playlist of the first day;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLF3TmI8G7Zyrt1MrwddLDV_OP6ndE1nvo
<u>Zoom:</u>	<p><u>Webinar Meeting ID: 93355958293</u> The Zoom Meeting link of the first day;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zoom Meeting Link https://zoom.us/j/93355958293
<u>Website:</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> https://www.ic-paces.org/
<u>Facebook</u> <u>&</u> <u>Twitter</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> https://www.facebook.com/pacesswd https://www.facebook.com/groups/571115283065092/ https://twitter.com/PacesSwd
<u>Photos</u>	<p><u>IC-PACES Conference Registration Photos Link:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> https://www.facebook.com/100865862045557/posts/143853417746801/?sfnsn=scwspmo <p><u>Day 1 Panel Discussions & Sessions Photos Link:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> https://www.facebook.com/100865862045557/posts/143988577733285/?sfnsn=scwspmo https://www.facebook.com/100865862045557/posts/121533116645498/?sfnsn=scwspmo



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Opening Speeches of IC-PACES Conference

<u>Time:</u>	12:15 PM (Duration – 72:40 mins), on Saturday 6 th of March 2021
<u>YouTube</u>	<p><u>Zoom Recording Link:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/Jx-IHn0wChA <p><u>Conference Hall Recording Link</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/s0uqiEmZSo0 • https://youtu.be/khkx34n9dCw • https://youtu.be/e4xJ9wZ7bug • https://youtu.be/rPXiluEUVZo • https://youtu.be/BiJKsEYqD54
<u>Facebook</u> & <u>Twitter</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.facebook.com/pacesswd • https://www.facebook.com/groups/571115283065092/ • https://twitter.com/PacesSwd
<u>Photos</u>	<p><u>Opening Session Photos Link:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.facebook.com/100865862045557/posts/143858827746260/?sfnsn=scwspmo
<u>Presenter</u>	<p>The opening session was presented by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Dr. Ahmed Khalifa Mehanna</u> Lead of PACES Team Project at AASTMT Vice Dean of Student Affairs, AASTMT, Alexandria, Egypt • <u>Eng. Karim Hamdy</u> Acting National Erasmus+ Coordinator, Erasmus+ Office, Egypt • <u>Prof. Jacqueline Cawston</u> Giant Steps! – An Overview of the EU PACES Project Coventry University, UK: (PACES Project Coordinator) • <u>H.E. Prof. Dr. Ismail Abdel Ghaffar Ismail Farag</u> President of AASTMT & Charmian of the IC-PACES Conference • <u>H.E. Prof. Dr. Ahmed Gaber Shedid</u> President of Fayoum University, Egypt. • <u>H.E. Dr. Nivine El-Qabbage</u> Minister of the Egyptian Social Solidarity

The summary of the IC-PACES Conference Opening Session:

Dr. Ahmed Khalifa Mehanna – Lead of PACES Team Project, and Vice Dean of Student Affairs at AASTMT, Alexandria, Egypt.

Dr. Ahmed Mehanna started by welcomes and appreciates the conference honorable platform with their positions, honorary speakers, all the honorable VIP guests and attendees whether in the hall or through the Online (Zoom Platform) at the opening ceremony of the IC-PACES Conference. He then follows up by introducing the conference as the second international conference for persons with disabilities taking on the role of entrepreneurship, and full inclusiveness.



Dr. Mehanna following up by introducing the aim of the IC-PACES conference as this is the Second International Conference for Persons with Disabilities under the slogan of the role of Entrepreneurship, Accessibility Centers and Assistive Technologies towards Full Inclusion, (IC-PACES), which is organized by AASTMT, under the patronage of the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, the Egyptian Ministry of Social Solidarity, the Egyptian Ministry of Education and Technical Education, the Egyptian Minister of Youth and Sports, and this Conference organized within the framework of the PACES Project: which is co-funded by the EU under the Erasmus+ Programme and he thanked H. E. Dr. Nivine El-Qabbage, the Minister of the Egyptian Social Solidarity for her attendance and supporting the Conference, and then he indicated that this edition of the conference will revolve around as following Topics:

- Building the knowledge and awareness campaigns for all concerned stakeholders to integrate the students with disabilities (SwD) and the persons with disabilities (PwD).
- Discussing the rights of persons with disabilities (PwD).
- The importance of the Assistive Technology, Accessibility Centres in the Universities and the educational environments.
- The necessity of the Training for SwD/PwDs to meet the skills criteria required by companies to hire them in appropriate jobs.
- How to include PwD's and have them be entrepreneurs.
- Role of medical and media coverage on the topic of people with disabilities

He then continues to thank the president of AASTMT for the full support of the conference and his fellow teammates from the Faculty members to the Administrators to the Students. Finally, he finished by thanking the European Commission especially Erasmus+ Programme for funding the PACES Project. Then he introduced Eng. Karim Hamdy to present his speech.



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Eng. Karim Hamdy (Acting National Erasmus+ Coordinator, National Erasmus+ Office, Egypt)

Beginning his speech by thanking the guests, EU, Erasmus+ Programme, PACES Project Team and those responsible persons for organizing the conference during these difficult circumstances, Eng. Karim expresses gratitude in witnessing the success in conferences related to such topics. “We support all high diploma educational institutions,” he stated the next calls will opening in October 2021 and he invited the faculty members to continue such projects. Finally, he concluded his speech with a brief mention and thanks for the kind invitation.



*Then Dr. Ahmed Mehanna introduced **Prof. Jacqueline Cawston** to present his speech about **the Giant Steps! – An Overview of the EU PACES Project during the project lifetime.***

Prof. Jacqueline Cawston – Co-Director, Centre for Postdigital Cultures, Professor of Immersive Culture and Heritage, PACES Project Coordinator, Coventry University, UK

Prof. Jacqueline Cawston started her presentation with Honorary Speakers (H.E. Dr. Nivine El-Qabbage, Minister of Egyptian Social Solidarity, Prof. Ahmed Gaber, President of Fayoum University, and H.E. Prof. Dr. Ismail Abdel Ghaffar Ismail Farag, President of AASTMT), she thanked all of Esteemed Speakers and guests and then Prof. Jacqueline Cawston made a special thanks to Dr. Ahmed Khalifa Mehanna and all of the committee at Arab Academy for organizing the conference, and to all of the PACES partners for working so hard, over the last three years and she thanks to all of the participants, and to all of you for joining the conference today, and especially to the European Union Erasmus+ programme for funding the PACES project and for making it all possible.



Prof. Jacqueline Cawston proceeded to state “according to the World Health Organization in 2020 there will be more than 1 billion people in the world who live with some form of disability and are still increasing day by day”. She stated that in 2017 with the project partners we started the PACES project TO TRY TO CHANGE THIS. Today, this conference allows us to celebrate our work over the last three years and to work with the ministries, the universities, the employers, the employers organizations and, of course the **students**, to discuss how we can take this further.

She introduces the topic she’ll discuss, the impact the conference made. She first briefly mentions a background on PACES Project and ERASMUS+ programme and history of writing process of PACES project with Arab Academy which follows on from SWING and MUSE projects as well as the focus of ALL of these projects is to increase access to University, for Students with Disabilities and then they talked about the aims and objectives of PACES Project as follows:

1. Transfer of good practice assessing needs and making recommendations.
2. Build and progress the accessibility centers and 3 were already set up from the Swing project.
3. Build on the Swing training to create a training handbook.
4. Establish an employer network and mentors in business.
5. Develop student peer-to-peer networks.

Giant Steps! The PACES Project



Professor, Dr Jacqueline Cawston, PhD, MBA,
CEIGHE
 Co-Director, Research Centre for Postdigital Cultures



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Prof. Jacqueline Cawston talked about the knowledge and borrow good practices between the Project Partners from Europe, Egypt and Morocco and their helping each other also about the well-balanced project where different universities bring their different skills and experiences to the mix.

Prof. Cawston talked about the PACES Project team, needs and the entire WPs of the project especially about the need analysis, accessibility centres, training, volunteers, employers, sustainability, communication, management and Obstacles, and she focused in her talk about the Dissemination WP and how the dissemination leading to Impacts, Prof. Jacqueline Cawston opinion that “dissemination is the gateway to impact”. After stating a few of the impacts PACES has, Prof. Cawston mentions the main objective “to set up a system and a program to support the modernization of higher education by developing Accessibility Centers so that students can access support services and move through education into employment for further study”. Prof. Cawston finally concludes her presentation with an ambition that the “legacy of PACES will be to create a more just, equal and diverse society”.

Then Dr. Ahmed Mehanna introduced H.E. Prof. Dr. Ismail Abdel Ghaffar Ismail Farag, the President of AASTMT & IC-PACES Conference Chairman to present his speech.



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H.E. Prof. Dr. Ismail Abdel Ghaffar Ismail Farag – President of AASTMT & IC-PACES Conference Chairman

H.E. Prof. Dr. Ismail Abdel Ghaffar Ismail Farag the President of AASTMT and Conference Chairman started his talk by welcoming all guests and attendees for their attendance at the IC-PACES Conference and he said that “People with disabilities are a huge part of our society and it is essential to be attentive to their needs” and this appears in the appreciation to the care and support the president Abdel Fattah El Sisi shows towards people with disability. AASTMT is one of the organizations of Arab League and is responsible for training, education, and research and consulting. Prof. Dr. Ismail Farag, then, explains how all courses in AASTMT are accredited internationally, i.e. College of Engineering have ABET, Architecture Department have RIBA, and Marine Engineering have ZIVA and IMO and several more and he talked about the funds submitted by the European Commission especially the Erasmus+ Programme and the projects that AASTMT involved in like PACE Project. He then emphasizes on how vital it is for all colleges and educational institutions to cooperate to help provide sufficient education for people with disabilities and for their inclusion. “They can,” he adds. Prof. Dr. Ismail Farag concluded his talk that the advancement is a result of knowledge and education.



Then Dr. Ahmed Mehanna introduced H.E. Prof. Dr. Ahmed Gaber Shedid, the President of Fayoum University to present his speech.

H.E. Prof. Dr. Ahmed Gaber Shedid – President of Fayoum University

Starts by expressing gratitude and appreciation for his presence in this international conference. Proceeds to welcome all guests and attendees. Welcomes everyone to the 2nd International Conference for Persons with disabilities. The goal of the conference is to call for raising the potential of people with disabilities and discovering their hidden talents and to improve their skills. The Egyptian constitution incorporates several articles that guarantee the rights of people with disabilities in all life matters, and also includes that they should be well presented in all legislative councils.

He mentions that the president of Egypt, Abdelfattah ElSisi, initiated Tahya Misr fundraising for persons with disabilities and participated with what adds up to be one-hundred million Egyptian pounds. Abdelfattah ElSisi, also, assigned five-hundred million Egyptian pounds from Tahya Misr fundraising headed to the ministry of education to support the educational needs of students with disabilities. It is now that ministries are working hard to provide a better life for people with disabilities. Furthermore, a disability pension is officially in action. Prof. Ahmed Shedid introduces Fayoum University as the main partner in this initiative and acknowledges the progress the university undergoes towards the inclusion of Students with disability. Fayoum University has the first training institution for the disabled. Prof. Shedid concludes his talk by a request that affairs that raise awareness be an occasional occurrence.



Then Dr. Ahmed Mehanna introduced H.E. Dr. Nivine El-Qabbage, the Minister of Social Solidarity in Egypt to present her speech.

H.E. Dr. Nivine El-Qabbage – Minister of Social Solidarity in Egypt

To begin her talk, Dr. Nivine expresses appreciation for her presence in such a vital conference, she then welcomes everyone from guests and attendees. Dr. Nivine then shows gratitude to the international support and collaboration. She starts her speech by recognizing the responsibility of authorities and society towards people with disabilities and follows by saying that “people with disabilities are to be supported not pitied”. Dr. El-Qabbage mentions how “Egypt is one of the first countries to sign the document of inclusion of people with disabilities”.

She discusses how it is essential to start taking action and not only talking, and stresses that it should start now. At the same time, Dr. Nivine believes that as important as it is to progress fast, as it is to take time to plan these steps carefully to make it an everlasting reality. To help provide for their objective; the country initiated the National Fund for the Disabled, which successfully helped in starting training programs and taking other steps towards inclusion. Dr. El-Qabbage ends her speech by a call to raise awareness in the society towards people with disabilities and their needs.



Then Dr. Ahmed Mehanna thanked **H.E. Dr. El-Qabbage, the Minister of Social Solidarity in Egypt** for her attendance and supporting the IC-PACES Conference, and he is looking forward to implement the conference recommendations. Finally Dr. Mehanna asked the Minister, the AASTMT President and the other VIP Guests for taken a Group Photo.



المؤتمر الدولي الثاني للأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة الذي أقيم بالأكاديمية العربية

IC-PACES Group Photo after the Opening Session – on 6th of March 2021

P.S. The time from 01:30 PM to 02:30 PM was for the opening of the Companies Exhibition and the Media coverage with the Minister, AASTMT President and the other attendees.

Written by : Ms. Maryam Abu Halima
Reviewed by : Eng. Mootaz Anany
: Dr. Ahmed Mehanna



[Opening of the Companies Exhibition during the IC-PACES Conference](#)

The ICPACES Companies Exhibition

The below link include the Photos of the IC-PACES Conference Companies Exhibition that were held at the AASTMT Main Campus, Alexandria, Egypt on 6th & 7th of March 2021.

<https://www.facebook.com/100865862045557/posts/143914181074058/?sfnsn=scwspmo>



PACES SwD

Published by [Ahmed Khalifa Mehanna](#) · 26 April at 21:05 · 🌐

The #ICPACES Companies Exhibition

#the_2nd_International_Conference_for_Persons_with_Disabilities - Album Photos of IC-PACES Conference Companies Exhibition on 6th & 7th of March 2021 at #AASTMT Main Campus, #Alexandria, #Egypt

PACES SwD

PACES

#PACESSwD_Everywhere

#PACES_Everywhere

AASTMT Public Relations & Communications

AAST Regional Informatics Center

AAST Entrepreneurship Center

Coventry University

Erasmus+

Coventry University International



Session Topic: How to hire People with Disabilities

<u>Time:</u>	<u>02:28 PM (Duration – 16:22 mins),</u> on Saturday 6 th of March 2021
<u>YouTube</u>	<u>Zoom Recording Link:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/Jx-lHn0wChA <u>Conference Hall Recording Link:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/gpD84t3jUUG
<u>Presenter</u>	<u>The online session was presented by;</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. Lefkothea Kartasidou Associate Professor, University of Macedonia, Greece. • Ms. Pagona Leonidou Ph. D Student, University of Macedonia, Greece.

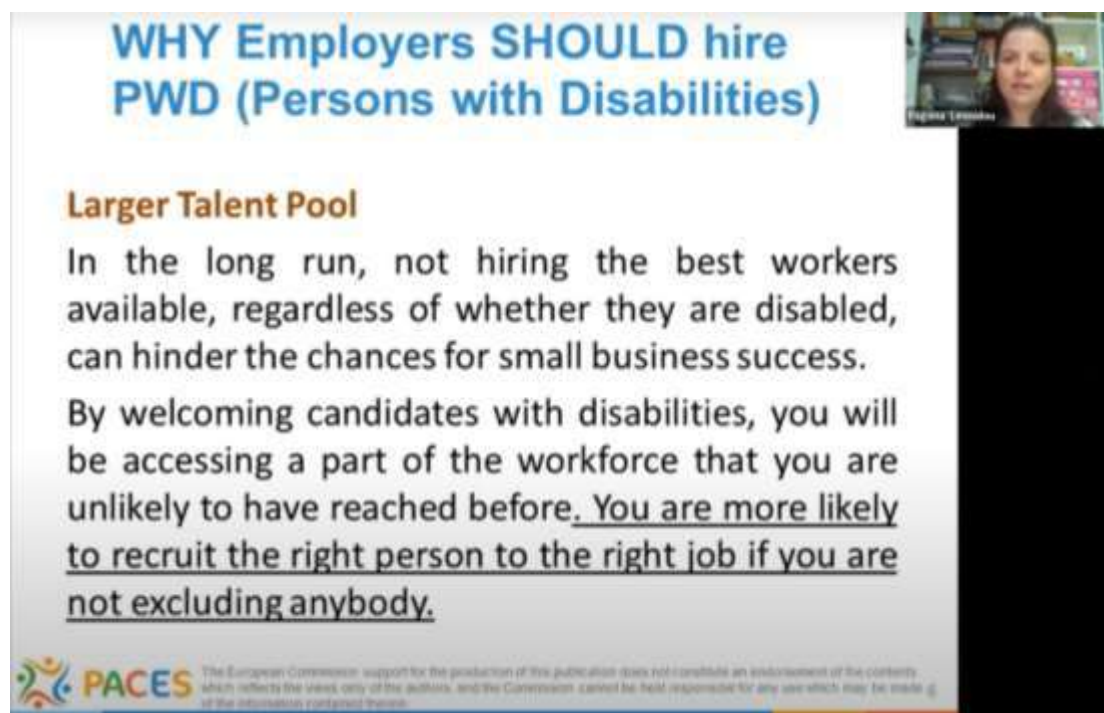
The summary of the session;

- Prof. Lefkothea started by thanking the organizer of the IC-PACES Conference and all the consortium from Europe, Morocco and Egypt. Then, she introduced Ms. Pagona Leonidou that will explain why and How to hire people with Disabilities.



- Ms. Pagona started by explaining Why Employers don't hire PwD, because employers pre-assume PwD are less productive than other people. On the other hand, she urges employers not to exclude anyone from their choices which will lead the employers to recruit the best fit by having a wider pool of talents. Moreover, hiring PwD will establish a reputation that this company offers more diverse workforce which will be

attractive for customers to support their business. Then, Ms. Pagona added that many PwD have been excluded from workplace for a long time, therefore, they are keen to work hard.



WHY Employers SHOULD hire PWD (Persons with Disabilities)

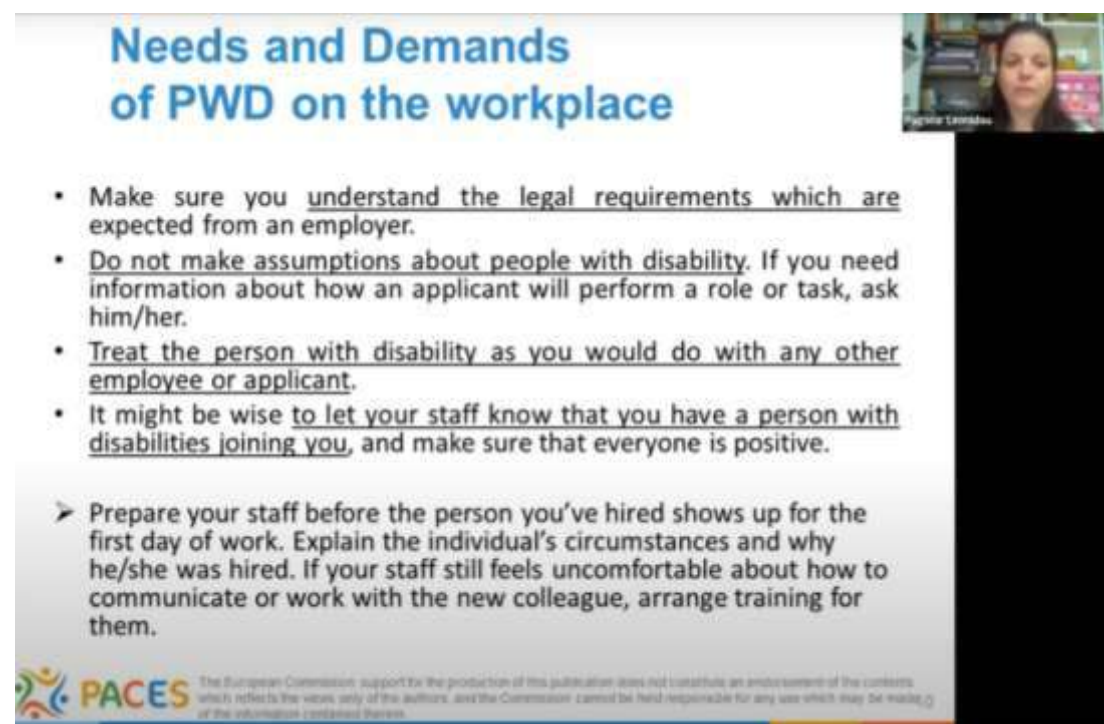
Larger Talent Pool

In the long run, not hiring the best workers available, regardless of whether they are disabled, can hinder the chances for small business success.

By welcoming candidates with disabilities, you will be accessing a part of the workforce that you are unlikely to have reached before. You are more likely to recruit the right person to the right job if you are not excluding anybody.

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- On the other hand, PwD have demands and needs from the workplace.



Needs and Demands of PWD on the workplace

- Make sure you understand the legal requirements which are expected from an employer.
- Do not make assumptions about people with disability. If you need information about how an applicant will perform a role or task, ask him/her.
- Treat the person with disability as you would do with any other employee or applicant.
- It might be wise to let your staff know that you have a person with disabilities joining you, and make sure that everyone is positive.


➤ Prepare your staff before the person you've hired shows up for the first day of work. Explain the individual's circumstances and why he/she was hired. If your staff still feels uncomfortable about how to communicate or work with the new colleague, arrange training for them.


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- When employers hire PwD , they might need to implement reasonable adjustments to support their employees with disabilities in the following order
 1. Seek advice
 2. Have initial discussion
 3. Conduct a workplace assessment
 4. Implement the recommendations

Options at work

- **Flexible working arrangements:** part-time, flexitime, job share or work from home may be a deciding factor.
- **Adapting the workplace and assistive technology:** an accessible workplace and assistive technology can allow PWD to perform their job without difficulty.







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Adapting the workplace

Examples for accommodations for disabled workers include the following:

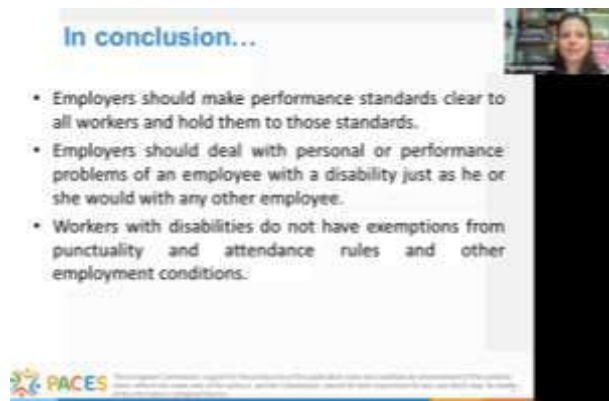
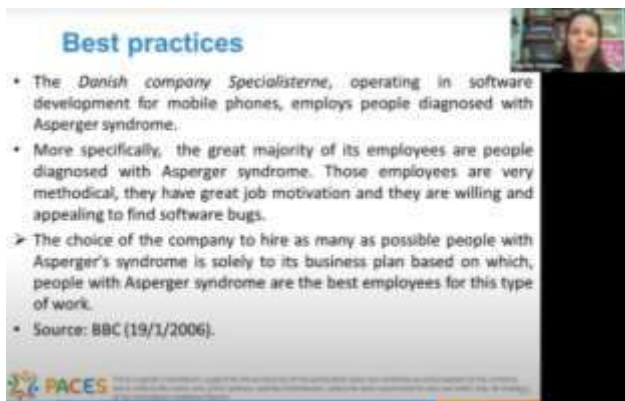
- Lowering a desktop height for a wheelchair.
- Providing a special telephone equipment for a hearing-impaired worker.
- Allowing a vision-assistance dog into the workspace for a blind worker.
- Modified and flexible work schedule for worker with mobility challenges.
- Accessible parking spaces.



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- Ms. Pagona stated some examples for safety precautions application, emergency accommodation, suggestions of accommodation for PwD with low vision and then she finished her presentation by sharing some best practices and the conclusion of her session.



“Being a member of the e-generation, one can escape the bounds of a damaged body and compete on equal terms with those without disabilities” a PwD describes

Finally, Prof. Lefkothea Kartasidou thanked the participants Ms. Pagona Leonidou for her presentation and she asked if there is any question from the attendees, then Prof. Lefkothea thanked Dr. Ahmed Khalifa and he thanked both of them for their contribution in the IC-PACES Conference.

Written by : Eng. Mootaz Anany

Reviewed by : Dr. Ahmed Mehanna

P.S. The time from 02:45 PM to 03:45 PM was taken Break for the participants, speakers, minister, VIP guests, volunteers students and Conference organizers Lunch and then the conference activities continued according to the Conference Agenda from 3:45 PM to 8:45 PM Cairo Time



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Panel Discussion: The Role of Social Responsibility towards the SwD & PwD - Sustainable Development Strategies

<u>Time:</u>	56:42 mins , on Saturday 6 th of March 2021
<u>YouTube</u>	<u>Zoom Recording Link:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/Jx-IHn0wChA <u>Conference Hall Recording Link</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/JW9frwhB3p0
<u>Presenter</u>	<u>The Panel discussion Speakers are;</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eng. Amal Mobadda Chief Fundraising Officer - Misr Elkheir Foundation • MP. Sahar Albazar Deputy Chair of Foreign Affairs Committee at The Egyptian Parliament • Dr. Ahmed Saada Minister of Social Solidarity Advisor for Support Civil Work and Health Support Affairs • Dr. Sanaa Haroon Director of TICO Office - ASRT, Fayoum university, Egypt <p>This panel discussion was moderated by;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Hagar Gamil Presenter Shaaby FM, Nile Radio Network (NRN) <p><i>P.S. Dr. Ahmed Khalifa Mehanna – Leading of PACES Project at AASTMT join the Panel Discussion Group</i></p>



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The summary of the panel discussion;

Eng. Amal Mobadda

- She talked about the role of Cinema in the awareness of the public towards the inclusion of PwD.
- The role of schools Education through “Respecting the different people” Course and how it’s affecting the younger generations towards a more inclusive community.
- She added that in the role of employability there are many NGOs that support the hiring by paying incentives to the corporates to hire PwDs.
- She closed with the importance of community awareness by everyone to everyone and the importance of such conference and initiatives to spot light on this important topic. Also she asked Dr. Ahmed Saada, the Minister of Social Solidarity Advisor for supporting in the community awareness with the Media.

MP. Sahar Albazar

- She mentioned the role of the government through the **SDGs 2030** for a more inclusive community also, the regulations by the parliament to ease the process and a dedicated \$ 100 M charitable fund “ATTA” which sponsored by the Egyptian sovereign fund, also a dedicated 5 % in the compounds by the Ministry of Housing to support the Housing of PwD.
- The role of the private sector in the employability of PwD and utilizing them for a better economy and inclusion.
- She closed with the importance of partnerships between the government, NGOs and the private sector to facilitate and activate the role of PwD towards a more inclusive engaged society and she told Dr. Ahmed Mehanna that she can support by activating the oversight role of Parliament regarding the issue of PwD.

Dr. Ahmed Saada

- As a government representative he mentioned the huge gap between the actual numbers of Persons with Disabilities (PwD) and the registered numbers as there are only 2 Million registered out of (10 to 15 Millions), out of the registered 33% have a PwD ID which facilitate all the PwD available service from the government (Services Card for the PwD).
- He mentioned the role of the ministry in educating the PwD through different imitative and partners like the USAID which grant college scholarships to elite universities and the different NGOs which are organic partners for the ministry in educating, awareness and facilitation.
- He assure about the aim of the Conference for the Awareness and raising awareness as this an important for help and support the disability issues also he state that this leads

and creating a feeling of hope or a contagious feeling of hope for the PwD and he means that the contagious hope is a positive thing for them.

- Dr. Ahmed mentioned the effect of neglecting PwD negatively in the economy as a power that should be utilized with a respectable salary.
- He added that the ministry is working on several projects including utilizing the assets and resources to better serve and restructure their objectives.
- Dr. Ahmed closed with the importance of registering in the PwD Services Card database that every PwD should sign in to facilitate the efforts and have access to the support from the government.

Prof. Sanaa Haroon

- She mentioned the role of the Accessibility Center, (Tawsol Center), in qualifying the PwD but aiming for more support from the government to obligate the private sector and government entities to apply the law of hiring 5% from the PwD as they are very qualified and capable of doing the job effectively.
- She asked Ms. Sahar Albazar for adopting the rights of PwD in the Egyptian Parliament.

Ms. Hagar Gamil

- She moderated the Panel Discussion between the all mentioned Speakers and she thanked the conference committee for this opportunity to make a healthy and fruitful debate and then she mentioned the effect of the “Qualified by difference” initiative which had a huge success for raising the awareness towards the cause.
- Ms. Hagar Gamil promised that she will make her first episode in the Radio about the Services Card for the Persons with Disabilities.
- Finally, she thanked the whole Speaker of the Panel Discussion for the fruitful participation and their valuable recommendations and she thanked the whole attendees in the Conference.

Written by : Eng. Muhammad Mongy

Reviewed by : Dr. Ahmed Mehanna



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Panel Discussion: Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Legislation and International Covenants

<u>Time:</u>	58:51 mins , on Saturday 6 th of March 2021
<u>YouTube</u>	<u>Zoom Recording Link:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/Jx-lHn0wChA <u>Conference Hall Recording Link</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/imsaFTU0CaE
<u>Presenter</u>	<u>The Panel discussion Speakers are;</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MP Mrs. Nada Alfy Thabet Member of the Solidarity Committee at The Egyptian Parliament • MP Dr. Mohamed El-Hamamy Member of The Egyptian Parliament • MP Mr. Mohamed Elsallab Member of the Industry Committee at The Egyptian Parliament • Mr. Mohamed Aboshanab Lawyer of the Supremes Administrative Court • Moderator: Ms. Mahinour Qamara



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The summary of the panel discussion;

- The Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Legislation and International Covenants was the second panel conducted in the conference. The panel hosted MP Mrs. Nada Thabet; a member in the social solidarity committee in the Egyptian Parliament, MP Dr. Mohamed Hamamy; a member in the education committee in the Egyptian Parliament, MP. Mohamed Elsallab; the deputy of the production committee in the Egyptian Parliament, Mr. Mohamed Aboshanab; a lawyer of the Supreme Administrative Court and Moderated by Ms. Mahinour Qamara.
- The panel started with a 5-min presentation given to the audience either on campus or online by **MP Mrs. Nada Thabet** about the history of rights of people with disability in Egypt and the stages that Egypt had to go through until law No. 10 of 2018 was legislated by the Egyptian Parliament. She also stressed on the difference between equity and equality and the implications of such differences in the legislation processes and most importantly on society. Swiftly after this presentation the panel started with a question directed at MP. Nada Thabet about the aspirations she aims to achieve during her existence at the Parliament. MP. Thabet talked about how she aims for a better future for every person with disability in Egypt; a future where they are socially accepted as equals to the average person, enjoying the same job opportunities and getting the same treatment. She further talked about the social stigmatization of PwD within their families. She stated that “the extent of how civilized a nation is, is measured by the amount of respect PwD get from their respective societies”. She also discussed the way movies picture PwD whether as heroes or inferiors equally play a role in stigmatizing them. However, she is certain that this future is inevitable but stated that such changes take time.
- Moving to **Mr. Mohamed Aboshanab** given his legislative background on law no.10 of 2018, he talked about how although the law no.10 and its executive bylaws were ideally formulated by the legislative authorities, in reality, the law is still inoperative. To assert such claims, he talked about the laws concerning the PwD right to work and how in reality, these laws are either not applied or applied for lucrative reasons. What actually happens is that PwD salaries are delivered to them at their doorstep without having the need to go to work because the 5% law requires businesses to hire PwD. He believed that the only way to achieve equity in the society is through raising awareness about how the PwD and the average persons are equal on the condition that PwD are trained properly for the tasks that they are required to do. His recommendation in the panel revolved around two major specs; raising awareness and proper monitoring.
- **MP Mr. Mohamed Elsallab** had the floor afterwards. He was asked about both the awareness campaign he had launched and the amendment draft to law no.10. He said that it all started with his electoral campaign when he decided that he would have a meeting with different sectors of his constituency separately (women, PwD, workers) to understand their demands and issues clearly. In the PwD meeting, he noticed that most of them complained about the bullying issues and the suicidal rates of PwD as a

result of bullying. Back then, the bullying law that was enacted, was targeting all people without distinction, which in his opinion, did not sound right. He, then, moved on to read law no.10 to find out that there was no single article talking about the issue of bullying, that is why the first amendment draft he had suggested was concerning this issue. He then moved to the role of media, the ministry of social solidarity and the ministry of youth and sports in the process of inclusion. he stated that most teachers are still not ready to deal with PwD which further reflects on the fact that the society as a whole is still not ready to deal with PwD normally due to the lack of awareness. That is why a national awareness campaign needs to be activated as soon as possible to enable the society to deal with PwD. Accordingly, he decided to start an anti-bullying campaign supporting PwD and he is aiming to expand it beyond what it is now until a tangible impact can be seen in reality. He believes, like Mr Abo Shanab that legislations are not the solution due to their existent abundance and how people and business owners seem to find loopholes in them using them as an out from their obligations. That is why, he stated, the new parliament has been working on these loopholes to set things right. He admitted that there is an institutional problem in Egypt, especially in the Egyptian schools and how schools are not equipped enough to implement inclusion. Finally, he stressed on the importance of awareness and social cooperation in achieving the desired goals pertaining to the rights of PwD.



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- **Finally, MP Dr. Mohamed El-Hamamy** was asked about when it is expected to implement full inclusion in the Egyptian Schools. He started his speech by quoting article 53 in the Egyptian constitution (no discrimination based on disability). He then talked about how, since 2018, there has been a national orientation towards giving PwD their rights and recognition in all the specs of life, which have accordingly resulted in the law no.10 for the year 2018. This orientation, along with the law, was an explicit statement by the state that it cares gravely about the situation of the PwD in the society. On the other hand, the society itself is not as responsive resulting in the inoperative feature of the law, since it is not being applied by the society. That is why reforming the society's behavior through awareness is extremely important as it encourages the culture of diversity among its members. He moved on to talk about the challenges facing the process of inclusion in schools starting from the curriculums, moving to the unqualified teachers and the non-conclusive accessibility codes. He stressed on the accessibility codes are not our major problem here since they require funding and once this funding is available through the government or the civil society, their issue would be solved, however, the bigger issue lies in the human capital and the society's misconceptions.

Finally, all of the Speakers in this Panel Discussion, “Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Legislation and International Covenants”, thanked the Arab Academy & the committee for inviting them to this Conference as it is discuss a very important topic and they thanked the organizers in addition to their promise to work on the Conference recommendations in the Egyptian Parliament as there are three members of the speakers in the Egyptian Parliament.

Written by : Ms. Mahinour Qamara

Reviewed by : Dr. Ahmed Mehanna

2nd INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

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of the European UnionSILVER SPONSOR


Session Topic: Digital Transformation Role in Supporting PwD's Jobs & Skills for Better Future

Time:	23:27 mins , on Saturday 6 th of March 2021
YouTube	<p>Zoom Recording Link:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/Jx-lHn0wChA <p>Conference Hall Recording Link</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/iG8ozAAhSeo
Presenter	<p>The session was presented by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eng. Hoda Dahroug <p>Head of the Central Department for Community Development, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT), Egypt</p>



The summary of the session;

Eng. Hoda Dahroug – Head of the Central Department for Community Development, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT), Egypt

- Eng. Hoda Dahroug introduces her presentation that tackles the digital transformation and its effect on the lives and independence of people with disabilities. She highlights that the main goal to reach is to provide people with disabilities with their basic needs. Their independence in a society where technological advancements have no limit should be inevitable. Supporting her words is a video of a blind individual grocery

shopping alone only using a pair of advanced glasses. This is the kind of independence Eng. Huda is aiming to achieve.

- In her opinion “to have technological transformation reach people with disabilities; it is vital to have an enclosed society, their cooperation and shared opinion in what they need, and most importantly a society that practices equity”. She suggests that instead of spending a large amount of money on training sessions that will probably go in vain, the state initiates a platform that acts as a network between capitals and people with disabilities. This platform displays exactly what is expected from people with disabilities in specific jobs. Eng. Dahroug expresses her point where she expects PwD to be the stakeholders in such projects. Eng. Dahroug thanked Dr. Mehanna for his invitation and she hoped for a grateful cooperation with PACES Project.



Written by : Ms. Maryam Abu Halima

Reviewed by : Dr. Ahmed Mehanna

Panel Discussion: Disability between Genetics and Medical Interventions

<u>Time:</u>	36:05 mins , on Saturday 6 th of March 2021
<u>Place:</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The discussion was held online through Zoom Platform Offline in the Conference Hall Presidential Building - Abu Qir in AASTMT, Alexandria, Egypt
<u>YouTube</u>	<p><u>Zoom Recording Link:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> https://youtu.be/Jx-IHn0wChA <p><u>Conference Hall Recording Link</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> https://youtu.be/BYAQ4hgcD0Q
<u>Presenter</u>	<p><u>The presentation was presented by:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prof. Tarek Omar Professor of Pediatrics and Pediatric Neurology, Department of Pediatrics, Faculty of Medicine, Alexandria University, Egypt



The summary of the session;

Prof. Tarek Omar, Professor of Pediatrics and Pediatric Neurology, Department of Pediatrics, Faculty of Medicine, Alexandria University, Egypt

- After expressing gratitude to the invitation to Speak in this conference by the Arab Academy and he thanked the Conference committee for the organization especially Dr. Ahmed Khalifa Mehanna, Prof. Tarek introduces his program regarding the topic. He explains how the “medical definition of disability considers people with disabilities sick and that’s incorrect, there are no medications to fix disabilities”. The World Health Organization (WHO) announced that the medical stream of disabilities is separated from the social stream. In Prof. Tarek’s opinion, this mentality is unacceptable for the “medical definition views the disabled person as needing to fit in rather than thinking about how society itself should change”.
- Prof. Tarek then discusses how the study of the impact of people with disabilities on society shows injustice towards those with disabilities. “The study limits the case to numbers and statistics, which is very objective,” he stated. Prof. Tarek insists that everyone should test for genetic disabilities. To cure disabilities is not an option; however, it is achievable to decrease the possibility of having children with disabilities by going through genetic tests first. He discloses that the main cause of disabilities is the lack of attentiveness to the causes of disabilities.



Written by : Ms. Maryam Abu Halima

Reviewed by : Dr. Ahmed Mehanna

Panel Discussion: Inclusive Entrepreneurship (Future Shaping)

Time:	39:36 mins , on Saturday 6 th of March 2021
Place:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The discussion was held online through Zoom Platform Offline in the Conference Hall Presidential Building - Abu Qir in AASTMT, Alexandria, Egypt
YouTube	<p>Zoom Recording Link:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> https://youtu.be/Jx-lHn0wChA <p>Conference Hall Recording Link</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> https://youtu.be/PCVYP-sjgGk
Presenter	<p>The Panel Discussion was presented by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eng. Ahmed Osman Chairman of International Council for Small Business (ICSB) Mr. Wael El Desouki Bedda Director of Entrepreneurship Center at AASTMT The panel discussion was moderate by Ms. Radwa Mahmoud Hassan, Presenter at DMC TV Channel



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The summary of the panel discussion;

- People with disabilities and entrepreneurs have a great passion to have their own startups and innovations specialized in enhancement of their disabilities. And the inclusive entrepreneurship concept supporting all entrepreneurs with including disable people with taking into consideration their capabilities not their disabilities.
- The law No. 10 of 2018 regarding to disable people obliged companies to hire 5% from disable people, the recommendation he is to transform the salaries of these percentage to have a dedicated fund for supporting startups for disable people.
- The role of universities has to have specialized incubator for supporting disabled people and their startups will increase the number of the startups from these segments. Also have dedicated competitions for disabled people and their ideas.



Written by : Mr. Hany Ayaad

Reviewed by : Dr. Ahmed Mehanna

Panel Discussion: Media Strategies for handling the PwD issues

Time:	39:33 mins , on Saturday 6 th of March 2021
YouTube	<p>Zoom Recording Link:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/Jx-lHn0wChA <p>Conference Hall Recording Link</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/PCVYP-sjgGk
Presenter	<p><u>The panel discussion speakers are:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Maha Kamal-Eldin Helali Board Member National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD) • Ms. Radwa Hassan Presenter at DMC, TV Channel • Ms. Hagar Gamil Presenter Shaaby FM, Nile Radio Network (NRN) • Moderator: Ms. Nourane Elhagar <p><i>P.S. Dr. Ahmed Khalifa Mehanna – Leading of PACES Project at AASTMT join the Panel Discussion Group</i></p>



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The summary of the panel discussion;

- Many media professionals with disabilities began to appear on the screen, but still there is much larger need for higher participation to get rid of any discrimination from the rest of society. Those PwD working in media must be judged like all other media professionals without separation or discrimination.
- Media agencies and companies started to show interest in the issues of people with disabilities, yet not enough proper attention is addressed to the PwD.
- It is not possible to consider all media outlets lacking a methodology in dealing with issues, but some media do not have sufficient skills and adequate media training in dealing with their issues as part of society on an equal basis with any individual in society without discrimination.
- The media sheds light on the difficulties and challenges of families of people with disabilities, but the exaggeration of the difficulties erases the positives of the current situation and gains.
- The media should not advocate or seek sympathy, but rather present solutions for the PwD in various ways.
- Egyptian cinema and drama should strive to instill people with disabilities with the rest of society, as they are the easiest means of communicating messages to the viewer.
- We must form a culture of awareness and not bullying the viewer through the media and others, and this must start from school and early education
- Social media has become much faster in transmitting information, and influencers have to pay more attention to various community issues, such as issues of people with disabilities.
- However, the positive side of social media is that it has become a means of mass media, providing job opportunities for media professionals with disabilities
- The media's role to shed more light on services that are related to means of communication, such as talking means of transportation and others
- Among the most important recommendations agreed upon by the three guests:
Continuous practical media training in a not boring way.
- Launching an informational campaign about people with disabilities with correct terminology, and laws pertaining to people with disabilities.
- The media should not show excessive sympathy for PwD.
- Drama and cinema makers should use real models of people with disabilities in their plays.
- The speakers, "Ms. Radwa, Ms. Hagar & Dr. Mehanna", insist about the awareness for the entire community.



The moderator asked the Speakers to give a recommendation about the session and she started with Mrs. Maha Helali who recommend that the media have to make an awareness campaign about the training of the SwD/PwD as well as about the disabilities rights and issues, and then Ms. Hagar Gamil recommend that we need specific training for the Presenters at the Media either in the TV or the Radio network to support the disability issue and how can they deal with them and Finally Ms. Radwa Hassan thanked the Government for the steps that were taken until now and she encourage the whole attendees and the other people to support the all issues related to the disabilities and we need to focusing more about the accessibility and she thanked the PACES Project team about the Conference and especially Dr. Ahmed Mehanna for his invitation to participate in such Conference.

Written by : Ms. Nourane Elhagar
Eng. Mootaz Anany
Reviewed by : Dr. Ahmed Mehanna

Closing of Day 1 of IC-PACES Conference

Dr. Ahmed Khalifa Mehanna thanked the whole Speakers for their valuable speeches and he thanked the attendees and apologized for them for the delay in the program, but that was due to the important in the all issues related to SwD and PwD in the Program that represents about one over seven from the world population and then he asked Coventry team Jacqueline, Sarah Merry and Cathryn Thompson for their feedback about the first day of the Conference. Jacqueline state that it's really exciting day and it's amazing that the Ministry here in the Conference as well as the participants form employment, Egyptian Parliaments to share with us how this issues and all topics of the conference are important in Egypt and she thanked the entire Speakers who did a great and amazing work and finally Prof. Jacqueline thanked everybody and especially Dr. Khalifa about the amazing job and his selection of the Panels and all interesting people as you started something huge now and there is no going back and it was an amazing day and she stated that I will always remember this statement by one of the Speaker, and it should be a PACES subtitle, we have created "a contagious feeling of hope".



Finally at 08:45 PM Cairo Time Dr. Ahmed Mehanna announced that we finished the sessions of the first day of the Conference and we will continue the second Day activities of the Conference tomorrow according to the Agenda, starting with the Work Groups (Round Table Discussion), at 10:00 AM Cairo Time and then he present the Conference Trophy to Ms. Hagar Gamil and Ms. Radwa Hassan.



Written by : Dr. Ahmed Mehanna

IC- PACES Conference Summary Report

Day 2: Sunday 7th of March 2021

<u>Place:</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The speeches were held online through Zoom Platform • Offline in the Conference Hall Presidential Building - Abu Qir in AASTMT, Alexandria, Egypt
<u>YouTube</u>	<p><u>Zoom Recording Link:</u> The Zoom recording link of the second day;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/qga_E7xpWjY <p><u>Conference Hall Recording Playlist Link</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLF3TmI8G7ZyrCKW5Z2Z6DFwG30TNSRMf4
<u>Zoom:</u>	<p><u>Webinar Meeting ID: 93355958293</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoom Meeting Link https://zoom.us/j/93355958293
<u>Website:</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.ic-paces.org/
<u>Facebook & Twitter</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.facebook.com/pacesswd • https://www.facebook.com/groups/571115283065092/ • https://twitter.com/PacesSwd
<u>Photos</u>	<p><u>IC-PACES Conference Work Groups (Round Tables) Photos Link:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.facebook.com/100865862045557/posts/143630187769124/?sfnsn=scwspmo <p><u>Day 2 Panel Discussions & Sessions Photos Link:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.facebook.com/100865862045557/posts/121539753311501/?sfnsn=scwspmo • https://www.facebook.com/100865862045557/posts/121539753311501/?sfnsn=scwspmo



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Session Topic: Volunteer Services - a tool to build an inclusive campus and increase employability for the students

Time:	21:11 mins , on Sunday 7 th of March 2021
YouTube	Zoom Recording Link: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/qqa_E7xpWjY Conference Hall Recording Link <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/XRsSNRvMGkQ
Presenter	The online session was presented by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Luis Gomez de Membrillera, Project Manager, International Project Management Office, University of Alicante Spain

The summary of the session;

- Dr. Luis started by greeting the attendees and thanked all the speakers/organizers for their effort/contribution towards the success of the conference.
- Dr. Luis shared the international standards in the CRPD Convention on The Rights of Persons with Disabilities article 24 and the UN Sustainable Development Goals especially SDG 4



- SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.



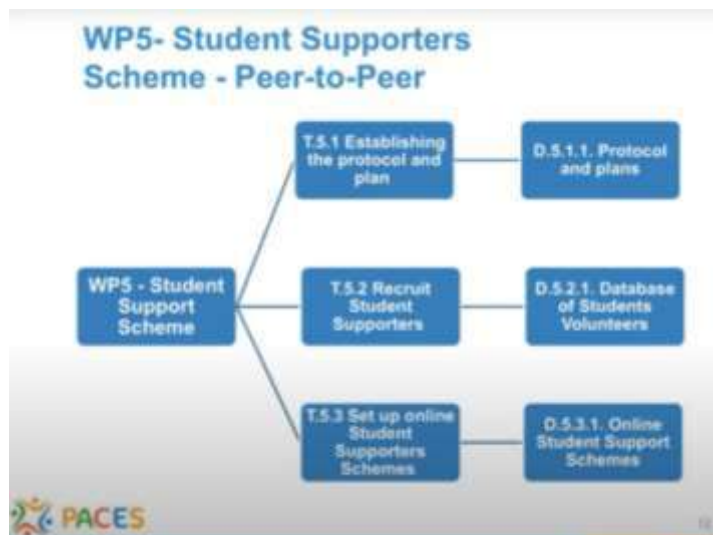
- Dr. Luis: We focus on the inclusion of all persons not only persons people with disabilities under the motto “Leave no one behind”
- Then, he highlighted the role of Peer-to-Peer Support Volunteering at Higher Education to build an inclusive campus by understanding the needs of all students through promoting collaborative practices, including team teaching, study groups, joint student assessment processes, peer support and exchange visits.
- Shared University of Alicante’s experience and contributions on volunteering since 1999.
- It started to focus on disability while today it focuses on all services that covers many different areas from environment protection to gender violence prevention, including sports, language promotion, palliative care or COVID-19.
- <https://web.ua.es/es/voluntariado-ua/voluntariado-contigo-ua.html>



- Dr. De Memberillera shared the Guiding principles of university of Alicante and he focused on the importance of synergies with all institutions. Later, he discussed the

guidelines of training for volunteers such as avoid overprotection and other important skills/attitudes.

- Later, it was explained that the Volunteering programme is “Volunteering between Equals” by taking notes, scanning documents, support in library and etc. Then, he explained the **student support scheme SSS** in three steps
 1. Prepare the plan
 2. Recruit the Volunteers
 3. Keep an online active platform for connectivity and networking and provide the support services



- Dr. Luis finished his presentation by showing the number of students who were recruited in each of the Universities and finally he thanked the participants of the PACES project.



The slide features a table showing the distribution of trained volunteers across various universities. The total number of students is 1206.

UNIVERSITY	NUMBER OF STUDENTS
ARAB ACADEMY FOR SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY AND MARITIME TRANSPORT	100 students
AL-BAYRUT UNIVERSITY	100 students
AL-FAYOUMI UNIVERSITY	100 students
AL-KHAYMA UNIVERSITY	100 students
UNIVERSITE MOHAMED EL BACHA	100 students
UNIVERSITE EL TORNA	100 students
UNIVERSITE MOHAMED V DE KENAT	100 students
UNIVERSITE MOHAMED EL	100 students
TOTAL	1206

... building up more a **INCLUSIVE CAMPUS** for partners of the PACES team.

Written by : Eng. Mootaz Anany

Reviewed by : Dr. Ahmed Mehanna

Session Topic: Education for SwD - Improving access, quality and employment opportunities

<u>Time:</u>	19:58 mins , on Sunday 7 th of March 2021
<u>YouTube</u>	<u>Zoom Recording Link:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/qga_E7xpWjY <u>Conference Hall Recording Link</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/6kCRTm3yLGo
<u>Presenter</u>	<u>The online session was presented by</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Iman Raissouni Associate Professor, Abdelmalek Essaadi University, Morocco

The summary of the session;

- Dr. Iman Raissouni started by thanking AASTMT for holding the final conference which is of a great value for learning, awarninga and networking.



- Dr. Iman shared some facts from their survey about the number and services provided for PwD. Then, she moved on the objectives of each university by reduce barriers of academic participation by increasing access and professional integration in the job market, provide some assistive technology devices for the SwD and to train them on using these devices perfectly.

The AT Equipment Purchased

- The AT purchased includes information communication technologies and AT equipment. The following is a list of the software and hardware purchased:
 - Voice recognition systems (Dragon Naturally Speaking)
 - Zoom-Text
 - Screen reader systems (JAWS)
 - Braille Keyboard
 - Joysticks
 - Signaling Devices
 - Sound Amplifiers
 - Head Phones
 - Smart Phones



- Dr. Raissouni explained that SwD were qualified through many trainings in the 2 Career Centers in Abdelmalek **Essaadi University**. These trainings were on orientation services, soft skills (problem solving, leadership) , employment skills (CV, professional communication and prepare for interviews) and other consultation and advising services.

Students with Disabilities Moving from Isolation to Integration (1)

- Disabled students created their own club on April 2015. The club acts as a legal platform that ensures a forum for expressing the diverse needs of students with disabilities. It is the students who drafted the club's internal regulation



- To create a better enabling environment a cooperation with many associations has been established with “Louis Braille”, “The White Pigeon “,“Hanan” and “Al Awael”.



- Finally, Dr. Iman shared a list of people with disabilities who managed to find employment with the help of the Center in the University. And she expressed that she is looking forward to more collaboration to break more barriers of SwD.



Written by : Eng. Mootaz Anany

Reviewed by : Dr. Ahmed Mehanna



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Session Topic: The use of technology in higher education for SwD

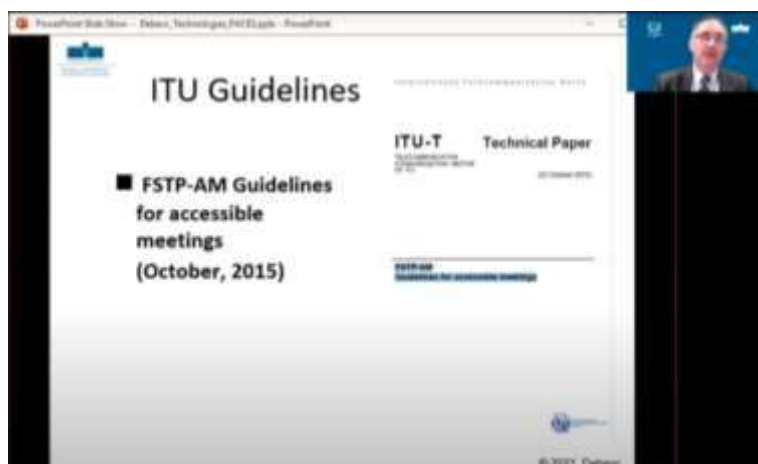
Time:	21:38 mins , on Sunday 7 th of March 2021
YouTube	<p>Zoom Recording Link:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/qqa_E7xpWjY <p>Conference Hall Recording Link</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/ttgkLnOuvJE
Presenter	<p><u>The online session was presented by:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Matjaz Debevc <p>Associate Professor, Engineering and Computer Science, University of Maribor, Slovenia.</p>

The summary of the session;

- Dr. Matjaz starting by discussing the E-Accessibility in Education. He talked about the Teaching and Learning tools such as Moodle, Administrative tools especially now in COVID-19, Collaborative and cooperative tools such as google docs. Then, all lecturers should make that their recorded lectures with captions. After that he focused on the importance of communication because they can't come to class such as speech recognition and speech synthesis.



- Dr. Matjaz recommend to use the FSTP-AM guidelines for accessible meetings (October 2015) because it is the main guidelines that address all the needs of people with disabilities in education.



Dr. Matjaz explained the different assistive technology devices for;

1. Deaf and hard hearing



2. Blind and partially sighted



3. Physically Impaired



- Another guideline was then suggested by Dr. Majtaz to be used and adopted the “WHO - Priority Assistive Product List” which is available in English, Arabic, French and other languages.



- Dr. Matjaz started sharing current trends in Assistive technology such as ASR Automatic Speech Recognition by Google and AI Smart Assistant such as Cortana or Alexa. However, ASR should not replace Telecommunication Relay Service because the accuracy is not high enough. For example, for English language the accuracy is about an acceptable rate of 90% but in an emergency situation this 10% are very crucial in the safety of the PwD. On the other hand, the accuracy of Arabic language is only 50% which is still relatively low.
- Other trends were shared also such as Holograms/avatars delivering sign language. However, AVATARS should never replace a human translation in public services. Dr. Matjaz finished his presentation by stating that “AVATARS can be only used in prerecorded static customer information.”

Written by : Eng. Mootaz Anany

Reviewed by : Dr. Ahmed Mehanna

Panel Discussion: Research and Innovation for Assistive Technology in Inclusive Education – Part 1

<u>Time:</u>	<u>27:24 mins</u> , on Sunday 7 th of March 2021
<u>YouTube</u>	<u>Zoom Recording Link:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/qqa_E7xpWjY <u>Conference Hall Recording Link</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/LxtcAHv1SNk
<u>Presenter</u>	<u>The Online Session was presented by:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Abeer Shakweer Assistant Resident Representative for Inclusive Growth & Innovation, UNDP Egypt • Dr. Ahmed Khalifa Mehanna, Vice Dean of Student Affairs, AASTMT (Panel Discussion Moderator)



The summary of the Presentation during the first part of the Panel Discussion;

Dr. Abeer Shakweer, started her presentation by thanking the PACES team, AASTMT, Dr. Ahmed, the European Union through the Erasmus Programme and she thanked Dr. Matjaz for his presentation because it covered a lot of important issues, Technologies and devices in the assistive technology trends. After that, she began to explain the main goals, attached with some statistics and some deep information about the assistive technology market size as follows:

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Goals:

- Universal education and supporting students with disabilities
- Employment and Inclusive Economic Growth
- Importance of integration of disabled students in various life aspects; political, economic and social life.
- Initialization smart cities for disabled people.
- Cooperation for the sake of achieving development goals by monitoring progression stages.

Statistics:

- By 2050, about more than 46% of person aged 60 years and over have disabilities
- World population is expected to reach 9.7 billion
- 2.4 billion PWDs in 2050
- Only 1 in 10 PWDs has access to AT

Assistive Technology Market Size

- About 43% of the growth will come from EMEA Region.
- Global disabled and elderly AT market was valued approximately \$18.70
- And it is expected to reach \$30.82 by 2050.
- Later, Dr. Abeer discussed the Assistive Technology in Education provides techniques that support reading (e-books, reader pen), writing, hearing, access to computer, ICT accessibility policy, Arabization of DIASY and developing more than 100 applications.
- She finished her presentation by explaining all Forms of Intelligent Assistive Technology. First, Speech-to-Text technique to facilitate language captioning for hard of hearing disabilities. Second, Text Summarization for many people with different type of cognitive impairments (dyslexia, attention deficit disorders and memory issues). Moreover, thought-to Text Technology and Brain OS Software allowing patients to control all kind of assistive devices by thinking of them.



Written by : Ms. Germian Gamal & Ms. Abrar Meshref

Reviewed by : Eng. Mootaz Anany & Dr. Ahmed Mehanna

Panel Discussion: Research and Innovation for Assistive Technology in Inclusive Education – [Part 2](#) & [Part 3](#)

Time:	25:32 mins , on Sunday 7 th of March 2021
YouTube	<p>Zoom Recording Link:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/qga_E7xpWjY <p>Conference Hall Recording Links (Part 2 & Part 3) https://youtu.be/V-rYPr02aAI & https://youtu.be/njY-MGxJCcE</p>
Presenter	<p>The Panel discussion speakers are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Abeer Shakweer Assistant Resident Representative for Inclusive Growth & Innovation, UNDP Egypt • Mrs. Omaima Elsheikh Civil society representative at Child protection Committee. • Ms. Amena El-Saie Cofounder & CEO of Helm • Dr. Ahmed Khalifa Mehanna, Vice Dean of Student Affairs, AASTMT (Panel Discussion Moderator)



The summary of the panel discussion;

Dr. Abeer Shakweer's Summary:

- Assistive technology is available in Arab countries (not implemented fully) and part of the income is spent on assistive technology to aid people with disabilities.
- There is a demand for assistive technology in Egypt indicating the growing number and needs of people with disabilities.

Mrs. Omaima Elsheikh's summary:

- Two reasons for the discontinuation or dropping out of students with various disabilities from learning in schools are lack of assistive tools and teachers with capabilities to deal with students with disabilities.
- Ms. Omaima Elsheikh was able to raise awareness and train teachers in some schools.
- To prevent bullying, students with disabilities were linked with high achievers to show that having a disability isn't a limitation.

Ms. Omaima Elsheikh's Recommendation:

- Growing and building the abilities of staff to deal with people with disabilities in governmental and non-governmental institutes; ensuring their capabilities to connect, communicate and treat people with disabilities in every career.

Ms. Amena El-Saie's Summary:

- A project was applied in 5 universities in Egypt: Cairo University, Alexandria University, Mansoura University, Assiut University, Ain Shams University. Its aim was to help students in universities with special needs.
- This project had 5 main objectives which focused on building aiding centers, ensuring the availability of people with abilities to manage these centers, raising awareness, guarantying the continuity of the project in the future (after coaching) in many universities.

Ms. Amena El-Saie's Recommendation:

- Every institute and building in Egypt should be suitable for people with disabilities. Also, all educational centers and institutes, from schools to universities, must be customized to allow people with disabilities to have the full experience without limitations.



Written by : Ms. Rewaa Harraz & Ms. Abrar Meshref

Reviewed by : Eng. Mootaz Anany & Dr. Ahmed Mehanna

Session Topic: Making or Breaking Inclusive HE for SwD

Time:	25:33 mins , on Sunday 7 th of March 2021
YouTube	Zoom Recording Link: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/qga_E7xpWjY Conference Hall Recording Link <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/5OfWPv7HT0c
Presenter	The Presentation was presented by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs. Eglal Chenouda Executive Director of SETI CENTER, Caritas Egypt, Board Member National Council of Persons with Disabilities (NCPD)



The summary of the session;

- City Centre has been founded since 35 years ago. It won a Prize of the Best Initiatives in Practices and Employment of Students with Disabilities.
- It includes integration of students with disabilities in both Schools and Universities. Focusing on Students with intellectual disabilities which represents one the biggest obstacles.
- Educational Integration is done by three processes which are presenting, participation and progression.
- It works on eliminating several barriers by physical and informational accessibility in addition to facing negative attitudes.

- In 2017, the number of students with disabilities enrolled in Universities at PACES Project didn't exceed 1%. However, the actual number was more revealing that some students didn't have the courage to say that they're disabled.
- The cause of hiding their disability is due to their fear of teachers and students' perceptions towards them, belittling them, lack of self-confidence and losing confidence of being helped. They feel that they're not welcomed in social activities.

Thoughts and beliefs should be changed:

- Disable student's possibilities don't allow them to participate.
- The required adjustments cost a fortune
- We harm them not helping them
- We can't deal with disabled students

Solving the problem:

- Try to know them well
- Ask them what they need to facilitate their study
- Recruiting volunteers to deal with them and inform the teachers with their needs
- Training peers for disabled students to support them in various tasks.

Mrs. Eglal Chenouda thanked the PACES project team for this opportunity.



Written by : Ms. Germian Gamal & Ms. Abrar Meshref

Reviewed by : Eng. Mootaz Anany & Dr. Ahmed Mehanna

Session Topic: Advances in Prosthetics and Assistive Technologies

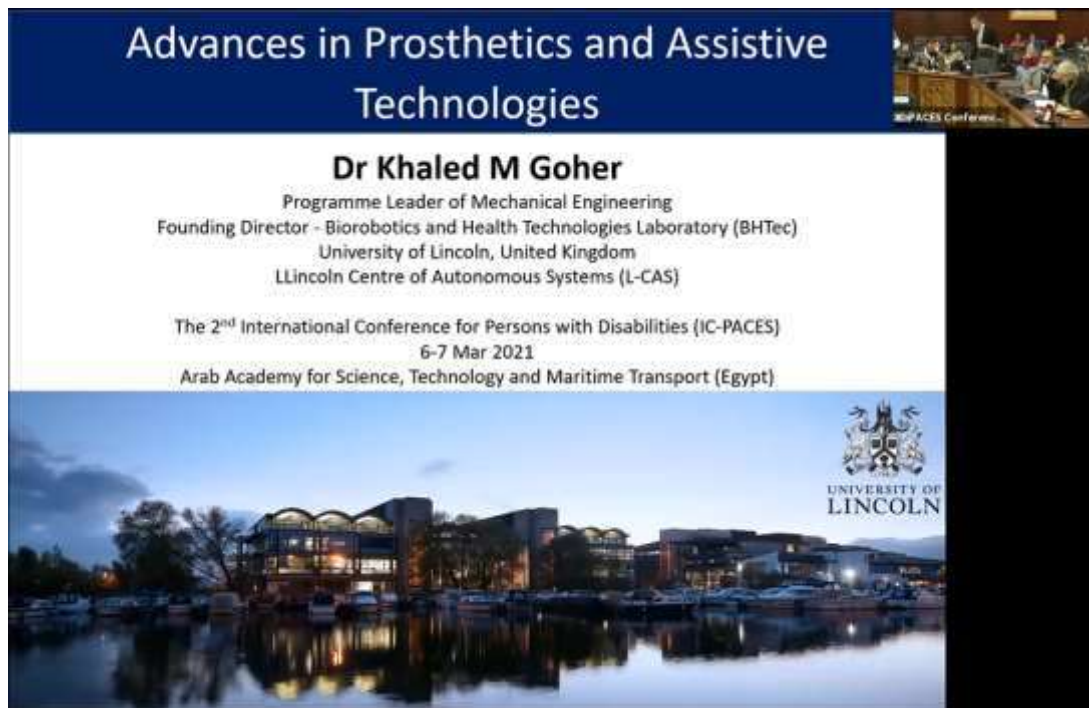
<u>Time:</u>	41:47 mins , on Sunday 7 th of March 2021
<u>YouTube</u>	<u>Zoom Recording Link:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/qqa_E7xpWjY <u>Conference Hall Recording Link</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/f-Sk5e8uDug
<u>Presenter</u>	<u>The Online Presentation was presented by:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Khaled Goher Programme Leader of Mechanical Engineering, University of Lincoln, UK



The summary of the session:

Dr Khaled started his session with identify self and then he thanked the organizing committee of the Conference and especially thanked Dr. Ahmed Mehanna for giving him this opportunity to be art of this Conference and then he highlighted about the following topics in his session starting with the digital transformation in Healthcare Technologies that includes;

- Hybrid soft/rigid actuators for assistive technology, affordable and adaptable soft/rigid children prosthetics and Smart Wearable solutions for Fall Prevention in elderlies.
- Multi-modal connectivity and mobility network for rural areas, Multifunctional smart assistive technologies for mobility and tele rehabilitation.
- Novel scanning technologies for NHS communities/ primary care settings and Wearable devices to support Remote and ageing rural population.



Then he stated how university of Lincoln takes space in modular, adaptable children prosthetic and disposable exoskeletons, functional assessments as well as the multipurpose assistive devices for elderlies. Bio robotics and health technologies researches showed that 60-80 million people are disabled in Africa while the US have 180,000 amputations occur per year and 250,000 upper limb amputations per year . Unfortunately, prosthetic rejection rates are approximately 38% due to discomfort, utility lack and weight complains. This shows the importance of optimizing affordability, design modularity, early exposure and adoption of prostheses for children as their bodies change and grow .One of the great examples is SIMPA which is the first myoelectric prosthesis for toddlers less than 2 years old. Other great prosthetics as Bionic arms and See through designs.

He also mentioned how beneficial artificial limbs were they even facilitated the way to the famous disabled Olympic player Oscar Pistorius.

He stated that UoL and Egyptian collaboration main aims are supporting civil society organizations and research for people with disabilities, public and private biomedical organizations and society awareness programs. Then he talked about UoL and AASTMT strategic partnership includes joint UG/PGR programme, institutional linkages, joint workshops/internships and an innovation programme.

He also stated how important it is to know that availability of assistive technologies will support inclusion , social integration , economic and ultimately national security and how supporting people with disabilities is not a job but also an ethical commitment and society service.

Written by : Ms. Rowan Eissa

Reviewed by : Eng. Mootaz Anany & Dr. Ahmed Mehanna

Panel Discussions: “Inclusive Employment and Accessibility to Workplaces” & “Competencies Gap & Employability”

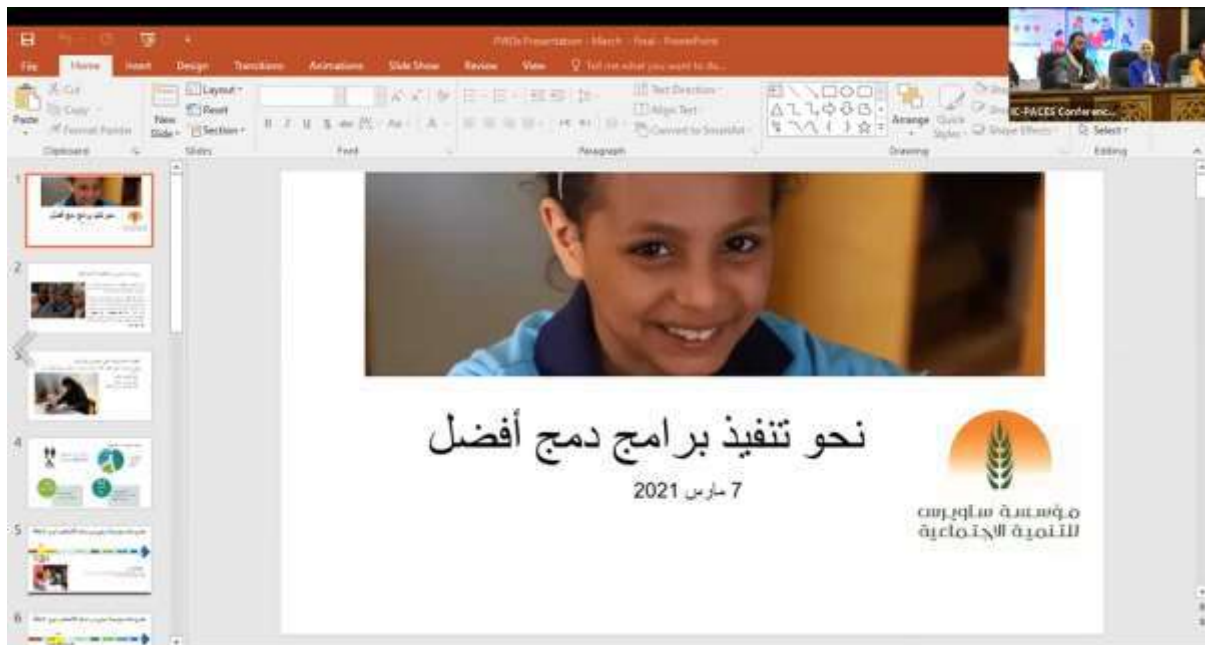
Two panel discussions had been merged in one panel session as they are related to each other.

<u>Time:</u>	95:36 mins , on Sunday 7 th of March 2021
<u>YouTube</u>	<p><u>Zoom Recording Link:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/qga_E7xpWjY <p><u>Conference Hall Recording Link</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eVhkB07RmkM&list=&index=9 • https://youtu.be/eVhkB07RmkM
<u>Presenter</u>	<p><u>The panel discussion speakers are:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Amena El-Saie, Cofounder & CEO of Helm • Mr. Ahmed Elbana, Founder and CEO of Nomad Divers • MP Dr. Rania El-Jazairly, Member of The Egyptian Parliament • MP Ms. Sahar Albazar, Deputy Chair of Foreign Affairs Committee at The Egyptian Parliament • Mrs. Mays Abou Hegab, Education Director, Sawiris Foundation • Dr. Reem Abd EL Meguid, Chairperson House of Management for Training & Consultancy <p>• <u>The panel discussions were moderate by:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Competencies Gap & Employability Panel Discussion moderated by: Ms. Radwa Mahmoud Hassan, Presenter at DMC TV Channel 2. Inclusive Employment and Accessibility to Workplaces moderated by: Mr. Hany Ayaad, Head of Operations at Entrepreneurship Center, AASTMT <p><i>P.S. Dr. Ahmed Khalifa Mehanna – Leading of PACES Project at AASTMT join the Panels Discussion Group</i></p>

The summary of the panel discussion;

Mrs. Mays Abou Hegab – Education Director, Sawiris Foundation

She firstly started with her thanked to the previous panel speakers for their valuable information and sharing knowledge then she thanked Dr. Ahmed Mehanna for organizing the wonderful and amazing conference and the Arab Academy that include a lot of sessions after that she spoke about the role of civil institutions in preparing people with disabilities for the labor market and training them. Her speech began with a brief introduction to the Sawiris Foundation for Social Development. It also mentioned the target groups, which are children and youth - women and girls - persons with disabilities. I briefly talked about the Foundation's budget and listed a summary of the Foundation's initiatives and projects from 2005 to 2021. The Sawiris Foundation is currently tending to focus on implementing interventions supported by scientific evidence and also encourages the implementation of innovative project ideas on the condition that the impact of these projects is evaluated.



MP Dr. Rania El-Jazairly – Member of the Egyptian Parliament

You talked about the parliament's role in monitoring and follow-up and the parliament's focus and support in employing and training people with disabilities. The deputy spoke about defining the job gap and stated that people with disabilities have sufficient competence to carry out and implement various works and jobs, especially in light of providing the appropriate work environment. As for the laws, for example, the International Convention for Persons with Disabilities states that employing people with disabilities and providing them with job opportunities is one of their basic rights. And also the Disabled Persons' Rights Law No. 4 of 1999, Article 27, prohibits discrimination based on disability while protecting their rights in fair working conditions. Article 10 also stipulates that they are entitled to vocational rehabilitation programs and obligates governmental and non-governmental institutions to accommodate several people with needs of at least 5% its employees. The Ministry of

Manpower is keen to advertise jobs for people with disabilities in the private sector. For example, I mentioned a distinguished person with disabilities, Ibrahim El-Khouly, who was the first teaching assistant with Down syndrome at the Canadian University of Egypt at the Faculty of Information. The doctor asked about any proposals from people with disabilities to be legislated by Parliament, then Dr. Muhammad Tohamy spoke while he was blind that the word "disabled" is very ordinary, and there is no need for excessive sensitivity. He also expressed his opposition to some car laws for people with disabilities. As a businessman, he spoke that the most important criteria for employment are competence, regardless of whether the applicant is disabled or not, and he is against adherence to the 5% rate in the law. The mother of a disabled girl said that some public universities refuse her enrollment to study there. Dr. Maged from Fayoum University said that the problem of people with disabilities comes in the kind of jobs that await them after graduation from the Ministry of Manpower, and it does not completely match their academic degree. Dr. Rania promised to consider all these proposals.



Mr. Ahmed Elbana – Founder and CEO of Nomad Divers

Ahmed Al-Banna spoke of changing his field of work from engineering to diving training, and that his company is interested in tourism, especially for people with disabilities. Al-Banna spoke about the advantage of scuba diving for the handicapped, and that it moves him to a free, free world that has no restrictions. Snorkeling is available for all types of disabilities. He also talked about success stories for people with disabilities who challenged their disabilities and obtained certificates in scuba diving. He also mentioned some of the challenges he faces, including the spatial availability of tourist places in Egypt.

MP. Sahar Albazar, Deputy Chair of Foreign Affairs Committee at Egyptian Parliament

The deputy spoke about how the 5% rate is activated and about the role of the labor market and companies in this activation. The deputy talked about some points, including that the disabled should be rehabilitated with difficult and complex skills, and not only with easy or basic skills. The deputy praised the project on the job training, which puts the disabled person in training for a period of 3 months, for example, to live the real work experience with the government or charitable institutions support for the salary during the training period. The deputy recommended giving entrepreneurs with disabilities the opportunity and embracing their projects to give them a chance in the labor market. She spoke about the role of legislation in easing the financial burdens on people with disabilities who are owners of new projects. She explained that the 5% rate is not fully activated, and here comes the role of Parliament in monitoring the private sector to ensure that this percentage is activated.

Ms. Amena El-Saie – Cofounder & CEO of Helm

Ms. Amena spoke about the role of Helm Foundation in bridging the gap between people with disabilities and the labor market. She spoke about the concern of major companies around the world with people with disabilities and the extent of their impact on the company's profits from an economic point of view. Amena explained the three pillars that the Foundation is working on, namely, training, employment, and access. She spoke about making remote training available for people with disabilities due to the circumstances of the Coronavirus and using the available technological resources remotely to raise the efficiency of training. She also spoke about the Foundation's experience in converting any facility to be available for people with disabilities.

Dr. Reem Abd El Meguid – Chairperson House of Management for Training

I talked about the gap between the labor market and those with benefits. She mentioned 4 basic competencies that the world's largest companies are looking for, which are digital skills, cognitive skills, social intelligence, and adaptability. And she wondered where people with disabilities could study STEM, which is science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. All of these sciences will qualify people with disabilities for prestigious jobs worthy of their competence. Dr. Ahmed Khalifa replied that some laws in the Supreme Council of Universities prevent persons with disabilities from joining some specialties, and it is one of the problems that must be resolved. Dr. Reem spoke about the university's role as a transitional phase for the disabled, as he prepares him for the labor market so that the study is appropriate for what the labor market needs.

Finally, all of the Speakers in both Panels thanked the AASTMT, the committee for inviting them to this Conference and they thanked the organizers especially Dr. Ahmed Mehanna and Dr. Alyaa Mounir. Moreover, two of the Egyptian Parliament in both Panels will work on the Conference recommendations.

Written by : Eng. Mohamed Elsherif

Reviewed by : Eng. Mootaz Anany & Dr. Ahmed Mehanna

Success Stories Session during the IC-PACES Conference

<u>Time:</u>	<u>23:21 mins</u> , on Sunday 7 th of March 2021
<u>YouTube</u>	<p><u>Zoom Recording Link:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/qqa_E7xpWjY <p><u>Conference Hall Recording Link</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/qrVGzra-eZE • https://youtu.be/qR2g0_vbtWE • https://youtu.be/UAvOcmsKu6g • https://youtu.be/NLVOouc14Mw • https://youtu.be/qRoI4r4fs20
<u>Presenter</u>	<p>The success stories speakers are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Amr ElSohagy • Ms. Gehad Abdullah • Mr. Sayed Mansour • Mr. Hamza Hamed • Ms. Sama Ramy • Mr. Ahmed Hassan

The Summary of the Success Stories Session during the IC-PACES Conference;

- **Mr. Amr ElSohagy** requested that diving for PwD will open a new area of expertise in Egypt and in the Middle East generally. He also added that diving for PwD can open new beneficial financial sectors in tourism, for example for this around 60-70 million people with disabilities in the Arab region alone. He asked the Egyptian government to adopt this idea and this issue.
- **Ms. Gehad Abdullah**, a student with visual disability in AASTMT, gratefully speaks of her experience with visual impairment. She tells us about the challenges she's faced in the community and how they've strengthened her. "I've learned leadership through the Institute of International Education by working on a project with them and participating in CRC conference." Gehad also participated in plenty of civil work such as Enactus Student Chapter at AASTMT, AAST Entrepreneurship Center, Hult Prize Computation, and she is one of the Student Union members. She also contributed a lot to serving her community by teaching blind kids Braille. Regardless of all the challenges she kept facing, Gehad pushed herself to become an independent active person.



- Mr. Sayed Mansour Zaki** is a student with hearing disability at Fayoum University; was originally born in Bani Suef in a family of six children, two of whom are PwD. Sayed is usually accompanied by a translator Mr. Maged who puts Sayed's signs into words. Sayed briefly described his experience with feeling the need to prove himself in his community until he proudly got the honors of being one of the outstanding students. He continues to discuss the hardships facing people with disabilities to get accepted into jobs. "We cannot accept you; we do not want mute persons" is what Sayed said is told to him when applying in companies.



- Mr. Hamza Hamed** is a student with visual disability in Arab Academy for Science Technology and Maritime Transport. Hamza spent his school years in a public school in Egypt; regardless of his blindness he still managed to place second nationally. "Excelling in AAST was the most challenging" he states, it's the way of teaching and tools used. Hamza blames schools for not providing the assistive technologies to have the students growing with the basics of these tools. He thanked his family about their support and he thanked Dr. Ahmed Khalifa fir his support in the AC and for this chance to speak during the PACES Conference.



- Ms. Sama Ramy Sobhy**, a 19-year-old student in AASTMT, speaks about how she was able to change the way the community views persons with disabilities by reaching out to leading figures such as the Minister of Education. She requested to put an end to the use of offensive terminologies regarding PwD. "We have the ability to think, we have the ability to understand, we have the ability to do everything," she said as she continued to recite a verse of the Quran. "I will keep changing in the society until it has changed."



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- Mr. Ahmed Hassan** is one of the staff team members at PACES Project and he is an Assistant Lecturer at the College of Management and Technology at AASTMT. He stated that the blindness was not allowed to hold him back. Mr. Ahmed applied to a scholarship funded by AAST to cover his college fees for his studying at College of Management and Technology through the Programming Computations that hosted and organized by the AASTMT Regional Informatics Center; he say that I **thankfully** as a got the first place. This is heartfelt comment on his receiving the approval of the scholarship. During his talk, Mr. Ahmed talked about his work at the AASTMT and especially his support to the SwD at the AASTMT AC and the Devices/Softwares that purchased by both projects SWING & PACES which funded by the EU. He talked about his happiness as he is one of the SWING & PACES project team at AASTMT.



Written by : Ms. Aya Abu Halima & Eng. Mootaz Anany
Reviewed by : Dr. Ahmed Mehanna



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IC-PACES Conference Closing Session and Recommendation

<u>Time:</u>	26:29 mins , on Sunday 7 th of March 2021
<u>YouTube</u>	<u>Zoom Recording Link:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://youtu.be/qga_E7xpWjY <u>Conference Hall Recording Link</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TT1BwipZBkg&list=PLF3TmI8G7ZyrCKW5Z2Z6DFwG30TNSRMf4&index=16
<u>Presenter</u>	<u>The session was presented by</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Ahmed Khalifa Mehanna – Lead of PACES Team Project, Vice Dean of Student Affairs, AASTMT, Alexandria, Egypt • Prof. Jacqueline Cawston, Coventry University, UK: (PACES Project Coordinator) • Dr. Ahmed Saada – Minister of Social Solidarity Advisor for Support Civil Work and Health Support Affairs • Prof. Mohamed Abo Elazm – Dean of Student Affairs, AASTMT, Alexandria, Egypt



The presenter of the IC-PACES, (**Ms. Rowan Eissa**), started the Closing Session and Recommendations of the Conference by presenting **Prof. Jacqueline Cawston** to give her feedback about the Conference; Prof. Cawston started her talk by we are coming to end of two amazing days with a very brilliant conference and she thanked **Dr. Nivine El-Qabbage** the Minister of Social Solidarity for her passionate speech, her contribution into the Conference

and for her words about that she will stand with us and she wants us to stand with her for the disability issue and there were many recommendations from this conference i.e. rising the awareness through the media about the rights for PwD to play an active part in society to make sure that PwD visibly doing the same job as everyone else not to be a taken person but to be a professional same to everyone else and to be treated the same no discrimination and also the conference covered the monitoring of employment for PwD to have real job with real responsibility and real pay and she talked about the PACES training and it's available on the Project website for free, all of the attendees can use it and share it as it is for free in addition to her talk about the employability network and the many resources that available on the PACES Project website in English & Arabic, then she stated that **Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport in Egypt and Ibn Tofil University in Morocco** made an amazing and fantastic progress and impact for organizing their conferences with a lot network i.e. the Minister, Advisor ministers, Egyptian parliament members, Companies, NGOs' like Helm and she talked about the Entrepreneurship and incubators which can includes SwD/PwD is a good option rather than the employability.

Prof. Cawston talked about the important of increasing the Accessibility Centers that support and help the SwD; she then talked about the Minister and Speakers speeches' that we don't have to wait the time for act is now and the all building should be an accessible for everyone. Prof. Cawston thanked the all attendees, fantastic speakers, all network for the very interested conference that have a many ideas and recommendations and she thanked all of the PACES Project Partners and she send an especial thanks for her Research team **Dr. Cathryn Thompson and Dr. Sarah Merry** for their supporting everyone in the project over the 3 years. Finally, **Prof Cawston** thanked the President of AASTMT **H.E. Prof. Dr. Ismail Abdel Ghaffar Ismail Farag** for his leading the Conference and especial thanks going to the organizing committee **Dr. Ahmed Khalifa Mehanna, Prof. Mohamed Fahmy Shehadeh, Eng. Mootaz Anany** and to all the technical supporters and to everybody involved in putting on in this conference and she talked about the statement mentioned in the first day from one of the Speakers as a main outcome of the Conference “a *contagious feeling of hope*”, then she say Shokran in Arabic (شكراً).



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After that Ms. Rowan moved to **Dr. Ahmed Saada** - Minister of Social Solidarity Advisor who started his speech by thanking the AASTMT for their generous hospitality and for the amazing organization and for the fruitful discussion and all the partners and network that attend at the conference i.e. the NGOs', companies, Speakers, Egyptian parliament members, and especially the presence of civil society as they are the main arm of the Ministry of Social Solidarity in supporting the all issues related to the PwD, and once again, he thanked the organizing committee and all attendees on behalf of H.E. The Minister of Social Solidarity.

Ms. Rowan moved to **Prof. Mohamed Abo Elazm** - Dean of Student Affairs on behalf the President of AASTMT who started his talk by submit an apology about the President of AASTMT for not attending the closing as he has a meeting in Cairo, then he thanked the attendees for the amazing two days and he send especial thanks to **Prof. Ismail Abdel Ghaffar** for his continuous support to the students either with or without disabilities where the students name him the godfather and then he thanked the organizer committee, the Deanery of Student Affairs, the Regional Informatics Center at AASTMT, and the AASTMT Entrepreneurship Center as they are participate in organizing the Amazing IC-PACES Conference and he thanked Dr. Ahmed Khalifa Mehanna and the all team work participate in the IC-PACES, then he give an speech in English to thank the PACES Project consortium from UK, Greece, Spain, Slovenia, Morocco and ofcourse finally our beloved country Egypt and he hoped that all of them here in the Conference and finally he thanked the partners for all the hard works that did together to make this project success which has a great impact in the awareness and training to help PwD in their education life and he thanked his H.E the Minister of Social Solidarity for her attendance the Conference.



Ms. Rowan, the conference presenter finally moved to **Dr. Ahmed Khalifa Mehanna** – Lead of PACES Team Project, Vice Dean of Student Affairs at AASTMT to give his speech with the conference recommendations and he started his talk with thanked the all participants either now in the closing during the 2nd day or in the 1st day also the online attendees and this is because their endured all the panel discussions for two-days of the conference, but this due to that we had to cover all the conference topics that help our sisters, children and parents that have disabilities who existing in every place of our relations/networks. He said that all of the

attendees know that this is the final conference of the PACES project which funded by the EU and we had worked hardly for more than 3 years in PACES Project either before or during Covid-19 pandemic.

Dr. Mehanna talked about the suffering in the project due to the Covid-19 pandemic, but he said that it was worthy to achieving the project's outcomes, and he talked especially about the last two months starting from the end of December 2020, by making the decision to host the conference at AASTMT, which was scheduled to take place in October 2020, but it was postponed due to pandemic and we decided to take the risk for holding the IC-PACES Conference in a hybrid edition Online through ZOOM and Offline at the AASTMT Main Campus in Alexandria due to the important of the presence of all stakeholders to discuss the conference topics and to present the project results and to make an awareness regarding the needs of SwD and PwD.



Once again he thanked everyone attended the Conference and the volunteer students who participating in organizing the Conference, especially the students who participating with him and with the IC-PACES Conference committee who worked in the last month continuously staying up, and he thanked the team of organizing committee from the Deanery of Student Affairs, the Regional Informatics Center at AASTMT, and the AASTMT Entrepreneurship Center which leading to this result of the amazing and fantastic conference and he thanked the entire speakers and **H. E. Dr. Nivine El-Qabbage**, The Minister of Social Solidarity for her attendance and support and finally he thanked the civil society. After that **Dr. Mehanna** started to present the recommendations of the 2nd International Conference for Persons with disabilities (PwD) under the slogan of the role of Entrepreneurship, Accessibility Centers and Assistive Technologies towards Full Inclusion (IC-PACES Conference March 2021) as indicated in the following page.

Written by : Dr. Ahmed Mehanna

The Recommendation of the Closing Session of IC-PACES Conference:

1. The parliament should work towards ensuring the execution of the written laws regarding people with disabilities.
2. Integrating both the virtual realities with the technological developments to allow students with disabilities from all academic levels encounter more educational experiences.
3. Professional training for all teachers, advisors and staff members about disability to be well aware of the right ways to dealing and handling with the people with disabilities; also the training might include learning about all the opportunities and services regarding the people with disabilities.
4. The Ministry of Social Solidarity should act upon rising awareness campaigns regarding the diverse disabilities, how to handle them, and the different services provided by the country.
5. Thoroughly designing academic curriculums that will completely prepare students with disabilities for work life.
6. The media is expected to play a role in raising the awareness between students.
7. A behavioral documentation in schools that is supervised by well-trained advisors.
8. Train those who directly and often interact with people with disabilities on the assistive technologies.
9. Establish centers that are fully equipped by assistive technologies to develop the skills of people with disabilities and raise their productivity rates.
10. Assigning a specific percentage, nothing less than 10%, of the civil society organizations' activities and services to people with disabilities. The services usually include health and food insurances.
11. Educate the civilians on sign language and other communication means through TV shows, as a form of entertainment.
12. Providing all facilities that allow the government to implement the availability code that will allow tourists with disabilities.
13. Early tests regarding children with disabilities to educate their family members and them early on.
14. Increasing the role of the civil society in promoting organizations that raise awareness between the parents of people with disabilities.
15. Listening to their needs. Support their dreams instead of restricting people with disabilities to specific jobs and futures.
16. Create a database that records all mental disabilities showing their capabilities and what job opportunities require what skills. People with mental disabilities should also get appropriate training.
17. Directing the minimum wage of the 5% of employees of people with disabilities to funding at the Ministry of Social Solidarity that are later used to support programs for people with disabilities.

Written by : Ms. Aya Abu Halima & Ms. Mahinour Qamara
Ms. Maryam Abu Halima

Reviewed by : Dr. Ahmed Mehanna

At 06:45 PM Cairo Time after Dr. Ahmed Mehanna presenting the IC-PACES Conference recommendations he announced about the agreement which is currently under design with the Egyptian Ministry of Solidarity in the presence of the PACES team to support and train the Orphans, SwD and PwD in the civil society organizations different Egyptian Sectors, then he asked the presenter to play the Final Film about the IC-PACES Conference.

After that **Ms. Rowan Eissa** closing the conference with a great words: “Being a person with a disability in our world is not an easy thing, but it is a daily suffering, so we fight to prove to the society your academic and professional competence every day and fight to obtain all your rights as a member of the society and our mission in this conference is to end this war and suffering and we guarantee all your rights together as one hand; Doctors and Engineers University presidents, Businessmen, Counselors and Ministers together to help and support you”, then she thanked the honorable attendees. **Ms. Rowan Eissa**, Student at College of Pharmacy – AASTMT, say that I was with you as a main presenter at AASTMT. Finally, she thanked, her colleagues and the team members, and **Prof. Mohamed Abo Elazm**, and especially **Dr. Ahmed Khalifa Mehanna, who worked with us 24/7 without stopping and at the end she thanked the President of the AASTMT.**

Dr. Ahmed Khalifa Mehanna told the attendees that we will go to the late dinner instead of the Lunch and then he asked the team for a group photo.



Written by : Dr. Ahmed Mehanna

Finally, we can say that in spite of the COVID-19 pandemic, the IC-PACES Conference which has been held on 6th and 7th of March 2021 as indicated in this report had surpassed its initial plans and objectives as follows:

- Three Egyptian ministries (1. Egyptian Ministry of Social Solidarity, 2. Egyptian Ministry of Education and Technical Education, 3. Egyptian Ministry of Youth and Sports) have adopted and patronage the IC-PACES Conference.
- The Minister of Social Solidarity (**Dr. Nivine El-Qabbage**) has joined the opening of the IC-PACES Conference due to her belief in the impact of PACES Project. The minister decided to join the IC-PACES Conference after the meeting of AASTMT PACES team with the responsible in the ministry on February 2021 to give them a brief about the Project objectives and outcomes in the Egyptian universities. She has sent its advisor (**Dr. Ahmed Saada**, Minister of Social Solidarity Advisor for Support Civil Work and Health Support Affairs) to attend the all Sessions, Panel Discussions and Work Groups (Round Tables) of the IC-PACES Conference to effectively contribute in the success of the outcomes of the project as well as he participated as a Speaker in the Conference.
- Three Ministers Assistants had attended the IC-PACES Conference.
- **Eng. Hoda Dahroug**, Minister Advisor and Head of the Central Department for Community Development at MCIT, attend the all Sessions, and Panel Discussions of the IC-PACES Conference to effectively contribute in the success of the outcomes of the project as well as she gave a session about the Digital Transformation Role in Supporting PwDs "Jobs and Skills for Better Future".
- Six of the Egyptian Parliament Members have joined the IC-PACES Conference as speakers, and some of them joined the Work Groups (Round Tables) and they will deliver the recommendation of the conference into the Egyptian Parliament to update the laws (if needed) towards the inclusion of SwD.
- Six companies of the network had attended and provided opportunities in the companies' exhibition during the -PACES Conference.
- Outcomes of SWING Conference and roundtables were helped us in preparing the Four Work Groups, (Round Tables), in the IC-PACES Conference.
- Four newsletters from the all-published newsletters that published on the PACES project website addressed the 4 work groups of the IC-PACES Conference (report on each work groups that had taken place during the second day of the IC-PACES Conference). <http://pacesproject.eu/en/newsletters> (Newsletters # 6, 7, 8 & 9).
- The IC-PACES Conference was covered by the biggest media group in the region such as MBC and other National TV channels as well as all other national Newspapers in addition to the Social Media Coverages.
- **442** attendees **online** in the first day of IC-PACES Conference through Zoom.
- **183** attendees **online** in the second day of IC-PACES Conference through Zoom.
- **279** attendees **offline** in the 1st day of IC-PACES Conference at AASTMT Campus.
- **225** attendees **offline** in the 2nd day of IC-PACES Conference at AASTMT Campus.
- 51 Speakers/moderators have joined IC-PACES Conference (20 Males & 30 Females).
- The final recommendation of the IC-PACES Conference has been sent and shared to the three ministries to be adopted by the Egyptian ministries.

This report has been prepared and reviewed by:

Eng. Mootaz Anany

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Dr. Ahmed Khalifa Mehanna

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IMPORTANT LINKS:

- **PACES Project Website:**

<http://pacesproject.eu/en/home>

- **Facebook:**

<https://www.facebook.com/pacesswd>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/571115283065092/>

- **Twitter:**

<https://twitter.com/PacesSwd>

- **YouTube:**

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNxeqwnYqqafViXfS-xsOXw>



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