

READY



SENSITIVE LANGUAGE REGARDING DISABILITY FOR A MORE INCLUSIVE SOCIETY

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TOOLKIT



ILA UN.



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ABOUT

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- **ILA, International Labour Association Partner - Amsterdam, Netherlands**



- **Fighttthestroke - Milan, Italy**



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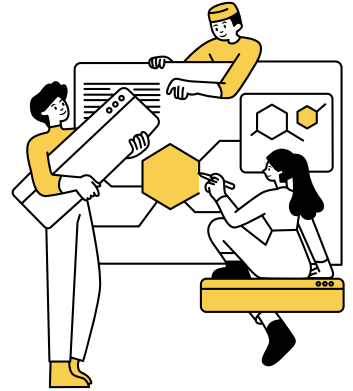


THE PROJECT

Inclusive language seeks to treat all people with respect, dignity, and impartiality. It is constructed to bring everyone into the group and exclude no one. “Sensitive Language regarding disability for a More Inclusive Society” (READY) was an Erasmus+ KA210 project in the field of Adult Education that aimed at raising awareness among trainers and educators working with people with disabilities on the importance of the usage of sensitive language as a tool to foster inclusion and equality and help to put an end to discrimination and stigmatization of people with disabilities.

In order to achieve its objectives, READY put in place:

- Research the current state-of-the-art in the usage and the teaching of sensitive language towards disabilities in partners' national languages.
- 3 International mobilities among partners to study the results of this research and codesign workshops (one per mobility) designed to train the target group to use inclusive language in everyday life and in the workplace. Each mobility will be themed to tackle a specific aspect of biased language towards disabilities.
- Production of a Toolkit with all the results and methods developed that will be available and downloadable for free from the project website.



The following pages are a summary of the experience of the project and comprehension of the research done by partners, a detailed description of the project mobilities, including a list of useful exercises used to achieve the project objectives, altogether creating this ToolKit.

THE TARGET GROUP

The READY project Target Groups were trainers and educators working with people with disabilities. In many countries, teachers do not have the confidence or the necessary skills to deliver inclusive education. Inclusive education is only a small component of the training received by teachers and is not always assessed. The idea of educators, such as teachers, training on inclusion is rarely realized. Teachers are often taught inclusion on the side, rather than as a central principle of all the training they receive. Cooperation among trainers within institutions and between organizations is also important to support them in addressing the challenges of diversity. By involving them, partners could better study the different methods and tools implemented, co-design new ones and observe the immediate impact of this project in the everyday activities of the target group. This can also represent the starting point for several follow-up activities, including a new Erasmus+ KA2 project aiming at further exploring tools and methods for effective sensitive communication and developing some new technological tools to address biased language.



THE PARTNERS



- Asociación Uno, Spain (Coordinator): “Asociación para el desarrollo SocioEmocional de la persona, la sociedad y para la cooperación internacional Uno” (Uno) is a no-profit organization founded in 2021 in Valencia, Spain. Uno focuses on life-long learning, believing that everyone should be able, and should aim, to study and improve themselves continuously. In doing so, also improve the society we live in. Uno's idea is that individuals and society can only be fully complete if they learn to interact and give their very best to each other. To help this process, Uno focuses its activities on four areas: Social Inclusion; Gender Equality; Development of Socio-Emotional Intelligence Competencies; and Sustainability. For all these problems, solutions could only come from a collective approach that puts together individuals and their communities. This concept fully embodied the spirit behind Uno. Uno is fighting the social exclusion of all the marginalised social classes that are the most at risk of being left behind due to difficulties in social activities, studies, job placement, etc.
- Fightthestroke, Italy: Existing since 2014, the Fightthestroke Foundation has been able to reach more than 1 million people, attending more than 250 events, thanks to the advocating capabilities and commitment of its founders. As a renowned disability and patients’ rights advocate, the Fightthestroke case study has been reported in 5 books, 30 theses and 4 scientific publications. FightTheStroke believes in the opportunity to offer a dignified life to those who experienced major trauma, such as a brain injury at birth or a young age so that they can look at opportunities and strengths more than at areas of improvement. FightTheStroke believes in the role of sharing experiences to give support to families impacted by trauma, related to health and disability. FightTheStroke believes in the care of the individual as a single unit and not as a set of organs to be maintained and repaired. FightTheStroke Foundation exists to answer to the need for knowledge and support for families impacted by the management of a young stroke survivor and with a disability of Cerebral Palsy; to educate the awareness that children, even those not yet born, can be affected by potentially disabling brain damages; to inspire the new generations and encourage research and adoption of 'disruptive' therapies.
- ILA, The Netherlands: ILA is an NGO that provides mechanisms to facilitate knowledge and experience transfer among sectors and countries and carries out national and international training, research and consultancy projects on employment, entrepreneurship, vocational qualification, migration, volunteering, youth work, and labour relations. ILA works with people at risk of marginalization and who are facing social obstacles. Even though the main activities of the organization target youth, they have been involved in several projects for the inclusion of adults and seniors at risk of social exclusion, such as the "Upskilling Adults 45+, with Migrant Background" project focused on tackling the difficulties of (re)insertion on the labour market and in the community of migrants both from the EU and outside EU and of return migrants. Regarding dealing with disabilities, they have been active in several projects as the "Shape Your Future" project was designed to have an impact in the direction of fighting youth unemployment and poverty, through supporting young disabled people’s participation, particularly in the employment process.



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Partners implemented research in their own countries, the results containing:

- Key national laws and regulations promoting disability rights and inclusion.
- Guidelines on language use in official documents and public communications.
- Political situations
- Cultural, societal, or systemic barriers to implementing sensitive language.
- Resistance or controversies faced.
- Public attitudes towards people with disabilities.
- Influence of culture, traditions, and media on language use.
- Survey results or studies highlighting current language use trends.
- Real-life examples of stigmatising vs. sensitive language.
- Curriculum integration for sensitive language use.
- Training programs for educators and trainers.
- Behaviour changes
- Recommendations for promoting inclusive language.
- Best practices from other countries or regions.
- Case studies where sensitive language led to positive outcomes.
- Testimonials from individuals with disabilities or their advocates.

CHAPTER 1 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK & POLITICAL SITUATIONS

1.1 ITALY



The Italian Constitution - Adopted in 1948, it establishes Italy as a democratic republic and guarantees basic rights to all citizens. It provides for a bicameral parliament, an independent judiciary, and a system of checks and balances between branches of government.

Articles 2, 3, and 4 of the Italian Constitution contain important protections for the rights of people with disabilities:

Article 2:

- Guarantees the inviolable human rights for all citizens, including those with disabilities. Ensures protection of fundamental personal rights.

Article 3:

- Prohibits discrimination and guarantees equal social dignity and equality before the law. Provides constitutional basis for disability rights and laws.
- Calls for full participation of all citizens in social, economic and political life. Mandates removing barriers for disabled.

Article 4:

- Obligates the state to promote circumstances to make human rights and equal dignity effective.
- This applies to facilitating exercise of rights and participation for disabled citizens through accommodations.

In summary, these articles constitutionally enshrine non-discrimination, human dignity, equal rights, and the state's duty to enable disabled citizens to fully participate in society's opportunities. They form the cornerstone for disability rights and inclusion under Italian law.



Specific laws on disability rights, services, accessibility, education, employment, etc. are the mechanisms for implementing these constitutional principles and making them substantive for Italy's disabled population. But it starts with the rights and protections recognized in Articles 2, 3 and 4.

The Workers' Statute (Statuto dei Lavoratori) - Passed in 1970, it guarantees basic rights for workers, such as protection against unjust firings, the right to strike, and the right to participate in union activities. It forms the foundation of Italian labor law.

Law 118/1971 is another important Italian law related to disabilities that I should have included. Here are the key details:

- Full Title: "Conversion into law of the decree-law on provisions in favor of civil invalids"
- Passed in 1971 to provide additional rights and benefits to disabled citizens in Italy.
- Granted new disability pensions to citizens with permanent reductions in working capacity, even at a young age. Increased amounts for existing disability pensions.
- Introduced integration allowances for disabled people employed in mainstream workplaces as well as shelters/social cooperatives employing disabled people.
- Provided financial support for technical equipment and home care expenses to improve autonomy and quality of life.
- Established free public transportation passes for people with major disabilities.
- Created the National Fund for the Civilian Handicapped to finance the implementation of these and other policies supporting the disabled.

So, in summary, Law 118/1971 expanded disability welfare and benefits in areas like pensions, allowances, accessibility aids, transportation, and employment supports. It took a substantial step forward in Italy's social services for the disabled.

Law 517 of 1977 was a landmark for the educational inclusion of students with disabilities. It established their right to enrol in mainstream schools at all levels, from elementary to university. Schools must accept disabled students and provide support like specialized teachers, customized learning plans tailored to each child's needs, and removal of architectural barriers. This aimed to promote equal educational opportunities through integration.

The law's full title was "Provisions for assistance, social integration and rights of handicapped persons." In mandating that regular schools accommodate disabled students, it sought to fulfil the Constitutional principle of enabling their full participation in society. Funds were allocated for accessibility improvements and specialized teacher training.

Overall, Law 517 of 1977 represented major progress at the time for disability inclusion in education. It pioneered the concept of mainstreaming, influencing subsequent policies like Framework Law 104 requiring integrated schooling. Execution remains a challenge, as many disabled students still do not get adequate support. However, the law was groundbreaking in Italy for establishing rights and standards around inclusive education.



Other important laws in this field are:

- Law 104/1992 - Also known as the "Framework Law for Assistance, Social Integration and Rights of Persons with Disabilities", it establishes rights such as free health care, accessible public spaces and transportation, integrated education, vocational training, and financial assistance for disabled people. It also provides for paid leave for caregivers.
- Law 68/1999 - Known as the "Regulations on the Right to Work for Disabled People", it requires companies with over 15 employees to maintain a quota of at least 7% of workers who have disabilities. Fines can be levied for non-compliance. The law aims to promote integration into the workplace.
- Law 18/2009 - Ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It adopted EU directives on non-discrimination and accessibility and expanded disability rights in areas like independent living, personal mobility, rehabilitation, and technological aids.
- Law 107/2010 - Established compulsory integrated education for students with disabilities in regular classrooms. Schools must provide support services and individualized education plans tailored to the needs of disabled students.
- Law 112/2016 - The "Dopo di Noi" ("After Us") law created a system of support for people with disabilities without families, to protect their well-being and housing after their family caretakers pass away. Includes provisions like dedicated housing and financial assistance.
- The Zan Bill - A proposed law against homophobia, transphobia, misogyny, and ableism to punish hate speech and violence against LGBTQ+ people, women, and people with disabilities. It passed the lower house of parliament in 2020 but stalled in the Senate.

Policy Papers

Moreover, we have to consider that Italy is incorporated into the European Union, so we have to consider some milestones posed by the EU that every country has to incorporate into its legal and civil system.

The European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and related European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) are very relevant to disability rights in Italy. Here are some key points:

- Italy ratified the ECHR in 1955, agreeing to uphold civil and political rights defined in the convention. This is legally binding.
- Several ECHR articles relate to disability rights, such as the right to life, prohibition of inhuman/degrading treatment, and respect for private and family life.
- The ECtHR hears cases of alleged ECHR violations. It has made disability-related rulings against Italy in areas like accessible transportation, employment discrimination, and inclusive education.
- For example, in the case *Ceraolo v. Italy* (2015), the ECtHR found Italy had violated the ECHR by failing to provide reasonably accommodated transportation for a man with mobility impairments.
- When the ECtHR rules against a country, it sets a legal precedent that the country must then comply with and adjust its laws accordingly.
- So, the ECHR and ECtHR established disability rights standards that Italy must integrate into its national laws and policies to avoid further penalties.
- Overall, the European human rights system has been an important mechanism for advancing disability rights and protections in Italy over time.



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European Disability Strategy 2021-2030 as it sets important guidelines for disability rights and inclusion that impact Italy as a member state of the European Union. Here are some key points:



- Adopted by the European Commission in 2021 to further advance disability rights and inclusion across the EU over the next decade.
- Covers areas like accessibility, independent living, education, employment, health, social services, political participation, and equality laws.
- Calls for removing barriers and improving accessibility in sectors like transport, infrastructure, digital tech, and public services.
- Seeks to ensure persons with disabilities have equal access to healthcare, education, and lifelong learning opportunities.
- Aims to boost employment opportunities and reduce the disability employment gap.
- Promotes adequate minimum income, disability pensions, and carer support for decent living standards.
- Monitors implementation and progress in EU countries through periodic reporting and evaluation.

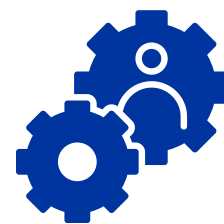
As an EU member, Italy will be expected to introduce measures that align with the goals and priorities outlined in the European Disability Strategy by 2030.

1.2 SPAIN



In contemporary Spain, as in many other parts of the world, the discourse surrounding disabilities and the use of language in addressing this vital issue have evolved significantly. This research paper delves into the complex intersection of disabilities and sensitive language within the Spanish context, shedding light on the importance of language as a tool for both empowerment and discrimination. The way individuals and society at large perceive, discuss, and address disabilities can profoundly influence the lived experiences of people with disabilities. As such, understanding the nuances of language in this context is paramount.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT



Disabilities encompass a wide range of conditions, from physical impairments to cognitive differences, and they affect individuals across the lifespan. According to the World Health Organization, approximately 15% of the world's population lives with some form of disability, making it a significant and diverse demographic group (WHO, 2021). In Spain, as in many developed nations, the prevalence of disabilities has been steadily increasing due to factors such as an ageing population and advances in medical diagnosis and treatment.

Historically, the treatment of individuals with disabilities in Spain, as in other parts of the world, has been marked by discrimination, segregation, and stigma. However, in recent decades, there has been a paradigm shift in how society perceives and addresses disability. This shift has been influenced by the disability rights movement, which advocates for equal rights, accessibility, and inclusion for people with disabilities.



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STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

While progress has been made in recognizing the rights of individuals with disabilities, there remain challenges related to language and communication. Insensitive language and negative stereotypes persist in various aspects of Spanish society, including the media, education, and employment. The use of insensitive language can reinforce societal prejudices, hinder inclusion efforts, and limit the opportunities and well-being of people with disabilities.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND LIMITATIONS

This research paper seeks to achieve several key objectives:

- To examine the current state of disabilities in Spain, including prevalence, demographics, and societal attitudes.
- To explore the concept of sensitive language and its significance in addressing disabilities.
- To assess the impact of insensitive language on individuals with disabilities and their experiences in Spanish society.
- To analyze the role of language in media representation, education, and employment of people with disabilities in Spain.
- To provide insights into existing guidelines and best practices for using sensitive language and promoting inclusion.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY



This research holds significant relevance for various stakeholders, including policymakers, educators, media professionals, and the public. By understanding the implications of language in the context of disabilities, it is possible to contribute to a more inclusive and equitable society. Moreover, this research aims to raise awareness about the importance of using respectful and inclusive language when addressing disabilities.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS



It is important to acknowledge the scope and limitations of this research. While the study focuses primarily on the Spanish context, it may draw insights from international perspectives and guidelines on disabilities and language sensitivity. The research is limited to desk research, and primary data collection is beyond its scope. Additionally, the rapidly evolving nature of language and societal attitudes may impact the relevance of certain findings over time.

In the following sections, this research paper will delve deeper into these issues, offering a comprehensive exploration of disabilities and sensitive language in Spain. Through an examination of existing literature, media portrayals, education, and employment practices, this paper aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse surrounding disabilities and foster a more inclusive and respectful society for all.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The journey toward the inclusion of people with disabilities in Spain has been marked by significant historical developments and shifts in societal attitudes. Here are some key milestones:

- **Early History:** Historically, people with disabilities in Spain, as in many parts of the world, were often marginalized and subjected to discrimination. They were frequently institutionalized or hidden from public view.
- **1982 Constitution:** The Spanish Constitution of 1982 laid the foundation for recognizing and protecting the rights of people with disabilities. It declared the principle of equality and non-discrimination (Article 14) and established the framework for social policies aimed at integration and inclusion.
- **1986: Law of Integration of Disabled People (LISMI):** This law marked a pivotal moment in Spain's commitment to disability inclusion. It established various measures to promote equal opportunities and the integration of people with disabilities into society. LISMI introduced affirmative action in employment, accessibility standards, and support services.
- **2006: The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD):** Spain ratified the CRPD in 2008, reaffirming its commitment to protecting the rights of people with disabilities. The convention emphasizes the principles of equality, non-discrimination, and inclusion.

PRINCIPAL LAWS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1986 - The Law of Social Integration of Disabled Persons (LISMI): This law has undergone several revisions and amendments, but it continues to be a fundamental piece of legislation for disability inclusion in Spain. It sets the framework for promoting accessibility, education, employment, and social participation for people with disabilities.

Accessibility Laws: Spain has implemented various laws and regulations to ensure accessibility for people with disabilities. These include laws that require public spaces, transportation, and websites to be accessible. Spain has had legislation related to universal accessibility since 2003, by virtue of Law 51/2003, of 2 December, on equal opportunities, non-discrimination and universal accessibility for persons with disabilities (LIONDAU, hereinafter referred to as LIONDAU), which was subsequently subsumed and integrated together with other legal regulations (Law 13/1982, of 7 April and Law 49/2007, of 26 December) in Royal Legislative Decree 1/2013, of 29 November, approving the Consolidated Text of the General Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and their Social Inclusion.

2011 - National Disability Strategy: Spain has developed a National Disability Strategy that outlines policies and actions to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities. It includes measures to enhance accessibility, education, employment, and independent living.

Use of Sensitive Language: In recent years, there has been a growing emphasis on using sensitive and inclusive language when referring to people with disabilities. Various organizations and disability advocacy groups in Spain have published guidelines on appropriate language use. These guidelines encourage the use of person-first language, where the person is emphasized before their disability (e.g., "person with a disability" rather than "disabled person"). Avoiding derogatory terms and stereotypes is also emphasized.



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1.3 NETHERLANDS

POLITICAL SITUATIONS



In the Netherlands, disability rights are typically addressed within the broader framework of human rights and inclusivity. The Dutch government has taken steps to ensure equal rights and opportunities for disabled individuals. This includes anti-discrimination laws, accessibility regulations, and policies aimed at improving the quality of life for disabled people.

The Netherlands is committed to promoting the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities. Beyond its legal framework, several political approaches and initiatives have been taken to advance this agenda. Here are some notable political stances and strategies:

- **Ratification of International Treaties:** The Netherlands ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) in 2016. While this is a legal commitment, it also indicates a significant political will to align national policies with international standards.
- **Interdepartmental Collaboration:** Various ministries and governmental departments have worked collaboratively to promote disability rights and inclusion. This interdepartmental approach ensures that disability inclusion is integrated across different sectors, such as education, employment, and healthcare.
- **Participation of Persons with Disabilities:** The Dutch government promotes the participation of persons with disabilities in decision-making processes that concern them. This participatory approach ensures that policies are tailored to those directly affected by needs and experiences.
- **Local Government Initiatives:** Municipalities in the Netherlands are crucial in promoting disability rights and inclusion. Many local governments have initiated programs and strategies tailored to the specific needs of their communities.
- **Public Awareness Campaigns:** The government, in collaboration with NGOs and other stakeholders, has launched public awareness campaigns to challenge stereotypes, prejudices, and harmful practices related to persons with disabilities.
- **Support for NGOs and Civil Society:** The Dutch government provides support to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society groups working on disability rights and inclusion. This collaboration ensures that grassroots initiatives and voices from the field are considered in policymaking.
- **Budgetary Commitments:** While budgetary allocations can be seen as practical, they also indicate a political commitment. The Dutch government allocates resources specifically for projects and initiatives promoting disability rights and inclusion.
- **International Advocacy:** On the international stage, the Netherlands has been a vocal advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities. The country often collaborates with other nations and international bodies to promote disability rights and share best practices.
- **Collaboration with the Private Sector:** The Dutch government collaborates with the private sector to promote disability inclusion in the workplace. This includes initiatives to encourage businesses to hire persons with disabilities and make their workplaces more accessible.
- **Focus on Digital Accessibility:** As the world becomes increasingly digital, the Netherlands has emphasized ensuring that digital platforms and services are accessible to everyone, including those with disabilities.



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- **Legislation and Policies:** The Netherlands has implemented various policies and legislation aimed at promoting the rights of people with disabilities. The country ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) in 2016, which underscores the importance of full and effective participation and inclusion in society. This ratification has further strengthened the country's commitment to improving accessibility and ensuring equal opportunities for people with disabilities.
- **Inclusive Education:** The Netherlands has adopted an inclusive education policy that aims to integrate children with special needs into mainstream schools. This policy is based on the belief that all children, irrespective of their abilities or disabilities, have the right to education in a regular school environment.
- **Awareness and Acceptance:** The Dutch government and various NGOs have launched campaigns to raise awareness about disabilities and promote acceptance. These campaigns aim to break stereotypes and foster understanding.
- **Accessibility:** The Dutch government has made significant efforts to improve accessibility in public spaces, transportation, and other areas. There are regulations in place to ensure that public buildings and transportation are accessible to people with disabilities.
- **Employment:** The Dutch government has also made strides in promoting the employment of people with disabilities. There are initiatives and incentives in place to encourage employers to hire people with disabilities.
- **Public Perception:** While there are always individual differences in attitudes, the Dutch public generally has a positive and understanding attitude toward people with disabilities. This is a result of cultural values and awareness campaigns' efforts.
- **Challenges:** Despite the many positive steps, challenges still exist. Some people with disabilities feel that there is still room for improvement, especially in areas such as employment opportunities, accessibility, and social inclusion.



LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK



- **Equal Treatment Act on Handicap or Chronic Illness (WGBH/CZ)**

This law was established in 2003 and it prohibits discrimination on the grounds of disability or chronic illness in employment, vocational training, and housing. It was later expanded in 2016 to cover goods and services.

- **Participation Act ('Participatiewet')**

Implemented in 2015, this law combined several laws related to work and benefits. It aims to help more people with disabilities or with long-term illness find a job, with a focus on their abilities rather than their limitations.

- **Social Support Act ('Wet maatschappelijke ondersteuning, Wmo')**

This act requires municipalities to provide support for people who have difficulty living independently or participating in society due to a physical or mental disability or a chronic illness. This could be in the form of home adaptations, mobility aids, or social activities.

- **The Dutch Building Decree ('Bouwbesluit')**

This regulation provides guidelines and requirements for accessibility in buildings, ensuring that public buildings and homes are accessible and usable for everyone, including people with disabilities.

- Education Act ('Wet op het primair onderwijs')

This law ensures that children with disabilities have the right to inclusive education, allowing them to attend regular schools whenever possible. When it's not possible, special education schools are available.

- Passenger Transport Act 2000 ('Wet personenvervoer 2000')

This law requires that public transportation be accessible to everyone, including people with disabilities. It covers buses, trams, and metro systems.

BENEFITS

WIA-benefit is the benefit you receive if, due to illness or disability, you cannot work or earn less than your previous income from work. You apply for the WIA benefit if you have been ill for nearly 2 years (104 weeks) and, because of the illness or disability, only can earn 65% or less of your previous income. Under the WIA, you must work as much as you can. The WIA encompasses two schemes:

- WGA: Return to Work (Partially or temporarily completely Disabled Persons) Scheme, for people who are temporarily or partially (at least 35%) incapacitated for work.
- IYA: Full Invalidity Benefit Regulation, for people who are completely (at least 80%) and permanently incapacitated for work.

GUIDELINES ON LANGUAGE USE IN OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS AND PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

In the Netherlands, inclusive language is encouraged in official documents and public communications to promote equality and avoid discrimination. The Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment's guidelines provide the following recommendations:

- Person-First Language: Put the person before the disability. Instead of saying 'disabled person', use 'person with a disability'.
- Avoid Negative Terminology: Refrain from using derogatory or negative terms. Use neutral language that doesn't stigmatize or offend.
- Respect Individual Preferences: Some individuals prefer specific terminology. If possible, use the terms they themselves use to describe their disability.
- Focus on Abilities: Highlight individuals' abilities rather than just their disabilities. Avoid overly focusing on limitations.
- Avoid Clichés and Stereotypes: Steer clear of clichéd phrases or stereotypes that can perpetuate misconceptions.
- Be Specific and Accurate: If relevant, use specific terms to accurately describe a person's disability (e.g., 'wheelchair user' instead of 'confined to a wheelchair').
- Person-Centered Language: Put the person at the center of your language. Instead of saying 'victim of', use 'survivor of'.
- Avoid Pity Language: Don't use language that elicits pity or sympathy. Focus on empowerment and independence.
- Use Plain Language: Keep language clear and simple to ensure everyone can understand the message.
- Respect Privacy: Don't disclose personal information about someone's disability without their consent.
- Sensitivity Training: Provide training to staff and communicators to ensure they understand and use appropriate language.



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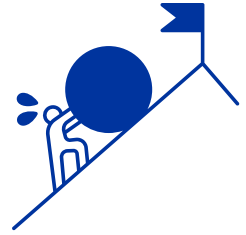
CHAPTER 2

CURRENT STATE OF LANGUAGE USE & CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS & CULTURAL AND SOCIETAL PERSPECTIVES

2.1 ITALY

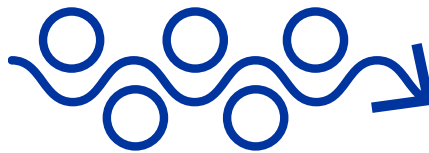


RESISTANCE OR CONTROVERSIES FACED



Most of the resistance and controversies faced in Italy are in the following fields:

- Accessibility - Many public areas, buildings, and transportation are not adequately accessible for people with disabilities. For example, blind people sometimes can't move easily in the city. There isn't enough braille information and traffic lights with sound.
- Employment - People with disabilities often face challenges in obtaining a job due to the lack of adequate workplace infrastructure.
- Healthcare Services - Access to healthcare can be complicated for people with disabilities. Sometimes hospitals can't accept people with disabilities.
- Discrimination - People with disabilities often encounter prejudices and stereotypes that can influence their societal participation and life opportunities.
- Assistance and Support - Families of people with disabilities must struggle to obtain the support and assistance they need, "fighting" against a complex bureaucratic system.
- Complex Regulations and Laws - Laws concerning people with disabilities are not always easily understandable, creating confusion and challenges for PWDs in accessing their rights.



Some information about how sensitive the language is used by Italian people, and the type of language used to talk about disability often changes depending on context, environment, and people. Commonly, if the person who is talking does not have any kind of disability himself, the most used words to raise awareness about that theme in Italy are:

'diversità' (=diversity), 'inclusione' (=inclusion), 'accessibilità' (=accessibility), 'disabilità' (=disability), 'empatia' (=empathy), 'solidarietà' (=solidarity), 'diritti' (=rights), and 'sensibilizzazione' (=awareness).

These words are often used to promote understanding, acceptance, and support for individuals with disabilities in society. On the other hand, when someone must speak directly to people with disabilities it's important to note that what's considered appropriate or preferred can change over time. What doesn't change is the need to use respectful and person-centered language when discussing disabilities. From another point of view, people with disabilities use a wide range of terms to describe their difficulties to others, and the language they use can vary based on their individual experiences and preferences. Some people commonly used words might include 'challenges', 'limitations', 'barriers', 'struggles', 'impairments', and 'obstacles'.

PUBLIC ATTITUDES TOWARD PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



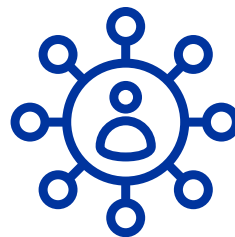
Attitudes towards people with disabilities in Italy have been evolving, but challenges and misconceptions still exist. The Italian government has taken steps to promote inclusivity and equal rights for people with disabilities through legislation and initiatives that provide various benefits and accommodations.

However, the level of accessibility and awareness can vary across different regions and communities within Italy. Some segments of society are supportive and understanding, while others may hold outdated stereotypes or lack proper knowledge about disabilities. Efforts have been made to improve infrastructure and public spaces to accommodate individuals with disabilities, but there might still be gaps.

In everyday life people with disabilities move through a 'jungle' consisting of architectural barriers, ignorance, fear of being different, and lack of culture; a 'jungle' that exists both in the real world and in the 'virtual' one. This 'jungle' creates episodes of discrimination that can be harassment, denigration, abuse, bullying, and physical and psychological assaults, hate crimes.

Influence of culture, traditions, and media on language use:

- In 1998 has been published "Decalogo della buona informazione sulla disabilità" by the Federazione Italiana per il Superamento dell'Handicap, Italy accepted the recommendations of ONU conventions, about the choice to use a person's first language instead of a disability first language, back in 2007. In the media, there haven't been particular changes in the language after these recommendations, but many associations (journalism order, associations) did some seminary about this topic.
- In 2017 the association FIABA, a non-profit organization that wants to push down all the architectural and cultural barriers wrote a "Carta deontologica sulla rappresentazione delle persone con disabilità" that has been presented to the journalists, asking them to use proper language when they talk about people with disability.
- In 2021 Italy recognized LIS (Italian language of sign) as an official language.
- In June 1980 CIP, the Italian branch of the Paralympics committee, was established for the purpose of 'setting up a unified process for the organization of sports for people with disabilities', the FIDIR (Federazione Italiana Sport Paralimpici degli Intellettivo Relazionali) was established in 2009.



SURVEY RESULTS OR STUDIES HIGHLIGHTING CURRENT LANGUAGE

USE TRENDS

What is ableism and how widespread is it in Italy? 'Nothing about us without us' empirical research on ableism in Italy (Franco Angeli, 2022), a collective work by Rosa Bellacicco, Silvia Dell'Anna, Ester Micalizzi, and Tania Parisi, it is aimed at answering these two questions. The central theme of the publication is, indeed, ableism, a systemic oppressive phenomenon that penalizes people with disabilities and manifests in structures, beliefs, prejudices, and discriminatory attitudes towards them.



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The idea for ableism research arose from the existing research project ESI-P (Towards a Schoolwide Framework for the Evaluation of the Quality of School Inclusion: a Pilot Project), which was funded by the Free University of Bolzano and aimed to build a model for evaluating the quality of school inclusion. Among the various aspects investigated in the project, in addition to teaching strategies, teachers' self-efficacy, and student well-being, there was the aspect of attitudes, a topic of great importance in the literature, but for which there was no specific intersectional measurement tool available. This technique needs to connect various fundamental features to the educational situation (four were recognized in this case: ableism, sexism, racism, and classism). The idea to create it emerged from discussions between Silvia Dell'Anna, a researcher at the Free University of Bolzano and the proposer of the ESI-P project, Rosa Bellacicco, and Tania Parisi, researchers at the Department of Philosophy and Educational Sciences at the University of Turin. Ester Micalizzi, a doctoral student at the University of Genoa, who was also involved in the ESI-P project, joined them from the beginning.



Ableism, at least in Italy, is less studied compared to other oppressive systems, such as sexism or racism. Although there is extensive literature in the Italian context studying and documenting the discrimination faced by people with disabilities, specific studies on the attitudes of those who engage in such discrimination are lacking. Building on these premises, the publication aims to fill this gap by identifying a shared definition of ableism, describing its various forms, investigating its consequences on the lives of those who experience it, and measuring its prevalence in Italy through specific research.

One distinctive aspect of this work is that, in accordance with the principle of 'Nothing about Us without U', coined by the global disability rights movement, the study was conducted using participatory methods and 'involved a group of people with disabilities experienced in ableism either through personal experience or through study and/or advocacy work. Their participation in the research - as stated in the Introduction - was fundamental in developing a shared definition of ableism and creating a tool to measure it.'

While there are existing measurement scales for phenomena like sexism, classism, and racism used in empirical studies, there was no specific tool available in the Italian language for ableism. Once developed by the research group, the scale was administered to a representative sample of 1,500 adult Italians. As the sample was constructed using probabilistic techniques, the findings about the prevalence of ableism can be attributed to the general population. It's also worth noting that the research was conducted with an intersectional perspective, considering that the coexistence of different characteristics that are susceptible to discrimination - such as gender, age, race, social class, and ability - exposes individuals to particular forms of discrimination, including multiple and intersectional discrimination.



The publication is divided into three sections, the first contains empirical and theoretical elements that help define and delineate the scope of the study. Among the proposed element is a reflection on the concept of ability by Fabrizio Acanfora (writer, university lecturer, and activist who engages in scientific dissemination about autism), a compilation of ableism definitions from international literature, and a survey of existing measurement tools. The second section is dedicated to presenting the phases and outcomes of the participatory research conducted. It's worth noting that within the research itself, in addition to the measurement scale, two definitions of ableism were also produced, one concise and another more extensive and articulated. The final section includes contributions from the members of the working group on manifestations of ableism in specific aspects of their daily lives and in relation to their concrete experiences (female gender, audism, independent living, architectural and cultural barriers, accessible tourism, employment, and career, sports). In short, it's a very rich work full of food for thought. Here, we are only capturing some of it.

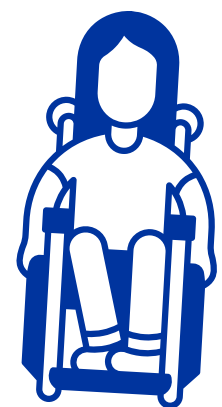
Certainly, it's interesting to understand and reflect upon the concise definition of ableism: 'Ableism is a form of discrimination that concerns disability as the product of interaction between a society centred on the concept of normality and certain characteristics of the individual. It consists of a set of negative attitudes and/or discriminatory behaviours that result in the creation, perpetuation, or exacerbation of disadvantaged conditions related to disability. As you can see, this definition revolves around the concept of normality, which is deconstructed in the extended definition, and emphasizes the presence of systemic disadvantage.

Developing the ableism measurement scale was a central task for the research group. In its final version, it comprises 22 items to which the sample units were required to assign a score from 0 to 4, corresponding to their level of agreement with each statement. These items pertain to the following thematic dimensions: non-recognition of disability and unjust rights/advantages; work;

- inspiration for a tragic view of disability;
- equity/accessibility;
- substitution/infantilization;
- relationships.



The collected data are numerous and all very interesting, for example, one clearly emerging trait is the ambivalent representation of people with disabilities, 72% of the sample agrees with the statement 'people with disabilities who strive to behave like others are to be admired', which indicates a substantial devaluation of these individuals and expresses an ableist orientation that encourages a representation of disability as deviant otherness, to be hidden, rejected, or ignored, or to be dealt with through a charitable approach, proposing curative and corrective solutions, or relegating the life experiences of people with disabilities to places and domains different from the rest of the population for the purpose of protection (either their own or others') and control.



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The ambivalence and polarisation of attitudes between piety and heroism become clear when over half of Italians (56%) express admiration by agreeing with the statement 'people with disabilities are an example for everyone', while almost one in three (32%) adopts the tragic view of disability expressed in this statement: 'Having a child with a disability is the worst thing that can happen to a parent'. Reflecting from an intersectional perspective, it's pleasing to note that most of the sample (49%) agrees with the statement 'women with disabilities are capable of taking care of their children like other mothers,' but at the same time, it's evident that this statement isn't shared by 22% of Italians. The fact that the gendered identity of people with disabilities isn't normalized is also demonstrated by the circumstance that 21% of the sample agrees with the statement 'people with disabilities need affection more than a sexual life'.

Another striking piece of data is that 39% of Italians agree with the statement 'It's beneficial for children with sensory disabilities (deaf or blind) to have schools dedicated solely to them to better address their needs', thus endorsing a segregating approach to educational services, even though Italy stands out in the European and global landscape for having abolished special schools as early as 1977. Furthermore, evidence that something isn't functioning well in school inclusion is demonstrated by the 16% of the sample that agrees with the item 'Having an autistic child in the classroom slows down the program'. In addition to describing the spread of ableist attitudes across different dimensions, the study also shows how the propensity for ableism is influenced by factors such as gender, age, and education level, and how having real contact with people with disabilities significantly reduces the inclination to adopt ableist behaviours from a statistical perspective.

REAL-LIFE EXAMPLES OF STIGMATISING VS. SENSITIVE LANGUAGE

In Italy, the stigmatization of people with disabilities is an issue that we try to mask when in fact it occurs through ableist behaviours that may seem trivial but make a real difference. In everyday language, we have often heard the word 'handicapped' used as an insult, almost as if disability were a fault. The inappropriateness of this term can be offensive, especially to those who live and fight with disability every day.



Real-life example:

'When I was at university, I was sitting with a friend in the library in the seat reserved for people with disabilities with the permission of an attendant. At a certain point, another attendant came in and shouted: What are these doing here? It's not like they're both handicapped. Everyone who was there turned around and looked at us. It was very humiliating. I'm getting used to listening to other offensive words using conditions of disadvantage as a common language. Maybe other situations are social life situations like groups going out, parties, or walking activities that aren't allowed for people with disabilities because they must run or do something physical. So, people prefer to exclude instead of include because it's easier and they don't have to work to find alternative solutions.'



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CULTURAL, SOCIETAL, OR SYSTEMIC BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTING SENSITIVE LANGUAGE

In Spain, like in many countries, there can be cultural, societal, and systemic barriers to implementing sensitive language. Here are a few potential barriers:

- Tradition and Resistance to Change: Spain has a rich cultural history, and some people may resist changes to traditional language use, viewing it as an erosion of their cultural heritage.
- Language Variations: Spain is linguistically diverse, with several regional languages such as Catalan and Basque. Balancing sensitivity in language across these linguistic variations can be challenging.
- Political and Historical Context: Spain has a complex history with periods of political repression and censorship. This can influence discussions around sensitive language, as some may be wary of government interference.
- Generational Differences: Older generations might be less open to adopting sensitive language compared to younger generations who may be more attuned to contemporary social norms.
- Media Influence: Media plays a significant role in shaping language use. Some media outlets may resist adopting sensitive language due to their own editorial policies or the preferences of their audience.
- Education System: The education system can either promote or hinder the use of sensitive language. Curriculum choices and teacher attitudes can impact how young people learn about and use language.

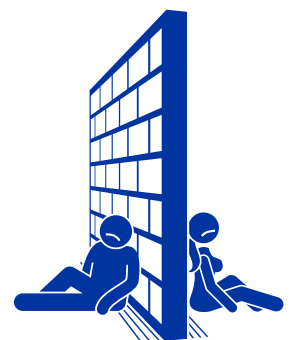
Addressing these multifaceted challenges necessitates a holistic approach. Prioritizing educational and awareness campaigns that underscore the importance of inclusive language is imperative. Establishing and reinforcing legal frameworks and guidelines can pave the way for uniformity in language practices. An integral component of this strategy should also be to amplify the representation of disabled individuals in media and public forums. Such representation can act as a catalyst in reshaping societal perceptions and fostering sensitivity in linguistic choices.



RESISTANCE OR CONTROVERSIES FACED

In September 2021, Spain has faced various forms of resistance and controversies, some of which include:

- Catalan Independence Movement
- Basque Separatist Movement
- Historical Memory
- Language and Identity
- Social and Political Divides
- Territorial Integrity
- Gender Equality and Women's Rights



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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE USE OF SENSITIVE LANGUAGE



Person-First Language: Emphasize the individual, not their disability. For example, say "person with a visual impairment" rather than "blind person."

Avoid Stereotypes: Refrain from using negative stereotypes or stigmatizing language. Focus on the person's abilities and contributions.

Respect Preferences: When possible, use language that individuals with disabilities prefer to describe themselves.

Accessibility: Ensure that communication materials, including websites and documents, are accessible to individuals with disabilities.

Educational Initiatives: Promote awareness and education about sensitive language use among the general public, including students and professionals in various fields.

Inclusive Media: Encourage media outlets to adopt guidelines for respectful and inclusive language in their reporting and portrayals of people with disabilities.

By examining the historical context and legal framework in Spain and highlighting recommendations for sensitive language use, Spain has made strides toward promoting the inclusion of people with disabilities. However, ongoing efforts and awareness are crucial to furthering the cause of disability inclusion and ensuring that individuals with disabilities can fully participate in society on an equal basis with others.



Practising sensitive and inclusive language when referring to people with disabilities is essential for promoting respect, dignity, and equality. Here are some best practices for using sensitive language towards people with disabilities:

- **Use Person-First Language:** Place the person before the disability. For example, say 'a person with a disability' instead of 'a disabled person'. This emphasizes the individual rather than their condition.
- **Respect Individual Preferences:** If possible, ask individuals how they prefer to be referred to. Some individuals may identify strongly with their disability and prefer terminology like 'deaf' or 'autistic'.
- **Avoid Negative Labels:** Refrain from using derogatory or stigmatizing labels such as 'handicapped', 'crippled', or 'invalid'. These terms can be offensive and perpetuate stereotypes.
- **Emphasize Abilities:** Focus on a person's abilities and talents rather than their limitations. Describe what someone can do, rather than what they can't.
- **Be Specific and Accurate:** Use specific terminology when referring to particular disabilities. Avoid generic or overly broad terms. For instance, say 'cerebral palsy' instead of 'a condition'.
- **Respect Privacy:** Don't inquire about a person's disability unless it is relevant to the conversation. Respect their right to disclose or not disclose their disability.
- **Avoid Pity or Inspirational Language:** Avoid language that portrays people with disabilities as objects of pity or as inspirational solely because of their disability. Treat them as individuals with their own achievements and challenges.
- **Inclusive Language:** Use language that promotes inclusion and equality. For example, instead of saying 'normal' when comparing someone to a person with a disability, say 'typical'.
- **Use 'Accessible' or 'Inclusive' Language:** When discussing physical spaces or documents, use terms like 'accessible' or 'inclusive' to convey that accommodations are available for everyone.
- **Educate Yourself:** Stay informed about disability terminology and issues. Language evolves, so it's essential to keep up with respectful language practices.



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- **Avoid Offensive Metaphors**: Be cautious with metaphors related to disability that can perpetuate negative stereotypes, such as ‘falling on deaf ears’ or ‘blind to the truth’.
- **Recognize Diversity**: Understand that people with disabilities are a diverse group with unique experiences and perspectives. Don't make assumptions based on disability.
- **Promote Inclusive Communication**: Ensure that communication materials, websites, and documents are accessible to individuals with disabilities, including those who use screen readers or alternative communication methods.
- **Engage in Open Dialogue**: Encourage open and respectful conversations about disability-related topics. If you're unsure about appropriate language, it's acceptable to ask someone how they prefer to be described.
- **Advocate for Inclusive Language**: Advocate for the use of inclusive language in your workplace, educational institutions, and communities. Raise awareness about the importance of respectful language.



Remember that language sensitivity is an ongoing process, and it's important to be receptive to feedback from individuals with disabilities. The goal is to create a more inclusive and equitable society where everyone is treated with respect and dignity, regardless of their abilities or disabilities. These are a few organizations and guidelines active in Spain:



- **Fundación ONCE**: Fundación ONCE is a Spanish foundation that works towards the social inclusion of people with disabilities. They have initiatives and resources related to inclusive language and disability awareness. You can visit their website for more information: [Fundación ONCE](#).
- **Plena inclusión**: Plena inclusión is a Spanish organization that focuses on the inclusion of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. They often promote inclusive language and awareness. You can find resources on their website: [Plena inclusión](#).
- **CEDD (Comité Español de Representantes de Personas con Discapacidad)**: CEDD is the Spanish Committee of Representatives of Persons with Disabilities. They advocate for the rights of people with disabilities in Spain. While they may not provide specific language guidelines, they are involved in policy and advocacy work related to disability rights and inclusion.
- **The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)**: While not specific to Spain, the CRPD provides international guidelines for the rights of people with disabilities. Spain is a signatory to this convention. You can explore the CRPD and its principles on the [United Nations website](#).
- **European Disability Forum (EDF)**: The EDF is an umbrella organization representing the interests of persons with disabilities at the European level. They often provide resources and guidelines related to disability rights and inclusion. You can visit their website: [European Disability Forum](#).
- **International Best Practices**: Many international organizations, such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), provide guidelines and resources related to disability inclusion and language sensitivity. While not specific to Spain, their guidance can be informative and applicable.



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CULTURAL, SOCIETAL, OR SYSTEMIC BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTING SENSITIVE LANGUAGE

In the past, the Dutch referred to individuals with disabilities as 'invalide'. However, this term doesn't suggest they are 'invalid'. The origin of 'invalide' can be traced back to the French word of the same spelling, which itself comes from the Latin 'invalide'. This is the antonym of 'validus', meaning robust and well. Thus, labelling someone with a disability as 'invalid' implies they are neither strong nor healthy, which is a rather severe and inaccurate descriptor. Recognizing this, the Dutch now use the term 'mindervalide', translating to 'less able' to be more sensitive and accurate.

Although 'mindervalide' has become more prevalent than 'invalide' in the Netherlands, it's not necessarily the most ideal term. The word still implies that the individual is less capable or even 'less valid'. Despite its implications, the term remains in use. For instance, one can see it displayed at the 'ingang voor mindervaliden' (entrance for the less valid) at the Rechtbank (court) in Haarlem, [Guidance on sensitive words and words to avoid, The City of Amsterdam](#)

In the Netherlands, there might be cultural resistance to changes in language, as people might perceive it as unnecessary political correctness and holding on to traditional norms. Societal barriers could include a lack of awareness about the impact of insensitive language on marginalized groups, as well as resistance to change and misconceptions about the intent behind such language shifts. Overcoming these barriers requires awareness campaigns, education, and open dialogue. Systemic barriers may arise from established language norms and difficulty in modifying official documents and guidelines.



RESISTANCE OR CONTROVERSIES FACED

The resistances or controversies faced in the Netherlands during history are:

- **Tradition vs. Change**: People are often resistant to change, especially when it comes to language, which is deeply ingrained in culture. Some individuals believe that changing language is unnecessary and can be seen as an attempt to be "politically correct" rather than a genuine concern for inclusivity.
- **Clarity of Communication**: Some argue that the use of certain inclusive terms can be ambiguous or less direct than traditional terms. For example, the term "differently abled" might be seen as a vague descriptor compared to more specific terms.
- **Generational Differences**: Older generations might not be as familiar with or accepting of newer inclusive terms. This can lead to misunderstandings or even confrontations between different age groups.
- **Fear of Misuse**: Some people worry about using the wrong term and offending someone, so they might avoid discussing disability altogether. This can lead to further marginalization of disabled individuals.

- **Diverse Opinions within the Disabled Community:** Not all persons with disabilities agree on which terms are best or most appropriate. Some might prefer person-first language (e.g., ‘person with a disability’) while others might prefer identity-first language (e.g., ‘disabled person’).
- **Economic Implications:** Changing signage, documents, and other printed materials to reflect more inclusive language can be costly. Some businesses and institutions might resist these changes due to the associated costs.
- **The Global Influence:** As a country that is very internationally connected, the Netherlands is influenced by global trends and discussions around disability and language. However, direct translations of English terms might not always work well in Dutch, leading to confusion or misuse.
- **Educational Challenges:** Educating the public about why certain terms are seen as derogatory and introducing them to more inclusive language requires consistent effort and resources.



PUBLIC ATTITUDES TOWARD PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The Netherlands, like many Western European countries, has made significant strides in recent decades towards promoting inclusivity and ensuring the rights of people with disabilities. While it's impossible to generalize the attitudes of an entire population, several trends and observations can be made about the Dutch perspective on disability:

- **Legislation and Policy:** The Netherlands has committed to international conventions that promote the rights of persons with disabilities, such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Dutch national policies also reflect a commitment to accessibility, non-discrimination, and full participation of people with disabilities.
- **Infrastructure:** Dutch cities have made considerable efforts to be accessible to people with physical disabilities. Public transport, buildings, and public spaces are generally designed with accessibility in mind, though there can always be room for improvement.
- **Education:** Inclusion in education is a priority, with the Dutch government focusing on integrating students with special needs into regular schools wherever possible. This policy of inclusion aims to familiarize all students with diversity from a young age.
- **Cultural Attitudes:** The Dutch are generally known for their directness and pragmatism. While this can sometimes come across as bluntness, it also means that many Dutch people are open to discussing and addressing the needs of people with disabilities directly. That said, as with any society, individual attitudes can vary.
- **Awareness Campaigns:** Various campaigns and organizations in the Netherlands work tirelessly to raise awareness about different disabilities, both visible and invisible. These campaigns help in shaping a more understanding and empathetic society.
- **Employment:** Efforts have been made to integrate people with disabilities into the workforce, with policies in place to support employers in hiring and accommodating employees with disabilities.
- **Social Interaction:** Generally, Dutch society values equality and fairness, so people with disabilities are often treated with respect and understanding. However, like any country, there can be individuals with prejudiced views or misunderstandings about disabilities.
- **Challenges:** Despite positive developments, challenges remain. Some argue that policies, while well-intentioned, don't always translate to full inclusivity in practice. There can also be discrepancies in accessibility between bigger cities and smaller towns.

INFLUENCE OF CULTURE, TRADITIONS, AND MEDIA ON LANGUAGE USE



Some languages have words or phrases that are closely tied to specific cultural concepts or values. For instance, certain words in one language may not have direct equivalents in another because they pertain to unique cultural aspects. Traditions encompass rituals, customs, ceremonies, and behaviours that are passed down from one generation to the next within a culture. Language plays a vital role in maintaining and expressing traditions. Types of influences:

- Vocabulary Evolution: Media exposure introduces new words, slang, and jargon into the language. Social media accelerates the spread of new terms and phrases.
- Language Standardization: Mass media often plays a role in establishing standard language norms and pronunciations. Broadcasters and news organizations set linguistic benchmarks that can influence how people speak and write.
- Language Globalization: Media contributes to the spread of languages beyond their original regions, impacting how languages are spoken and understood in various parts of the world.

SURVEY RESULTS OR STUDIES HIGHLIGHTING CURRENT LANGUAGE USE TRENDS

The Appropriate Education Act of 2014 was designed to curb the rising admissions to special education, yet it retained the dual-track system. By 2019, a surge in the number of students attending special education schools resulted in waiting lists in numerous localities. Around 4.1% of primary school-aged children consistently attend special education institutions. However, since 2014, there has been a decline in the percentage of students with disabilities receiving additional support in mainstream schools, dropping from 1% to 0.3%.

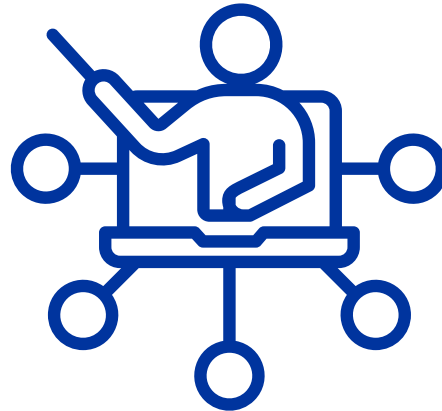
Around 4,000 school-aged children are not enrolled in any educational institution. This category includes kids who have been out of the school system for over three months and for whom a suitable educational setting hasn't been identified. One-third of these children have a disability. Additionally, there exists a subset of children who have been formally excused from mandatory schooling due to their disability. Parents with children who have disabilities have the legal right to select a mainstream school for their children. However, a school can lawfully decline admission if it feels it's unable to offer the necessary support to the child. Consequently, many parents express challenges in locating a suitable school nearby.

The Appropriate Education Act provides that schools determine the kind of support they make available. Since 2015, municipalities have cut back on care resources for support at school for children with a disability. Parents experience difficulties getting support. Parents do not have a say over the allocation of support funding, regardless of whether the money comes from a school consortium or from a municipality. Parents report instances of being pressured to accept placement in special education under threat of a report to child abuse authorities.



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Education scholars recognize that ‘ratification of CRPD raises urgent questions about the institutional division between regular and special education’ and that Article 24 necessitates a ‘searching discussion’ about the question of whether all pupils requiring extra support can receive that in regular education, and ‘how to define that if special education no longer exists.’ This discussion is not being facilitated by government officials. Schools wanting to be inclusive face barriers created by the financing system and rules complicating individual solutions and care.



Teacher training programs provide minimal training in inclusive teaching methods. Problems are reported with the availability of adapted teaching materials for schools.150 Educational materials for children with intellectual disabilities may not be disseminated due to copyright law. This inhibits information sharing and transmission. Students who complete special secondary education, regardless of whether they obtain a diploma, have a significantly lower chance of gaining employment compared to their counterparts in mainstream education. The National Education Inspectorate has raised concerns regarding the substantial number of students from special secondary schools who neither pursue further studies nor enter the workforce after graduation. A mere 20% of these students secure employment.

In technical and vocational programs for those aged 16-18, students with disabilities often encounter a knowledge gap concerning disability, both within classroom settings and during compulsory internships. This challenge is particularly pronounced for students transitioning from special secondary education, mainly due to inadequate guidance and support. In higher education, students with disabilities are at a higher risk of lagging in their coursework or discontinuing their studies.

The Netherlands lacks a comprehensive policy for continuous education. This is particularly concerning to many, as many individuals with disabilities have received minimal education, leaving them without the necessary skills or qualifications for meaningful jobs.

More details in [‘The Netherlands Disabled Person’s Organizations Report on the CRPD in the Netherlands’](#).



REAL-LIFE EXAMPLES OF STIGMATISING VS. SENSITIVE LANGUAGE



Examples of real-life language:

Stigmatizing Language

Using the term 'schizophrenic person' to describe someone with schizophrenia can be stigmatizing as it defines the person solely by their condition.

Using derogatory terms like 'crazy' or 'insane' to describe someone with a mental health condition can perpetuate negative stereotypes.

Labelling someone as a "drug addict" can stigmatize their struggle with addiction.

Describing a disabled person as 'handicapped' can be stigmatizing and focuses on their limitations rather than abilities.

Sensitive Language

Referring to someone as a 'person with schizophrenia' focuses on their humanity first, rather than defining them solely by their condition.

Using terms like 'person with a mental health condition' or 'individual with lived experience' shows respect and acknowledges their personhood.

Referring to someone as a 'person in recovery' acknowledges their efforts to overcome addiction and focuses on their journey.

Using phrases like 'person with a disability' or 'differently abled' recognizes their individuality and emphasizes their capabilities.





3.1 ITALY



CURRICULUM INTEGRATION FOR SENSITIVE LANGUAGE USE

All the teachers, not only 'support teachers' should attend the active educational training, TFA to develop pedagogical skills on how to manage a class group where there is a person with a disability. The purpose of this TFA course should be the change behaviour and above all mindset: to handle the class as one group of people, regardless of the disability.

Primary school teachers in temporary employment should be mandated with a minimum core pedagogical course, that includes:

- Building a moment in which everyone is entitled to speak up and share their feelings, emotions, moods, and thoughts in an open and inclusive environment to promote empathy inside the class group.
- Developing the 'Ten commandments of kind word\sentences' to show how to be kind towards all their classmates
- Organising a short first meeting with the school psychologist to get acquainted with their services and help.
- Set a monthly class meeting with the school psychologist regarding communication and behaviour in an inclusive class environment.
- Analyse and review along with teachers the open issues about inclusion that emerged in the monthly meeting about the class environment.



BEHAVIOUR CHANGES

To create behaviour changes we must start by changing the words we use to prioritize the person over the disability. Follow these steps:

- Qualitative and quantitative observation: learn how to know the person in front of us by empathizing and being open to learning about different disabilities and the language associated with them.
- Ask and listen: ask what people with disabilities need and then be ready to listen not just to what they're saying but also to how they speak and how they feel.

Ways to behave inclusive:

- Approach the person as you would anyone else, speak directly to the person, using clear, simple communication.
- Treat persons who are adults as adults. Do not patronize, condescend, or threaten when communicating with the person.
- Do not make decisions for the person or assume that you know the person's preferences. Respect their choices.
- Focus on an individual's abilities and strengths rather than only on their disabilities.
- Be patient, flexible, and supportive.



CURRICULUM INTEGRATION FOR SENSITIVE LANGUAGE USE

Curriculum integration for sensitive language use involves consciously incorporating language that is respectful, and inclusive and avoids reinforcing stereotypes or causing offense. This can be applied across the curriculum, from textbooks to classroom discussions, to create a more inclusive and equitable educational environment. For instance, instead of using terms like ‘normal’ or ‘abnormal’ when discussing diversity, more neutral terms like ‘common’ or ‘varied’ could be used to foster a more inclusive environment.

In literature, rather than focusing solely on authors and characters from a single perspective, expanding the selection of readings to include voices from diverse cultures, genders, and backgrounds would help students understand different realities and develop empathy.

In summary, curriculum integration for sensitive language use aims to create an educational environment that values diversity and avoids perpetuating stereotypes. Incorporating diverse examples and perspectives across all subject areas helps create a more inclusive and conscious education.



TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR EDUCATORS AND TRAINERS

These programs seek to provide educators and trainers with the knowledge and skills needed to address disability-related topics using inclusive language.

The following steps should be included in the programs:

- **Introduction:** Highlight the importance of respectful language for people with disabilities.
- **Inclusive Language:** Explain what it is and why it matters.
- **Need for Training:** Discuss why educators and trainers require specialized training in inclusive language.
- **Training Components:** Outline what these programs should cover, including awareness, terminology, and practical communication.
- **Implementation:** Describe how institutions can integrate training into education and professional development.
- **Measuring Impact:** Explain how to assess the effectiveness of these programs.
- **Conclusion:** Emphasize the significance of training for fostering inclusivity.



BEHAVIOUR CHANGES



In Spain, there have been significant advances in promoting inclusive education for people with disabilities. Policies and laws have been implemented, such as Organic Law 2/2006 on Education and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, aimed at ensuring equal access to education.

These changes in educational initiatives have led to greater awareness of the individual needs of students with disabilities, and specific resources and supports have been developed to facilitate their participation in the regular education system. However, challenges still exist in terms of infrastructure, teacher training, and the full implementation of inclusive practices at all educational stages.

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

Teachers in Spain teach others to have sensitive language towards people with disabilities through educational strategies and approaches. Some of the methods include:

- **Inclusive Education**: The inclusion of students with disabilities in regular classrooms to promote interaction between students with and without disabilities using sensitive language, which helps normalize diversity and foster empathy.
- **Modelling**: Teachers can serve as role models by using respectful language and behaviour in their interactions with all students, including those with disabilities by creating an inclusive educational environment and integrating lessons on empathy and respect into their daily teaching. They use inclusive and respectful language as a way of showing the right way to communicate with people with disabilities. This involves using terms and phrases that do not reinforce stereotypes or prejudices towards people with disabilities.
- **Teamwork**: Group projects and collaborative activities in the classroom provide opportunities for students to work with peers who may have different abilities and needs. This fosters mutual understanding and respect using consciously sensitive language.



Other ways of transferring this knowledge could be:

- **Education based on values**: It's essential that trainers incorporate values in education, such as respect and equality. They normally use examples and activities that highlight the importance of treating all people with respect and consideration, regardless of their differences.
- **Awareness**: Educators organize talks and activities to raise awareness among students about the needs and challenges of people with disabilities. These activities help students better understand the realities of people with disabilities and develop empathy putting special emphasis on the use of a sensitive language.



CURRICULUM INTEGRATION FOR SENSITIVE LANGUAGE USE

The Dutch government and educational institutions are generally proactive in ensuring inclusivity for all students, including those with disabilities. This includes not only infrastructure and educational support but also curricular content that promotes awareness and sensitivity towards persons with disabilities. However, the exact content and extent of this curriculum integration can vary based on the specific educational institution and level. Additionally, over time, there might have been more recent changes or additions to the curriculum that I'm unaware of.

Here are some general samples or examples of what curriculum integration for sensitive language toward persons with disabilities might look like:

- Awareness Lessons: Educators may incorporate lessons that teach students about various disabilities, both visible and invisible. This helps students understand the challenges faced by their peers and fosters empathy.
- Language Education: Students could be taught the importance of using a 'people-first' language. For instance, instead of saying 'disabled person', it's more appropriate to say, 'person with a disability'.
- Storytelling: Incorporating books or stories that have protagonists with disabilities can be an effective way of teaching students about the experiences and perspectives of those with disabilities.
- Guest Speakers: Inviting persons with disabilities to share their experiences can be a powerful way to foster understanding and sensitivity.
- Role-playing and Simulations: Activities where students are put in situations to simulate the experiences of those with disabilities can be eye-opening. For instance, navigating the school using a wheelchair or trying to complete tasks while blindfolded can help students appreciate the challenges faced by their peers with disabilities.
- Guidelines and Policies: Schools might have guidelines for respectful communication, which includes avoiding derogatory terms related to disabilities and promoting positive language.
- Teacher Training: Educators themselves might undergo training sessions to ensure they use sensitive language in the classroom and promote an inclusive environment.





Training programs for educators and trainers in the Netherlands:

- Inclusive Language Workshop - This program offers educators insights into appropriate language use, addressing common misconceptions and providing practical strategies for promoting inclusivity in communication.
- Disability Awareness Training - This training aims to raise awareness about different types of disabilities, debunk stereotypes, and teach educators how to communicate respectfully and inclusively.
- Communication and Inclusivity Seminar - Focusing on practical communication skills, this seminar helps educators adapt their language to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for people with disabilities.
- Person-First Language Workshop - This workshop emphasizes the importance of using person-first language that prioritizes the individual over their disability, helping educators foster respectful and empathetic communication.
- Accessible Teaching Strategies Program - Alongside language training, this program equips educators with strategies to ensure their teaching materials and methods are accessible to all students, regardless of their abilities.
- Interactive Role-Playing Sessions - These sessions involve educators in simulated scenarios to practice using sensitive language when interacting with individuals with disabilities, providing constructive feedback for improvement.
- Collaborative Learning Circles - Educators engage in group discussions and share experiences, helping them learn from one another and collectively develop effective ways to communicate sensitively.
- Guest Speaker Series - Bringing in individuals with disabilities to share their experiences and preferences regarding language use can be a powerful way for educators to learn and adapt their communication.
- Continuous Professional Development - Integrating inclusivity and sensitive language training into ongoing professional development programs ensures that educators stay updated and continually refine their communication skills.
- Inclusive Curriculum Design Workshop - Educators learn how to create inclusive curricula that not only incorporate diverse perspectives but also use language that respects and reflects the experiences of people with disabilities.



CHAPTER 4

BEST PRACTICES AND WORST PRACTICES, SUCCESS STORIES



STAKEHOLDER



The use of sensitive language towards people with disabilities involves a variety of stakeholders who play different roles in promoting respectful and inclusive communication. Here are some of the main stakeholders involved:

- **People with Disabilities**: Individuals with disabilities are central stakeholders. They have the right to self-identify and express their preferences regarding language and terminology used to describe their disabilities.
- **Disability Advocacy Organizations**: These organizations represent and advocate for the rights and interests of people with disabilities. They often develop guidelines for sensitive language and raise awareness about the importance of respectful communication.
- **Government and Policy Makers**: Government agencies and policymakers are responsible for enacting laws and regulations that promote accessibility, inclusivity, and language sensitivity. They may also create guidelines for government communication.
- **Educational Institutions**: Schools, colleges, and universities are stakeholders in promoting sensitivity towards disabilities. They can implement policies that encourage the use of respectful language and educate students about disability awareness.
- **Media and Entertainment Industry**: The media has a significant impact on public perceptions. Media outlets, journalists, and content creators can influence attitudes through their portrayal of people with disabilities. It's essential for them to use sensitive language and avoid harmful stereotypes.
- **Healthcare Professionals**: Healthcare providers, including doctors, nurses, and therapists, interact with people with disabilities regularly. They should use respectful language when discussing diagnoses and treatment options.
- **Employers and Workplaces**: Employers can create inclusive work environments by using sensitive language in job postings, policies, and interactions with employees with disabilities. They should also provide reasonable accommodations.
- **Educators**: Teachers and educators play a crucial role in fostering an inclusive environment in schools and universities. They can model respectful language and teach students about disability awareness and sensitivity.
- **Community and Social Service Organizations**: These organizations provide services and support to individuals with disabilities. Using sensitive language is essential in their interactions with clients and the broader community.
- **Legal and Human Rights Organizations**: Organizations dedicated to human rights and legal advocacy may work to ensure that the rights of people with disabilities, including the right to respectful language, are upheld.



- **Language Professionals:** Translators, interpreters, and language experts have a responsibility to convey sensitive and accurate terminology when translating or interpreting for individuals with disabilities.
- **General Public:** Society at large is a crucial stakeholder. Public awareness and attitudes toward people with disabilities can significantly impact their experiences. Promoting respectful language and raising awareness is a collective effort.
- **Research and Academic Community:** Researchers and academics in fields such as disability studies, linguistics, and communication play a role in studying and promoting language sensitivity and inclusivity.
- **Technology and Accessibility Experts:** Those involved in developing accessible technology and communication tools can ensure that these tools support sensitive language and accessibility for people with disabilities.

Collaboration among these stakeholders is essential to create a more inclusive and respectful society that values the dignity and rights of people with disabilities. Each group has a unique role in promoting sensitive language and fostering an environment of equality and inclusion. The future objectives of using sensitive language towards people with disabilities encompass broader goals of promoting inclusivity, equity, and respect in society.

These objectives align with ongoing efforts to create a more inclusive and accessible world for individuals with disabilities. Here are some key twelve future objectives:

- **Promoting Inclusion:** Sensitive language will continue to play a pivotal role in promoting the inclusion of people with disabilities across all aspects of society, including education, employment, healthcare, and social participation.
- **Reducing Stigma:** Using respectful and inclusive language helps reduce the stigma associated with disabilities. Future objectives include further eradicating negative stereotypes and discriminatory attitudes through language.
- **Enhancing Access and Participation:** Sensitive language supports efforts to improve access to public spaces, services, and information for individuals with disabilities. Future goals involve advancing accessibility and ensuring equal participation in all areas of life.
- **Advancing Legislation and Policies:** Advocates will work to strengthen legislation and policies that reinforce the use of sensitive language and promote the rights and well-being of people with disabilities.
- **Education and Awareness:** Future objectives include continued education and awareness initiatives to ensure that individuals, organizations, and institutions are informed about the importance of sensitive language and its impact on the disability community.
- **Inclusive Media:** The media will be encouraged to adopt and adhere to guidelines for sensitive language use, ensuring that portrayals of people with disabilities are respectful, accurate, and diverse.



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- **Accessible Communication**: Efforts will focus on making communication, including digital content, documents, and public information, accessible to individuals with disabilities, supporting their full participation in the digital age.
- **Promoting Self-Advocacy**: Individuals with disabilities will be empowered to advocate for their own language preferences and rights, ensuring that they have a say in how they are described and referred to.
- **Continual Language Evolution**: As language and societal attitudes evolve, future objectives will involve adapting language guidelines to reflect these changes while maintaining a commitment to sensitivity and inclusivity.
- **Global Collaboration**: Collaboration between countries and international organizations will continue to promote best practices in language sensitivity on a global scale, fostering a more inclusive world for people with disabilities.
- **Respect for Intersectionality**: Future objectives will also involve recognizing and respecting the intersections of disability with other aspects of identity, such as gender, race, and ethnicity, in language and advocacy efforts.
- **Holistic Well-Being**: Beyond language, the broader objective is to ensure that people with disabilities enjoy holistic well-being, including physical and mental health, social connections, economic opportunities, and the ability to lead fulfilling lives.

By pursuing these future objectives, society can work towards creating a more inclusive and equitable environment where all individuals, regardless of their abilities or disabilities, are treated with respect and dignity, and have the opportunity to thrive and participate fully in all aspects of life.

Achieving widespread adoption of sensitive language in the short term involves a combination of awareness, education, and advocacy efforts. Here are some main steps that can be taken in the short term to promote the use of sensitive language towards people with disabilities:

- **Awareness Campaigns**: Launch public awareness campaigns that highlight the importance of using respectful and inclusive language when referring to people with disabilities. These campaigns can target the general public, media professionals, and specific industries.
- **Media Training**: Provide training and resources to media outlets and journalists on the use of sensitive language. Encourage accurate and respectful reporting on disability-related issues.
- **Educational Initiatives**: Implement educational programs in schools and universities that teach students about disability awareness and the use of inclusive language. Work with teachers and educators to incorporate these topics into the curriculum.
- **Guidelines and Style Manuals**: Develop and disseminate guidelines and style manuals that provide clear instructions on using sensitive language. These guidelines can be tailored for specific industries, such as healthcare, education, and media.
- **Collaboration with Stakeholders**: Collaborate with NGOs, advocacy organizations, and disability rights groups to promote the use of sensitive language. These organizations can play a crucial role in raising awareness and advocating for respectful language.





- **Accessibility in Communication:** Ensure that all communication materials, including websites, documents, and public signage, are accessible to individuals with disabilities. Promote accessible communication as an essential component of sensitive language use.
- **Engage with Influencers:** Partner with influential figures, celebrities, and social media influencers to advocate for the use of sensitive language. Their reach can help spread awareness to a broader audience.
- **Policy Advocacy:** Advocate for policies and legislation that promote the use of sensitive language and address discrimination based on disability. Work with lawmakers to introduce and support relevant bills.
- **Corporate Responsibility:** Encourage businesses and corporations to adopt language sensitivity in their internal policies, external communications, and marketing materials. Support initiatives that promote diversity and inclusion.
- **Feedback Mechanisms:** Establish mechanisms for feedback and accountability, allowing individuals to report instances of insensitive language and offering resources for correction and improvement.
- **Community Engagement:** Engage with local communities through workshops, seminars, and town hall meetings to raise awareness about language sensitivity and the experiences of people with disabilities.
- **Celebrate Success Stories:** Highlight success stories of individuals with disabilities who have overcome challenges and made significant contributions to society. Showcasing their achievements can inspire positive change.
- **Continuous Evaluation:** Continually assess and evaluate the impact of language sensitivity initiatives. Gather feedback from individuals with disabilities and stakeholders to refine strategies and messaging.
- **Public Statements and Pledges:** Encourage public figures, organizations, and institutions to make public statements or pledges committing to the use of sensitive language. These commitments can set an example for others.
- **Social Media Campaigns:** Utilize social media platforms to launch campaigns and hashtags that promote awareness and discussions about the importance of sensitive language. Engage with online communities and influencers.



By taking these steps in the short term, it's possible to create momentum for the adoption of sensitive language that can lead to a more respectful and inclusive society for people with disabilities. These efforts should be ongoing and integrated into broader inclusion initiatives.

OBJECTIVE FOR SHORT AND LONG TERMS



Achieving a long-term and sustained spread of sensitive language toward people with disabilities involves deeper cultural and systemic changes. Here are key steps and objectives for the long term:

- **Incorporate Sensitivity in Education:** Ensure that disability awareness and the use of sensitive language are integrated into all levels of education, from primary schools to higher education institutions. This will help create a generation of individuals who naturally use respectful language.
- **Legal and Policy Frameworks:** Advocate for comprehensive legal and policy frameworks that institutionalize the use of sensitive language across all sectors. These frameworks should include clear guidelines and consequences for violations.
- **Media and Entertainment Industry Standards:** Establish industry standards for media and entertainment that prioritize respectful and inclusive language in scripts, portrayals, and reporting. Encourage media outlets to sign codes of conduct.
- **Corporate Responsibility and Employment Practices:** Encourage businesses to adopt corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices that emphasize sensitivity in their internal and external communications. Support diversity and inclusion in the workplace.
- **Public Institutions and Services:** Ensure that public institutions, including government agencies, healthcare providers, and social services, consistently use sensitive language in their interactions with the public and in official documents.



- **Monitoring and Reporting Mechanisms:** Establish independent bodies or agencies responsible for monitoring and reporting instances of insensitive language. Encourage transparency and accountability in language use.
- **Accessible Communication Technology:** Invest in accessible communication technology and ensure that digital platforms and information are designed with sensitivity to the needs of people with disabilities.
- **Promote Intersectionality:** Recognize and address the intersectionality of disability with other aspects of identity, such as race, gender, and sexual orientation, in language and inclusion efforts.
- **Promote Self-Advocacy:** Empower individuals with disabilities to advocate for their language preferences and rights. Ensure that they have access to resources and support to do so effectively.
- **Cultural and Media Representation:** Promote cultural diversity and representation of people with disabilities in media, literature, and the arts. Celebrate the unique stories and experiences of individuals with disabilities.
- **Education and Training for Professionals:** Implement ongoing education and training programs for professionals in fields like healthcare, education, and media, emphasizing sensitivity in their interactions and communication.



- **Global Collaboration:** Collaborate with international organizations and governments to share best practices and promote sensitive language use on a global scale.
- **Long-Term Cultural Shift:** Recognize that creating a culture of sensitivity is a long-term endeavor. It requires not only policy changes but also a fundamental shift in societal attitudes and behaviors.
- **Regular Evaluation and Adaptation:** Continuously assess the impact of long-term initiatives, gather feedback from stakeholders, and adapt strategies as needed to address evolving language and inclusion challenges.
- **Generational Change:** Over time, aim for generational change where younger generations grow up with a deep understanding of and commitment to the use of sensitive language, making it an integral part of society.

Long-term objectives for sensitive language use are deeply intertwined with broader efforts to create a more inclusive and equitable society. Achieving these goals will require persistence, collaboration, and a commitment to respecting the rights and dignity of people with disabilities.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING TOOLS

Monitoring and evaluating the use of sensitive language to ensure it is well done requires a combination of tools and strategies. Here are some key tools and approaches:

- **Guidelines and Style Manuals:** Develop and distribute guidelines and style manuals that provide clear instructions on the use of sensitive language. These guidelines can serve as a reference for individuals and organizations to follow.
- **Checklists:** Create checklists or rubrics that outline specific criteria for using sensitive language. These checklists can be used to assess written and verbal communication, ensuring that key principles are followed.
- **Language Assessment Software:** Some software tools are designed to analyze text and provide feedback on language use, including sensitivity. These tools can identify potentially insensitive language and suggest alternatives.
- **Feedback Mechanisms:** Establish feedback mechanisms where individuals can report instances of insensitive language. Create clear reporting channels and procedures for addressing complaints or concerns.
- **Surveys and Questionnaires:** Conduct surveys or distribute questionnaires to gather feedback from target audiences, including people with disabilities. Ask for their input on language sensitivity in specific contexts.
- **Content Analysis:** Periodically analyze content produced by organizations, media outlets, or individuals to assess language sensitivity. Look for patterns of insensitive language and areas for improvement.



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- **Focus Groups:** Organize focus groups with diverse participants to discuss language sensitivity. Collect qualitative feedback on the effectiveness of language use in different contexts.
- **Peer Reviews:** Implement peer review processes, where colleagues or experts in relevant fields review and provide feedback on communication materials for sensitivity and inclusivity.
- **External Audits:** Employ external auditors or consultants with expertise in language sensitivity to evaluate and provide recommendations on communication materials, policies, and practices.
- **Automated Filters and Tools:** Utilize automated filters and tools within digital platforms to flag potentially insensitive language. These tools can provide real-time suggestions for more inclusive language.
- **Accessibility Audits:** Conduct accessibility audits of websites, documents, and other communication materials to ensure they meet accessibility standards and guidelines for people with disabilities.
- **Impact Assessments:** Assess the impact of language sensitivity initiatives over time. Measure changes in public perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors related to disability inclusion.
- **Regular Reporting:** Establish a system for regular reporting on language sensitivity efforts and progress. Share reports with stakeholders and the public to demonstrate commitment to improvement.
- **Training and Workshops:** Offer training and workshops on language sensitivity to employees, professionals, and relevant stakeholders. Evaluate the effectiveness of these training programs through pre- and post-training assessments.
- **Compliance Monitoring:** Ensure compliance with relevant laws and regulations related to language sensitivity. Monitor organizations' adherence to legal requirements and take corrective actions when necessary.
- **Case Studies and Best Practices:** Share case studies and examples of best practices in language sensitivity. Highlight organizations or individuals that excel in using sensitive language as models for others to follow.
- **Public Engagement:** Encourage public engagement through social media, campaigns, and events to raise awareness about language sensitivity and gather feedback from the broader community.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Use the feedback and insights gathered through monitoring and evaluation to make continuous improvements to language sensitivity efforts.

By employing these tools and approaches, organizations and individuals can effectively control, evaluate, and monitor the use of sensitive language, ensuring that it aligns with principles of inclusivity and respect for people with disabilities.



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There were broader initiatives and educational efforts focused on disability awareness, inclusion, and respectful communication. These initiatives often included components related to using sensitive language. Please note that the educational landscape may have evolved since then, and new programs may have been introduced. Here are some general types of educational initiatives and organizations that may address sensitive language in Spain:

- **Teacher Training**: Educational institutions, including universities and teacher training programs, often include courses and workshops on inclusive education and disability awareness. These programs may cover the importance of sensitive language in the classroom.
- **Disability Studies Programs**: Some universities offer programs or courses in Disability Studies, which explore various aspects of disability, including language and communication. These programs promote an understanding of disability-related issues.
- **NGO Workshops and Training**: Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and advocacy groups in Spain may organize workshops, seminars, and training sessions for educators, professionals, and the public. These events can include components on language sensitivity.



- **Public Awareness Campaigns**: Government agencies and NGOs occasionally run public awareness campaigns on disability inclusion. These campaigns often emphasize the use of sensitive language and respectful communication.
- **Inclusive Education Initiatives**: Inclusive education efforts in Spain aim to create classrooms that welcome students with disabilities. Teachers are often trained in inclusive teaching practices, which can include guidance on language sensitivity.
- **Online Resources**: Various online resources, including guidelines and toolkits, may be available to educators and the public, offering guidance on using sensitive language in educational settings.
- **Professional Development Workshops**: Some organizations, including disability-focused NGOs and professional associations, may offer workshops and training sessions for specific professional groups, such as healthcare providers, on using sensitive language.



Programs and initiatives aimed at promoting the use of sensitive language in civil society in Spain typically involve a combination of awareness campaigns, training, and resources provided by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), advocacy groups, and government entities. While I can't provide specific program names or details beyond my last knowledge update in September 2021, I can give you an idea of the types of initiatives that may exist or have been developed since then:

- **Awareness Campaigns**: NGOs and government agencies often launch awareness campaigns that target the general public and civil society organizations. These campaigns aim to educate people about the importance of sensitive language when referring to individuals with disabilities.
- **Workshops and Training**: NGOs and advocacy groups may organize workshops and training sessions for civil society organizations, community leaders, and volunteers. These sessions provide guidance on using respectful and inclusive language in their work.
- **Resource Development**: Organizations may create and distribute resources such as guidelines, manuals, and toolkits specifically designed for civil society organizations. These resources offer practical tips and examples for using sensitive language.
- **Collaborative Initiatives**: Collaborative efforts between different civil society organizations, disability rights groups, and government bodies can result in joint programs to promote sensitivity in language and inclusion.



- **Community Engagement**: Initiatives may involve engaging with local communities through events, seminars, and dialogues. This grassroots approach encourages discussions about language sensitivity and disability awareness.
- **Accessibility and Inclusion Assessments**: NGOs may offer assessments and consultations to civil society organizations to help them improve their accessibility and inclusivity, including language use.
- **Best Practice Sharing**: Platforms for sharing best practices in language sensitivity and inclusion among civil society organizations can be established, allowing groups to learn from each other's experiences.
- **Funding and Grants**: Government agencies and foundations may offer grants and funding opportunities to support civil society organizations in their efforts to promote sensitive language and disability inclusion.
- **Advocacy and Policy Engagement**: Civil society organizations may advocate for policies and guidelines related to language sensitivity in their interactions with government entities.



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GOOD PRACTICES

- Disabled Data analysis provided by Fightthestroke Foundation.



- Using LIS on TV news.



- Using LIS in music events.



- Recreating pieces of art in museums for people who don't see



- **Parlarecivile:**

An example of a dashboard in reshaping the language for no hate speech and nonambiguous communication.



BAD PRACTICES

- Allowing teachers with no pedagogical training to enter the teaching system.

4.2 SPAIN



GOOD PRACTICES

- Guía para un uso no discriminatorio del lenguaje (en el entorno de la discapacidad), Written by: Isabel Frutos Frutos y Pilar Rodríguez Aparicio (2001)



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In this PDF, you will find a guide for the non-discriminatory use of language in the context of disability. It offers new definitions for concepts related to inclusive language and provides theoretical insights. What's particularly interesting is the inclusion of practical exercises that allow us to work on understanding and addressing issues related to disability.



- **Manual de Lenguaje Inclusivo, written by: COCEMFE, FAAM**

This manual is a document agreed upon by the associative network representing people with physical and organic disabilities that sets out the terminology by which this group of people want to be represented in society, to be designated and known. In short, guidelines for the use of correct, respectful and consensual language when referring to people with disabilities. In this sense, the most advisable thing to do is to use the term person with disability and not disabled, as this guide explains, because disability is one more characteristic of all people who have it recognized, and not the only thing for which they should be recognized.



- **Lenguaje inclusivo sobre discapacidad en el deporte , written by: Comité Paralímpico Español (december, 2022)**



On this page, you can find everything related to disability in sports, as well as a reference to the limited visibility that exists regarding disability in sports. There is a strong emphasis on the terms that should not be used, such as "adapted sports," and instead suggests using terms like "Paralympic sports." In conclusion, it highlights the importance of disability visibility in the sports area.

BAD PRACTICES

- **Spain violates the right to inclusive education of a child with Down's syndrome, Written by United Nations**

In this news article, we can observe how Rubén, a child with Down syndrome, is subjected to abuse and mistreatment by his teacher. In a report, his behaviour is wrongly characterized as 'disruptive behaviour', 'psychotic episodes', and 'developmental delay associated with Down syndrome'.

España viola el derecho a la educación inclusiva de un niño con síndrome de Down



Autor: mercado2 | foto: pixa



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4.3 NETHERLANDS

GOOD PRACTICES



- University of Groningen Inclusive Language Style Guide



The University of Groningen has introduced an 'Inclusive Language Style Guide' to enhance the inclusivity of communications within its academic community. Recognizing the impact of language in shaping an inclusive environment, this guide offers valuable insights and tips to ensure respectful, accurate, and non-harmful communication. By adopting such measures, the university aims to make everyone, including staff, students, and visitors, feel welcomed and recognized. The guide is structured in two main sections: identity-based language, which covers topics such as gender, ability, ethnicity, and nationality, and theme-based language, with a specific emphasis on areas like HR. Additionally, it touches upon inclusive language practices in Dutch. Users can conveniently navigate this guide, using it as a reference tool, to address specific language concerns, emphasizing the importance of understanding rather than assuming.

- The City of Amsterdam Guidance on Sensitive Words and Words to Avoid



The 'Writing Guide' produced by the City of Amsterdam is a comprehensive resource designed to enhance the quality and clarity of municipal communications. Emphasising the core values of being 'active, open, and honest', this guide provides detailed instructions on crafting policy documents, emails, and other forms of communication, such as newspapers, websites, social media posts, posters, and brochures. Aimed at ensuring effective and jargon-free communication with residents, business owners, visitors, and officials, the guide champions the use of straightforward and relatable language. Notably, while the guide itself is the property of the City of Amsterdam, the knowledge contained within is not proprietary. Users are encouraged to freely utilize, modify, and distribute its contents without the need for attribution, as the information has been widely recognised and similarly presented by various sources over the years.



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- Guide for Inclusive Language at Radboud University



Radboud University's ambition is to promote a safe, inclusive academic community that embraces and promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion ([DEI plan, 2022](#)). Language is key to inclusion: by using certain words, we can make everyone feel more included. This guide serves as a tool to become aware of the impact language can have and how to use inclusive language, so that we do not exclude anyone or use harmful stereotypes.



The Erasmus+ KA210 project READY, foreseen in its development the implementation of three project mobilities, one in each project country (Spain, Italy, The Netherlands). The aim of these mobilities was for partners to meet and to involve the final target group in a series of workshops that would lead them to challenge their beliefs with regard to language and the role it plays in the way we see the world. Consequently, to be more conscious in using it in a more inclusive way, with a specific focus on the way this affects people with disabilities. Each mobility had a specific topic to investigate in order to achieve the project's objectives. They were structured as follows:



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- **READY TO ADDRESS**

To analyse the role played by language in creating our reality and realize the biased ways in which it is used;

- **READY TO CHANGE**

To understand how the language is used to shape the narrative of our world and how to change this narrative

- **READY TO SPREAD**

How to use the tools and skills learned in order to create a more inclusive way of communicating, especially using the new technologies that are catalysing the way we communicate.

In more detail, the day-by-day organization of these mobilities has been the following:

1. VALENCIA, 19-22 DEC 2022 - READY TO ADDRESS - HOSTED BY ASOCIACIÓN UNO

The focal point of this four-day mobility was the exploration of the profound impact of language on our world and the pivotal role it plays in perpetuating discrimination, particularly against individuals with disabilities.



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Day 1: Understanding Language and Reality

The project participants were warmly welcomed into the mobility. The first day was dedicated to the intricate connection between language and reality. Participants engaged in stimulating discussions and activities that delved into how language influences perceptions and reinforces stereotypes, particularly concerning individuals with disabilities. The atmosphere of shared learning and experiences was set as the foundation for the days to come.

Day 2: Developing Empathy and Recognizing Biased Expressions in Texts

The second day of the mobility project highlighted empathy. Through a series of immersive exercises and scenarios, participants gained a profound understanding of the challenges faced by individuals with disabilities. These experiences illuminated the importance of language in cultivating empathy while also shedding light on the harm inflicted by insensitive language choices.

The second part of the day was dedicated to a workshop that aimed to identify biased expressions in texts, with a special emphasis on job advertisements. Participants scrutinized real-world examples, revealing how language can inadvertently exclude or discriminate against individuals with disabilities. The day's activities were instrumental in raising awareness about the far-reaching impact of language on discrimination, highlighting the urgency for change.

Day 3: Safe Spaces

The project's third day revolved around creating safe spaces for change. Participants recognised that fostering inclusivity and empathy requires environments where individuals can share and learn without fear of judgment.



Day 4: Workshop Development

In this context, they collaboratively developed ideas and strategies to establish these safe spaces within their communities. The participants generated innovative workshops that could be employed to educate and raise awareness about the role of language in discrimination. The participants generated innovative workshops that could be employed to educate and raise awareness about the role of language in discrimination. The READY TO ADDRESS project mobility in Valencia successfully facilitated the exchange of ideas, experiences, and knowledge among participants, equipping them to continue their vital work in promoting inclusivity and empathy in their home countries.

2. MILANO, 3-6 APRIL 2023 - READY TO CHANGE - HOSTED BY FIGHTTHESTROKE

The primary objective of the READY TO CHANGE mobility was to unravel the profound impact of language on our world and its role in perpetuating discrimination, with a special focus on individuals with disabilities. Through a carefully curated series of activities, the participants embarked on a journey of discovery and change.



Day 1: Inclusive Communication and its Significance

The inaugural day was dedicated to exploring the concept of inclusive communication. Through engaging discussions and workshops, participants delved into the transformative potential of language in fostering inclusivity and empathy. They reflected on its pivotal role in dismantling discrimination, particularly against people with disabilities.



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Day 2: Harnessing the Power of Storytelling

On the second day of the mobility project, participants honed their storytelling skills. They learned to craft narratives that can carry impactful messages, effectively conveying the importance of inclusive communication. Storytelling was unveiled as a potent tool for change, with the capacity to captivate an audience, inspire empathy, and challenge biases.

Day 3: Public Narrative and Exposing Exclusive Communication

The third day delved into the art of public narrative. Participants shared their own experiences and examples of exclusive communication, highlighting its harmful consequences on individuals with disabilities. This day underscored the urgency of dismantling exclusive language and fostering inclusivity.

Day 4: Creating and Presenting Stories for Change

The final day of the project was the culmination of all the knowledge and skills acquired. Participants were tasked with creating and presenting their own stories. These stories were aimed at promoting inclusivity, and empathy, and shedding light on the impact of language on people with disabilities. The storytelling prowess displayed by the participants served as a powerful testament to the potential of language to drive positive change. Participants left the READY TO CHANGE mobility, with the tools to promote inclusive communication and empathy through the art of storytelling, striving to dismantle discrimination against individuals with disabilities.



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3. AMSTERDAM, 26-29 AUGUST 2023 - READY TO SPREAD - HOSTED BY ILA



Participants from the three countries of the project converged for the READY TO SPREAD project mobility, to understand how language shapes our world and its role in perpetuating discrimination, particularly against people with disabilities. In this digital age, the project mobility focused on effectively using technology to foster inclusive language and harness new tools like AI to further their objectives.



Day 1: Digital Tools and Inclusive Language

The first day was dedicated to exploring the use of digital tools for promoting inclusive language. Participants engaged in discussions and hands-on workshops that showcased the power of technology in dismantling discriminatory language and fostering inclusivity. They learned how to utilise digital platforms, resources, and strategies to advocate for people with disabilities effectively.



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Day 2: The Role of AI in Language Inclusivity

After the first part of the day focus also on enjoying the cultural environment of Amsterdam, the second day of the mobility project focused on the emerging frontier of AI tools. Participants delved into the capabilities of artificial intelligence in supporting their mission. Through expert-led sessions and collaborative activities, they discovered how AI could assist in identifying and addressing discriminatory language, ultimately contributing to a more inclusive society.

Day 3: Application and Hands-On Practice

Participants put their newfound knowledge into action, exploring the practical applications of digital tools and AI in fostering inclusive language. They engaged in real-world scenarios and scenarios, fine-tuned their skills in advocating for people with disabilities and creating change in their communities.



Day 4: Presenting Digital Solutions for Equality

The final day of the project was the culmination of their collective efforts. Participants, having acquired essential digital literacy skills, presented their innovative digital solutions and strategies. These solutions aimed to combat discrimination through the promotion of inclusive language. The presentations of the READY TO SPREAD mobility served as a testament to the potential of technology to drive positive change and advance the cause of people with disabilities.



During the described mobilities, partners implemented a series of workshops, as well as designed new ones in the making, in order to reach their objectives.

Here's the most effective used:

Workshop

TOPIC	EMPATHY
TITLE	Through the lines
DURATION	45-60 minutes
PARTICIPANTS	4+
TOOLS NEEDED	Roles sheet, pens
DESCRIPTION	<p>Participants are divided into groups of 4. Each one gets assigned one role among the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Speaker• Face Decoder• Speech Decoder• Body Decoder



DESCRIPTION

The Speaker will have to choose a specific emotion, without telling the rest of the group which one, and will have 5 minutes to tell a story that represents it.

The Face Decoder will have to look at the facial expressions of the speaker without caring about the story to try and guess the emotions from that.

The Speech Decoder only has to understand the emotion of the story told, without looking at nonverbal signals from the speaker.

The Body Decoder instead will have to ignore the story and only focus on the body movements of the speakers to understand the emotion. They all can take notes. At the end of the 5 minutes, roles switch until each of the 4 has covered all four roles. Once everyone has covered all roles, the groups will have a 5-minute debriefing about the experience and will discover if they all have the right emotions. After that, a final debriefing with all the different groups about the activity.

RESULTS

Participants will learn new ways to understand each other and to understand the emotions of the people in front of them, all this while also understanding the similarities among each other in the way they express their emotions, leading to an increased capacity to feel empathy for the others and more effectively communicate with each other

Workshop



TOPIC	CREATING A SAFE SPACE
TITLE	What is safe for you?
DURATION	45-60 minutes
PARTICIPANTS	4+
TOOLS NEEDED	Large room, pens, paper
DESCRIPTION	<p>At the beginning of the exercise participants are all sitting quietly in a room. At the call of the facilitator, they will have to list the first:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5 things they can see• 4 things they can hear• 3 feelings they feel• 2 things they can smell• 1 thing they touch <p>At this point, participants are divided in groups of 4 and discuss comparing their answers for about 10 minutes. Guided by the facilitator then, all the groups merge together analysing how many different things were noticed, the reasons behind this and how that is related to how safe space is perceived and how this perception is different for everyone.</p>
RESULTS	<p>Participants will learn about themselves and the things they value in order to create a safe space, at the same time understanding the different things other people might value in order to create their safe space and learn to take it into account while communicating.</p>

Workshop



TOPIC	DIGITAL COMMUNICATION
TITLE	AI for inclusion
DURATION	45-60 minutes
PARTICIPANTS	4+
TOOLS NEEDED	Laptop, smartphone, internet connection
DESCRIPTION	<p>Divide participants into groups of 4, each group with a laptop/smartphone and internet connection.</p> <p>Describe a list of topics for the groups to create a text for and a list of AI tools for text creation they can use. They have to ask the tool to create a text regarding the specific topic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• i.e. Job Ads for car dealers, School texts on physical development, Biology texts on physical abilities, Fashion Ads for activewear, etc. <p>Have the groups ask for a text the the selected AI tool, and reframe the question differently every time they notice the text is biased with ableism. Once they reach an unbiased text, they move to the next topic, and so on, until they use all the topics assigned and the tools presented.</p> <p>Once the exercise is over (max. 35 minutes) the groups come together as one and discuss the experience and the biases they found guided by the moderator.</p>
RESULTS	<p>Participants will have a new perception of digital tools realizing the way they are biased from the programming phase and will learn how to navigate around these problems and use new tools in a more inclusive and thoughtful way.</p>



Workshop

TOPIC	OPEN UP
TITLE	THE HUMAN PORTRAIT
DURATION	45-60 minutes
PARTICIPANTS	2+, in pairs
TOOLS NEEDED	Large room, colored pencils, paper
DESCRIPTION	<p>HOW IT WORKS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● In couples● Person A will tell about themselves for 2.5 minutes, whilst person B listens and draws their portrait in the meantime.● Afterwards, they will switch.● In larger groups, each of you will show their partner's portrait and tell their story as you remember it
RESULTS	<p>Participants get together for a final discussion about the exercise. The facilitator could start the discussion pondering the following questions: What surprised you about the other person? How did it feel to talk about yourself for 2.5 minutes? How did it feel to hear your story shared by someone else? Was it easier to share your story or your partner's story?</p>



Workshop

TOPIC	BUILDING A SAFE SPACE
TITLE	THREE IS A PIZZA
DURATION	45-60 minutes
PARTICIPANTS	4+
TOOLS NEEDED	Large room
DESCRIPTION	<p>HOW IT WORKS</p> <p>Let's count together in circle</p> <p>BUT...</p> <p>Each number that consists of 3 or can be divided by 3 will be PIZZA</p> <p>If one makes a mistake, everyone celebrates shouting IT'S HOT!</p>
RESULTS	<p>The main goal is to get to know each other and build a safe space for trust</p>



Workshop

TOPIC	CONSOLIDATING
TITLE	Back to Back drawing
DURATION	45-60 minutes
PARTICIPANTS	4+
TOOLS NEEDED	Large room, pens, paper, pictures
DESCRIPTION	<p>HOW IT WORKS</p> <p>Please, find a partner and spread out in the room, seating back to back in pairs.</p> <p>One in each pair will receive an image (do not show it to your partner!), and the other will have paper and pen.</p> <p>The participant holding the picture instructs the one holding the paper on what to draw to create the same image</p>
RESULTS	<p>Participants get together for a final discussion about the exercise. The facilitator could start the discussion pondering the following questions: Was it easy to explain? Was it easy to draw according to instructions? How did you feel when you finally saw what your partner created? How did you feel when your partner saw your drawing? What was the most successful strategy?</p>



Workshop

TOPIC	STORYTELLING
TITLE	What's Your Story? (WYS)
DURATION	45 minutes
PARTICIPANTS	All + 1 Staff
TOOLS NEEDED	Hero's journey cards, PPT, Projector, Pens & Papers
DESCRIPTION	<p>The activity with the card deck will be focused on the elaboration of the individual story in narrative form. The tool used, a deck of cards with the main phases for the creation of a fairy tale and its narrative plot will serve the participants to create a personal story about their lives. In this way, they will be able to reflect and put into words the main nodes and focus on those that interest them most in developing over the near future. Participants will work in couple (or groups of 4, depending</p>
RESULTS	<p>From a working point of view, becoming aware of one's strengths and weaknesses allows you to have great results in finding new ways to express yourself as well as the possibility to better plan your use of language, which can be highly valuable in using a more sensitive and language. Clarity allows you to avoid wrong choices and put the subject in a state of stress.</p>

CONCLUSIONS



The Erasmus+ project "READY" has been a remarkable journey that delved into the impact of language on shaping our reality and, in particular, its role in perpetuating stereotypes against people with disabilities, leading to their social exclusion. Over the course of this project, we have strived to address these issues head-on, aiming to equip our participants and staff with the tools and knowledge necessary to create a more inclusive and accepting society. The three transnational mobilities undertaken during the course of the project have yielded invaluable insights and experiences. Participants and staff from our partner organisations have emerged from this project with a deepened understanding of language's significant role in shaping our perceptions and interactions with the world.

Key Achievements:



- **Enhanced Awareness:** Through a series of workshops and discussions, participants have significantly increased their awareness of how language can perpetuate stereotypes against people with disabilities. They have developed a more nuanced perspective on the power of language in shaping societal norms and attitudes.
- **Effective Tools and Exercises:** The project has equipped participants with a comprehensive toolkit of effective tools and exercises that empower them to engage with language in a more inclusive and empathetic way. These resources are not only practical but also adaptable for use in various contexts.
- **Contextual Understanding:** Participants and staff have learned how to navigate the complexities of language within the specific context of disability. This newfound contextual understanding is an essential step towards using language to combat stereotypes and promote inclusivity.
- **Promoting Social Inclusion:** "READY" has fostered a commitment to using inclusive language in everyday life, thereby contributing to the reduction of social exclusion. The impact of this project extends far beyond its immediate participants, as they will act as advocates for change within their communities and organizations.

In conclusion, the Erasmus+ project "READY" has successfully raised awareness of the pivotal role of language in perpetuating stereotypes against people with disabilities. By providing valuable insights, tools, and exercises, we have empowered our participants and partner organizations to make meaningful strides towards a more inclusive society. The "READY" project stands as a testament to the positive changes that can be achieved when we engage with language mindfully and strive for a more inclusive and accepting world.

We look forward to the ongoing impact of the "READY" project as it continues to inspire change and foster inclusivity in the years to come.



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To know more about the project and the partner organizations:



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The present publication would have not been possible without the participation, passion and engagement demonstrated by each and every participant who took part in the project activities. All of this is thanks to them.

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RESOURCES



- Disability-Inclusive Language Guidelines:
<https://ila.wiki/6v9>
- Disability Language Guide:
<https://ila.wiki/W3k>
- European Commission Guidelines for Inclusive Communication: <https://ila.wiki/lSu>
- Glossary of Sensitive Language for Internal and External Communications: <https://ila.wiki/sgK>
- Le Parole Giuste Media E Persone Con Disabilità:
<https://ila.wiki/HHT>
- NCDJ Editorial Manual:
<https://ila.wiki/Obr>
- University of Groningen Inclusive Language Style Guide:
<https://ila.wiki/KYk>