

DISmode

“Digital training for NGO's youth workers to become disability support moderators for youth with disabilities”

Project number: 2022-2-PT02-KA220-YOU-000095234

WP 2 Project deliverables

Result 1(R1): New functional profile of “Disability support moderator” at NGO sector

June, 2023

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G83193425



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Preamble

Youth non-formal education institutions are very conscious on possible attraction of youth with disabilities in order to be fully integrated from the mainstream and vocational schools to the youth education and to be in line with the application of UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD and Article 24 in particular. However, when the youth applied for training, in the most cases, there is nobody, who can assist advice and negotiate with the staff possible adaptations of the educational process (both for formal and non-formal courses).

All over Europe, the educational requirements should be modified as necessary and appropriate to ensure that they do not discriminate, or have the effect of discriminating, on the basis of a disability against qualified applicants among youth with disabilities.

As appropriate, modifications may include but are not limited to:

- changes in the length of time permitted for the completion of a requirement,
- substitution for specific courses required,
- adaptation of the manner in which a required course is conducted and examined,
- adjustments of the learning pathways and validation.

Building inclusive youth support of the future, where the youth with disabilities will reach full inclusion and accessibility to the formal and non-formal education is a common purpose of the DISMODE consortium. We would like those young people to be able to succeed in terms of accessibility of the environment, but also to ensure behavioural accessibility for them in terms of possible adaptation of the formal and non-formal learning process or adaptive learning by use of specific assistive technologies, that support the success in the any kind of educational process.

For that purpose we need a person(s), depending on the size of the non-governmental organisations (NGOs), who are supporting youth with disabilities from the process of applying to the education, through the entrance examinations and during their studies.

Based on that, we are suggesting a functional profile of “disability support moderator” in order to define his/her role, duties and the extent to which, they will provide reasonable guidance and support to youth with disabilities. These moderators will be equipped with proper training on disability awareness, disability etiquette, communication guidelines including basic communication via assistive technologies and sign language. This will ensure that we are successfully building inclusive youth pathways for formal and non-formal education systems with propagators - youth oriented and targeted organisations from Portugal, Spain, Bulgaria and Turkiye.

We want our “disability support moderators” to have professional skills to work towards integrative NGOs and to outreach to open up them as institutions towards inclusive education practices. They will have knowledge & skills in managing diversity, ability to suggest strategies to promote inclusive practices, ability to create a learning community in which staff, youth and their parents are involved.

As a result from the interaction with the “disability support moderator”, we aim to achieve an improvement of the youth with disabilities’ digital and social competencies, goal achievements as well as to improve their engagement in the learning process, to support and increase their motivation towards the learning process and last but not least to support their social learning and inclusion, which will be possible by using assistive technologies as supportive gadgets to the learning process. Our disability moderators will recognize that parents can be their greatest allies, as parents have skills and experience that promote the learning process for their children (Obeidat, Osamha, & Al-Hassan, 2009; Cox, 2005).

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Addressed needs of youth with disabilities



We are addressing the following needs of youth with disabilities to enter and succeed in forms of education by smooth transition process supported by the youth-oriented NGO:

1. Identification and applying

As a first step the youth with disability are looking for opportunities for providing accommodations and to make specific requests addressed. Therefore, the youth faced quite chaotic situation to whom s/he should look for support in this process of selection proper subject and preparation of the necessarily documentation, where frequently alternative formats are needed both in formal and non-formal provision.

2. Examination and evaluation

Youth have the responsibility to present documentation of their condition(s) for consideration of possible accommodations and to request adaptations of the examination process if needed. The evaluations conducted are performed at the youth's expense, which is also not supported by the government.

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We should not forget that the youth may need an alternative form of examination (for example: if the person with severe visual impairment, s/he may request the examination to be in oral form). This process will be also facilitated by the moderators.

3. Documentation

Training organisers (including at Higher education institutions) have the right to ask for current and comprehensive documentation that clearly details: the health profile (including the diagnosis of the person), the functional limitations and the need for accommodations. In that case the youth need to disclose even hidden disabilities in this stage. In addition, the documentation presented in the majority of the cases does not present clearly details about the youth's substantial limitations. The use of successful mitigating measures (e.g. changes of the environment or attitude, use of an alternative approach of teaching/training, use of an assistive technology etc.) that reduce the functional impairment could be appropriate. In other words, learning differences or "relative weaknesses" compared to one's abilities in other areas are not necessarily disabling.

4. Reasonable Accommodations

Accommodations should be designed to ensure equal access and "level the playing field" versus guarantee academic success. For example, providing an interpreter for a deaf youth to allow him/her to understand the material being presented and giving extra test-taking time to a youth with a learning disability to make sure that he/she has sufficient time to read an exam could reach a positive outcome. In contrast, accommodations would not be provided to ensure that a youth gets a certain grade on an exam.

5. Self-Advocacy

In youth NGO, by default it is expected that the youth must be able to communicate their needs and to be able to request services. However, still parents should have the opportunity certainly to voice their concerns about their youth. All these stages should be supported by specific and competent person like the disability support moderator, we believe.

Therefore, the “disability support moderator” should be able:

- to welcome youth with disability and to present the learning opportunities
- to discuss the ways how the youth with disability can implement the entrance examination process and if this process will need an adaptation, this can be communicated to be approved by the institution’ Management board.
- to collect, review and clarify to the youth NGO staff what are the strengths and limitations, caused by the disability to this particular youth.
- to negotiate with the youth and therefore with the Management board reasonable adjustments of the curriculum and learning path, if needed.
- to be an “advocate” for the youth in his/her communication with youth NGO staff and where needed to resolve possible conflicts and issues with academic and non-academic staff as well as with peers without disabilities.

The following functional profile for “Disability support moderators” consists of:

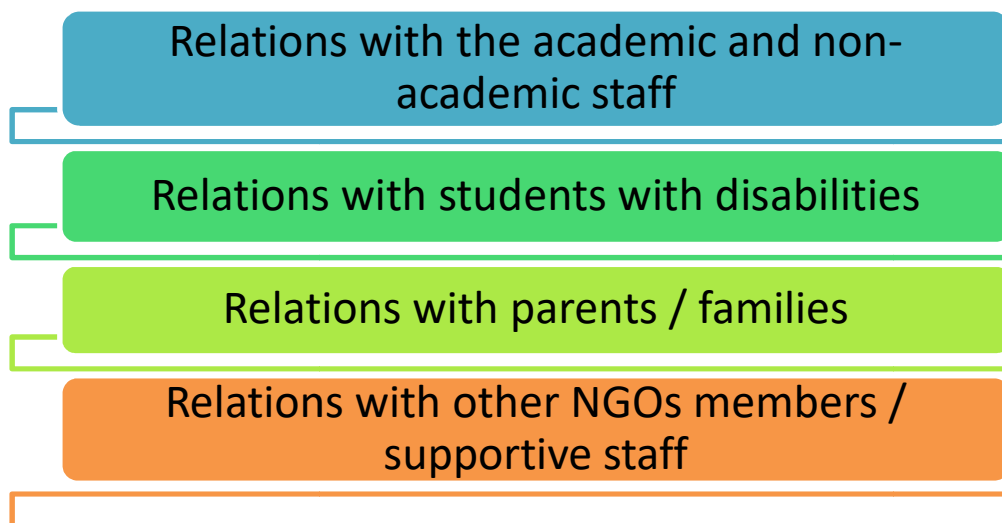
- Description of the previous knowledge and educational background
- Description of the modalities of areas of application
- Description of the knowledge, skills and competences of the disability support moderator

Description of the previous knowledge and educational background

The candidate for a “Disability support moderator” could have an educational background in any of the below mentioned fields. It will be important if s/he has additional knowledge in at least one extra field from the mentioned.

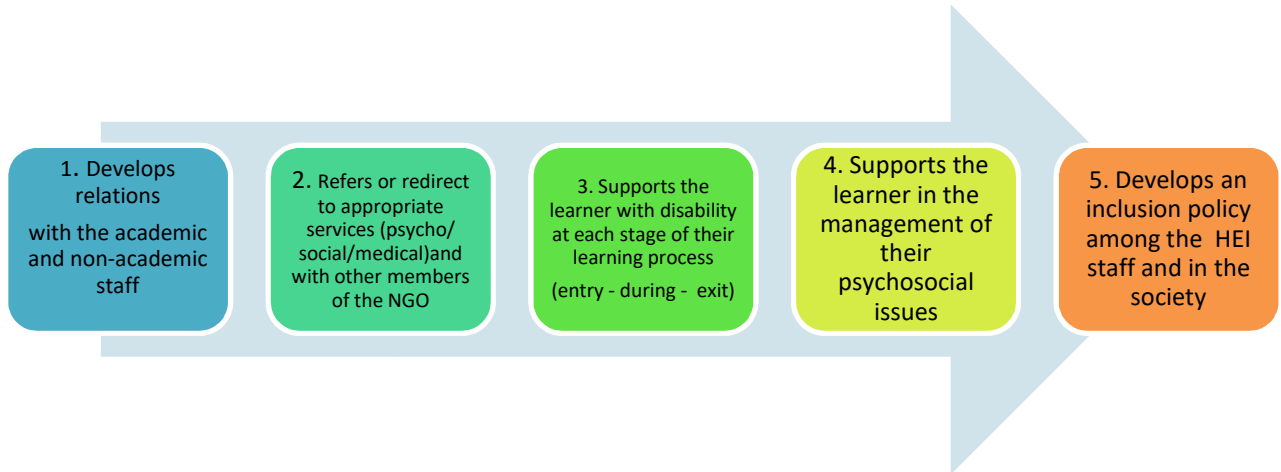
- Pedagogy and education
- Psychology, and mental health, special needs
- Career and guidance counselling
- Legal framework, official institutions and competent authorities

Description of the modalities of areas of application



Description of the knowledge, skills and competences of the disability support moderator

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COMPETENCE	SKILLS		KNOWLEDGE
	<i>Know how</i>	<i>Behavioural skills</i>	
1. Develops relations with the academic and non-academic staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be active in the partnership collaborative actions at the HEI organization • Identify relevant partners according to their role and characteristics • Negotiate the terms of the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational skills • Communication • Problem solving • Assertiveness • Self-confidence • Comply with regulations • Innovative thinking • Open-mindedness • Interpersonal skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characteristics of the territorial partners (academic and non-academic staff): type of departments, their missions, functioning issues, roles, ways of collaboration. • Notions of organisational analysis: actors, issues, objectives, resources, obstacles ... • Knowledge about

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	<p>cooperation and collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain, animate and federate this network • Mobilise the network of partners to optimize learners needs 		<p>Universal design of learning principles</p>
<p>2. Refers or redirect to appropriate services (psycho/social/medical)and with other members of the NGO</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement appropriate partnerships • Conduct individual interviews and guidance meetings to guide and orientate the learner • Take into account the characteristics of the learner • Monitor the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a relationship with the learner with disabilities taking into account their feelings , needs and circumstances • Adapt their communication to the learner way of communication • Active listening • Respect ethical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the psychosocial landscape of the territory • Interview techniques • Knowledge of the social law and regulations (social benefits, health, insurance policies, ...)

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	<p>organisations that can respond to the problems encountered by learners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate the process with family members 	<p>and deontological rules</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect the autonomy of the trainee • Be able to question himself/herself 	
<p>3. Supports the learner with disability at each stage of their learning process (entry - during - exit)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct individual interviews • Develop and use appropriate tools to assess their readiness to enter HEI • Determine, with the learner, the relevant elements for frequent assessment and individualised follow-up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active listening posture • Respect ethical and confidentiality rules • Discretion • Empathy • Interpersonal skills • Respect the autonomy of the learner Create a trustworthy relation • Mediation ability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant European and national regulation about inclusion policies (incl. EU art.24, ICF) • The legal framework of the sector (requirements in terms of learner's support) • Social work postures • Purposes and technical specificities of assessment tools (interviews, tests, ...) • Reporting techniques • Basic knowledge in psychology, and

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify, with the learner, the resources and attention points related to transversal competences acquisition • Adapt the learner's training program according to their individual needs and learning habits • Mentoring support • Mobilise relevant external resources and partners 		<p>mental health and special needs issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic knowledge in career guidance counselling • Basic knowledge about the labour market and employment services • Knowledge in inclusive pedagogy, didactics ...
<p>4. Supports the learner in the management of their psychosocial issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the learner in identifying and analysing problematic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapt communication to the trainee • Active listening posture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethics and professional conduct • Communication techniques • Conflict management

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	<p>situations and needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the learner to develop action plans and procedures • Support the learner in the implementation of these activities • Intervene within the limits of their function • Implement partnerships to adapt the approach to the learner's needs and disturbances • Develop alternative actions and initiatives to help the learner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect ethical and deontological rules • Respect the autonomy of the trainee • Be able to question yourself • Comply with regulations 	<p>skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group management • Notions about privacy • Legislation • Notions of law, psychology, sociology, mental health, special needs and anything related principles of (intercultural)communication • Elements of pedagogy • Basic knowledge in therapy methods: psychology, speech, art, ...
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	<p>express themselves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share information with other stakeholders / parties, as appropriate 		
<p>5. Develops an inclusion policy among the HEI staff and in the society</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly evaluate the inclusion capacity of the HEI regarding inclusion and diversity policies and practices • Raise awareness about obligations of accessibility, inclusion and training adaptations • Work closely with their peers and colleagues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creativity • Organisation • Ability to train and convince • Active listening posture • Problem-solving mind • Unbiased • Patience • Respect ethical and deontological rules • Interpersonal skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic knowledge in public relations • Group management • Conflict resolution • Legal and regulatory obligations • Knowledge in pedagogy • Ethics and professional conduct • Communication techniques • Conflict management skills • Notions about confidentiality and privacy legislation • Reporting techniques

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	<p>to the support of learners with disabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise further staff events and trainings related to inclusion support • Communicate, to the outside world, about their organisation inclusion policies and ability to welcome and support students with disabilities 		
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With regards to further knowledge provision, guidance and support, the DISMODE project consortium is providing two additional resources, which may help covering missing aspects in the knowledge, skills and competences of the candidate for “disability support moderator” namely:

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- **R2 Training handbook on inclusive education adjustments including guidelines and tips**

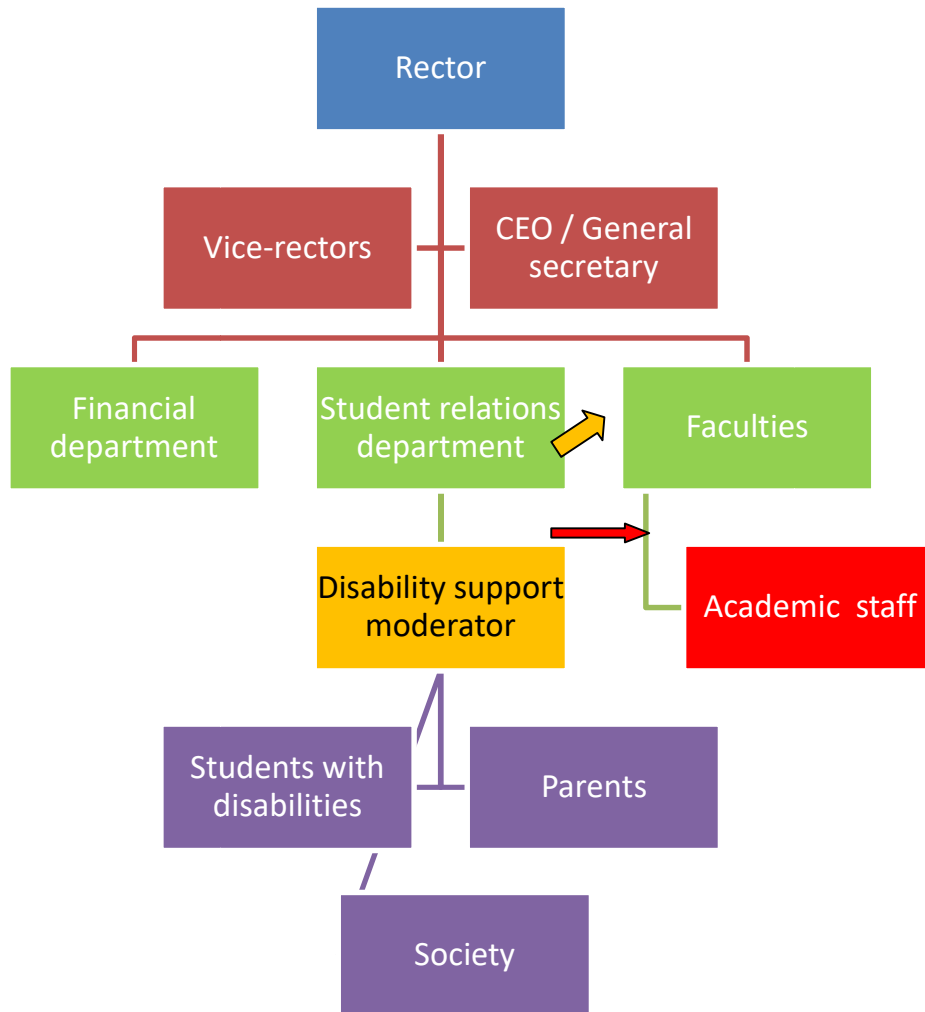
The training handbook consists of methods, strategies, tips and practices, which can ensure the proper execution of the work of the disability support moderators. They guidelines are based on the Universal design for learning guidelines including the recent strategy of the consortium for inclusion and diversity policies.

- **R3 Communication module on disability awareness, disability etiquette, communication guidelines, basic use of assistive technologies and sign language**

Dedicated communication module is providing more information about the different groups of disabilities and what potential barriers these people may encounter while making transition between the school graduation and entering higher education institutions. Tips about proper disability etiquette are provided as dedicated guidance on application and usage of digital assistive technologies. Basic videos consisting key words in local Sign language is also at your disposal.

Hierarchical chart of position of the “Disability support moderator” in the HEI institution

Depending on the size and internal organisation of the Higher education institution the following chart may vary in some organisations and therefore can be adjusted to the local circumstances.



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