

DELIVERABLE D7.6

REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMON STANDARDS (M39)

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Abstract	This deliverable maps out the progress made at all partner universities during the first year of the implementation of common standards for mobilities of students with special educational needs.
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INTRODUCTION

The following document is the **first** implementation report of the standards for students with special needs within the European Digital UniverCity (EDUC) alliance. It is a part of work package 7 (WP7) of the pilot phase of the project. WP7 “Reducing barriers for physical mobility” is focused on streamlining and harmonizing mobility procedures in such a manner that existing barriers preventing students or staff going on mobilities are reduced as much as possible. The deliverable 7.5 in particular addresses the mobility of students with severe disabilities (hereinafter, with special needs).

Mobility standards for students with special needs (D7.5) has been agreed on by all the partners throughout the alliance. It consists of the following sections:

- Preamble;
- Keeping records of the students with special needs
- Service provision standards
- Standards in communication
- Addendum A - General information on the services
- Addendum B - Specifics of services at individual partner HEI

The document has been created based on interviews and on the feedback received from the partners. Subsequently it underwent a review process where all the partners had a chance to add their comments and suggestions. As a result, [addendum A](#) of the mobility standards features the list of links to general information regarding the services for students with special needs, such as the disability units (disability centres or responsible persons) and addendum B was also added to the document to provide clearer information regarding individual partner cases. As of today, the addendum features information only from the University of Potsdam.

The following report provides a listing of each of the key areas and explanation of progress made by each partner. As mobility of students with special needs is a complex endeavor (further complicated by the recent pandemic), many of the areas within the standards are still work in progress.

Partner universities in the EDUC alliance and their abbreviations

University of Potsdam – UP

Université de Rennes 1 – UR1

Université Paris Nanterre – UPN

Masaryk University – MU

University of Pécs – PTE

University of Cagliari – UNICA

OVERVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STANDARDS FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS (D7.5):

1. Definitions, norms, standards

Done

All partners have agreed on following the principles of universal design when it comes to mobility of persons with special needs. This has helped establish a common ground for subsequent steps to build a more inclusive mobility environment. For this purpose, **universal design** means not only *universal design for teaching and learning*, as thoroughly described by, for example, Durham College (<https://durhamcollege.ca/ctl/teaching/planning-to-teach/udl/>), but universal design in a more general sense, as defined, for example, by the Centre for Excellence in Universal Design (CEUD) team, established by the National Disability Authority (NDA) in Ireland (<https://universaldesign.ie/what-is-universal-design/>). Of course, agreement on these principles alone is not sufficient to implement them, as achieving such a defined physical and virtual environment at all levels of university management and operation is a long-term process. Moreover, the definition of UD implies that it does not concern accessibility of the university environment, because it must be combined with the availability of accessible tools outside this environment and with reasonable individual adaptation processes in those cases that exceed universal design (i.e. for those demands whose satisfaction is directed towards a specific group and is at the same time a barrier for another group).

Let us remind what has been done in the partner universities as far as UD and individual adjustment is concerned (more specific information is available in the [Annex](#)):

Masaryk University

Both UD (as defined above) and reasonable individual adaptation services are provided by the staff of the *Teiresias Centre (Support Centre for Students with Special Needs)*. In addition to monitoring both physical and virtual environment of MU and cross-checking MU plans for any change or investments, specialists of the Teiresias Centre offer mediation with academic and administrative staff, assistive technologies including the training in how to use AI effectively, formatting adaptations and public library of accessible documents, transport and accommodation services and reasonable accommodation of examinations (accompaniment and assistance, subdivision of the exam, additional time, note taking, speech-to-text reporting, Czech sign language interpreting).

University of Cagliari

Reasonable individual adaptation services are provided by the staff of the S.I.A. (*Servizi per l'Inclusione e l'Apprendimento*) and by the specialized tutors who are present in the faculties and offer mediation with academic and administrative staff, assistance during classes, tutoring, assistive technologies, formatting adaptations, and personalization of examinations (accompaniment and assistance, subdivision of the exam, additional time, access to a notetaker, change of vocal exams into written ones and vice versa. Italian sign language interpreters and transport services are available depending on the annual budget).

University of Paris Nanterre

Reasonable individual adaptation services are provided by the local CROUS (Centre régional des œuvres universitaires et scolaires), by SHA (*Service Handicap et Accessibilité*) within the framework of the SCUIOIP (*Service Commun Universitaire d'Information, d'Orientation et d'Insertion Professionnelle*) and by the administrative contact points available at each faculty for mediation with academic and administrative staff, assistance during classes, tutoring, assistive technologies, formatting adaptations and personalization of examinations (accompaniment and assistance, subdivision of the exam, additional time, access to a notetaker, French sign language and cue speech (*langue parlée complétée*) interpreter, reservation of workspaces, accessible rooms for accommodation etc. etc.

University of Pécs

Reasonable individual adaptation services are provided by the *Pécsi Tudományegyetem Támogató Szolgálat* whose services cover mediation with academic and administrative staff, assistance during classes, tutoring, mental health counseling assistive technologies, formatting adaptations and personalization of examinations (accompaniment and assistance, additional time, access to a notetaker, Hungarian sign language interpreter, reservation of workspaces, transport services, rehabilitation gymnastics and sports, training compensation strategies etc.

University of Potsdam

Both UD (as defined above) and reasonable individual adaptation services are provided by the staff of the team of Commissioner for the Students with Disabilities (*Beauftragte für Studierende mit Behinderung*) The team of tutors offer mediation with academic and administrative staff, assistive technologies including the training in how to use AI effectively, formatting adaptations and public library of accessible documents, transport and accommodation services and reasonable accommodation of examinations (accompaniment and assistance, subdivision of the exam, additional time, change of vocal exams into written ones and vice versa, note taking, German sign language interpreting).

University of Rennes 1

Reasonable individual adaptation services are provided by the local CROUS (Centre régional des œuvres universitaires et scolaires) and by the VIE (*Pôle Vie étudiante*) together with the university health service and a specific advisor available in each faculty for mediation with academic and administrative staff, assistance during classes, tutoring, assistive technologies, formatting adaptations and personalization of examinations (accompaniment and assistance, subdivision of the exam, additional time, access to a notetaker, French sign language interpreter, reservation of workspaces, accessible rooms for accommodation, transport services etc.

2. Keeping records of the students with special needs

In progress

Keeping records of the students with special needs is the point which needs more time to implement the standards. The existing differences are related to different interpretations of the GDPR regulations. Some partners hesitate to invite students with disabilities to register for regular services and limit themselves to offer individual services on demand without any registration. These different approaches may be reasonable and comprehensible in specific local context and with respect to the local historical tradition in providing services, but as a matter of fact, without keeping records, more complex services are difficult to offer or even not possible, because they require time for preparation and coordination of different teams. This is typically the case when it comes to the mobility of students with severe disabilities (as defined in the project), the collection of data is an ongoing process that will take some time to implement.

The overview of the service centers at the individual universities in the previous section provides information on the current state of affairs regarding the establishment of disability units. In all the cases, they can indeed be considered to be disability units as stated in the mobility standards.

3. Service provision standards

3.1. an agreement on the partners' responsibilities;

In progress

The standards have clearly defined the areas to take into account when it comes to mobility of students with special needs in relation to service providers. As the extent of the standards is vast, the implementation sometimes requires structural changes and updates.

EDUC partners are not the sole service providers and rely on the help from external entities (this can be a voluntary service of students within, so-called buddy system, where local students volunteer to offer help to incoming students).

The standards for students with special needs allow a variety of options when it comes to service provision. The important factor here is to clearly inform the rest of partners about the common practice as well as help with negotiations with external partners outside of the alliance.

3.2. budgetary questions

Mostly done

The diversity of service providers is high among partners. Some provide the services through volunteers, others rely on external (state) providers, and the rest provide the services on their own. Thus, the resulting budgetary requirements differ. All partners, however, have agreed on utilizing the Erasmus+ Special Needs Grant to its fullest potential.

4. Standards in communication

Mostly done

All the partners have disclosed their disability unit officers who are available to incoming students with special needs. Formation of “disability unit” with the cooperation on mobility of persons with special needs is still a work in progress in most of the cases.

Masaryk University

Dedicated website for students with special requirements studying at the university - [link](#)

Information on services for incoming international students with disabilities at a dedicated website - [link](#)

University of Cagliari

Dedicated website for students with special requirements studying at the university - [link](#)

No clear information for incoming international students with special needs.

University of Paris Nanterre

Dedicated website for students with special requirements studying at the university - [link](#)

International students with special needs can find information on a separate website, which provides series of links to information booklets and other resources - [link](#)

University of Pécs

Dedicated website for students with special requirements studying at the university - [link](#)

A brief note on Special facilities for disabled in the International facts and figures brochure ([link](#)) but no more information on whom to contact is available. Separate website informing incoming international students about disability services - [link](#)

University of Potsdam

Website with several subsections dedicated to various types of issues, ranging from application forms, international studies, exams, health issues, etc. - [link](#)

Specific section on Disability Services leads to Counseling for Students with Health Impairments / Chronic Conditions website ([link](#)) with information on inclusion concept and students advisors.

No dedication website for incoming international students with disabilities.

University of Rennes 1

Dedicated website for students with special requirements studying at the university - [link](#)

No clear information for incoming international students with disabilities.