

Mirrors of Society

15-23 November 2023 | Beja, Portugal

Erasmus+ Training Course

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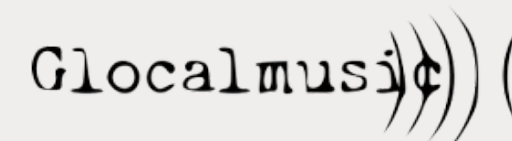
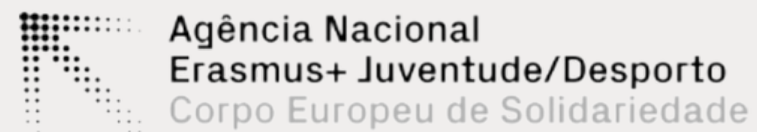


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Introduction

“The true measure of any society can be found in how it treats its most vulnerable members.”

-Ghandi

The Mirrors project was dedicated to crafting methodologies for artistic engagement with people living with disabilities, designed especially for youth workers who carry out professional activities with this community.

Throughout a week-long training program, we delved into various methodologies and addressed inclusion-related social issues. Participants gained practical experience in non-formal education methods, with a particular focus on those rooted in theatre and visual arts.



Introduction

As a result of this experience, we have developed this toolkit to be published online. This not only recounts the experience but also outlines the methodologies that were explored and applied during the project.

This toolkit is structured as follows:

- in the first section, the activities developed during the training week are systematically explained, which can be replicated in other contexts of practice with and for people with disabilities;
- in section two we present practical workshops developed by the youth workers in the context of an organisation that supports people with disabilities - CERCIBEJA;
- in the third section some examples of good practice in the participants' countries and finally a section with individual reflections and testimonies from all the participants.

We hope this toolkit can serve as a valuable resource for all those professionals dedicated to working with people living with disabilities. We aim to foster a more inclusive approach to artistic endeavours and to give support to the professional and personal growth of those actively working in this field.

Activities

Movement drawing

Short description

Pair up or form teams of 3-4 people. Each group should have a piece of paper and a pen. The task is for each person to sequentially draw a few separate abstract patterns on the paper, one after the other. Then, collaboratively, the team should translate these patterns into the language of dance. Discuss and demonstrate which movement corresponds to each pattern and learn the sequence as if it were a choreography. For example, the dashed line could represent steps, or the spiral line could indicate spinning, etc. There are no rules!

Type of activity

Cooperative physical and art activity

Duration

15 minutes

Learning outcomes

Exploration of free movement, cooperation

Materials

Paper, pens, speaker for music

Notes for trainers

The game can also be played with team members taking turns drawing and dancing for each other. In this case, the dancer must spontaneously interpret and perform the sequence of patterns created by the drawer.



Activities

Identity tapestry

Short description

Identity tapestry is a redesigned version of the Privilege Walk activity, inspired on Mary March's installation of the same name. On a large paper, we add statements ranging from 'English in my first language', 'I have a disability', 'I am black', and 'I sing in the shower'. Each participant marks their identity statement after statement, with a uniquely coloured piece of crayon. People select what they feel defines them. At the end of the activity, we have a closer look together at the connections in people's stories and celebrate human diversity.

Type of activity

Visual arts activity

Learning outcomes

Understanding diversity

Notes for trainers

The facilitator should give participants a heads-up about the intensity of the exercise. Ensure that the room is a safe space for conversations. Leave enough time to go through the statements and to give feedback.

Duration

30 minutes

Materials

Paper, crayons, scissor, tape



Activities

Shadow theatre

Short description

Make a small group of 5-6 people from the same nationality who will choose to perform a scene as a theatrical play role in their own language. The game should be short and easily recognizable, including gestures. The audience then had to guess what was the subject of the scene. In the second round each actor/actress will have a person as a shadow who will play the same role as them and repeat each sentence they say during the scene.

Type of activity

Intellectual, theatrical

Duration

10-15 minutes

Learning outcomes

All players have to have patience and sense of different nations' pronunciation and habit to play.

Materials

-

Assignment for the participants

The actor/actress has to speak clearly and slowly to help the shadow who has to imitate the language they speak.

Notes for trainers

Try to guide both participants in the duo to make it easier to play the role



Activities

I am, BUT I am not

Short description

Participants fold a piece of paper in half to make two columns. In the first column they should add 'I am', and in the second 'I am not'. In between the two columns, they should write BUT. Give them a minute or two to fill in the first blank with their choice of common identifiers, such as their race, religion, gender..etc, and the second with a common stereotype about that group that is not true to them. Allow everyone to write at least 4-5 statements. Invite the group to open a respectful discussion on stereotypes.

Type of activity

Team building

Duration

10-15 minutes

Learning outcomes

An activity on inclusion to break down misconceptions and stereotypes.

Materials

Paper, pens

Assignment for the participants

The actor/actress has to speak clearly and slowly to help the shadow who has to imitate the language they speak.

Notes for trainers

Make sure to hold the space for everyone who would like to share their statements and lived experiences on the subject.

Activities

Mirrors

Short description

The facilitator forms pairs of 2. The members of the pairs facing each other. At the beginning of the exercise the members chose one leader and one "mirror". The leader moves their body in slow movements and the mirror has to imitate exactly the same movements at the same speed as the leader. About 2-3 minutes later the members of the pairs change the roles, the leader will be the mirror.

Type of activity

Cooperative concentration game.

Duration

10-15 minutes

Materials

-

Learning outcomes

Ensemble building, creating joint attention, experiencing movement.

Assignment for the participants

"We are forming pairs (...) please, chose a free spot in the room and stand in front of each other. This game is called "mirrors", because one member of the pairs will be mirroring the other one. The leader should move really slowly and the mirror has to imitate exactly the same movements at the same speed as the leader. Firstly I show the exercise. (...) As you can see I moved my legs, and my head too and I used the space. Please decide with your partner who will be the mirror first."

Notes for trainers

The facilitator should show an example, draw attention to our body parts, to variate them during the exercise. If it necessary help the participants individually. Make sure every member should have enough space to move.

Activities

Agree, not agree walk

Short description:

The facilitator will read polemic sentences about disabilities. Each participant must position themselves in an invisible line in the room, in which at one end 0% means “totally disagree” with the sentence and on the opposite side 100% “totally agree”. After each participant chooses a place in the line the facilitator asks 2 or 3 different opinions for the group to hear and reflect on different opinions. The sentences were: “A person’s disability defines who they are as an individual; People with disabilities cannot lead a full and productive life; People with disabilities are brave, courageous and inspirational for living with their disability; People with disabilities are special and should be treated differently.

Type of activity

Debate, Reflection

Duration

15-20 minutes

Learning outcomes

Reflection on different stereotype perspectives about disabilities

Materials

Printed Sentences

Assignment for the participants:

We have an invisible line in the room, on the one hand, there is like 100% agree and on the opposite side, 0% disagree. I will read some sentences and each one of you should choose your place in the line accordingly your opinion is to agree, not agree or somewhere in the middle. I will ask your opinion later on.

Notes for trainers

The facilitator can comment after the debate to reinforce the deconstruction of stereotypes about disabilities; you can create other sentences.

Activities

Flower Power

Short description

Each Participant receives a paper with a designed flower print on it with categories like religion, language, education, geographical origins, age group, gender, physical and mental abilities, sexual orientation..etc.

In these categories, if the participant experienced disadvantage, they should paint the outer petals one colour and if they experienced privilege, they should paint the inner petals a different one. After this individual exercise, they should share in groups of 2 or 3.

Type of activity

Reflection, self-knowledge, visual, individual exercise

Duration

20 minutes

Learning outcomes

Become aware of privileges and disadvantages in each participant's own life

Materials

1 copy of the flower with the categories, 2 coloured pens

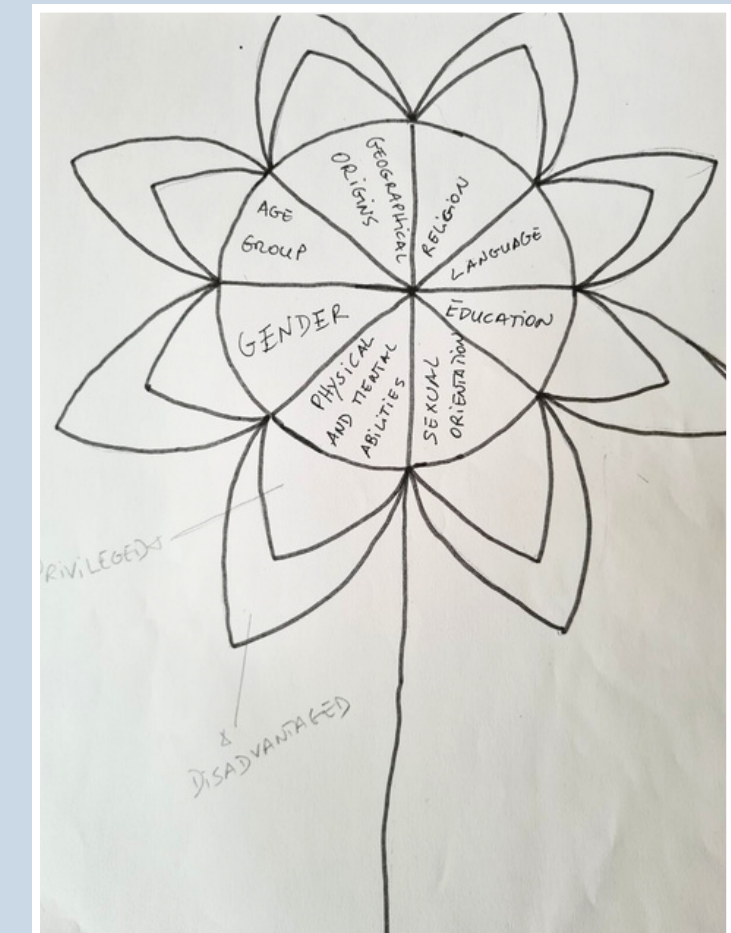
Assignment For Participants

Each one of you should reflect on each category of the flower and think for yourself: Did I feel privileged in this aspect of my life?

Or, did I face some disadvantage? Paint the inner or outer petals accordingly.

Notes for trainers

This exercise could have some impact and insights on some participants, so they should only share what they are comfortable with. Reflection questions for small groups: Did you experience both?; Were you surprised by anything in this exercise?; How do you feel?



Activities

Building bonds

Short description

Participants are going to spend their break tied together. First, ask them to write down up to three things they would like to do in their breaks. Then divide them into groups of 3-5, and instruct them with the following: 'Get together with your groups and attach the strings. You have 15 minutes of break. Please enjoy and remember what's on your list for the break.'

Type of activity

Cooperative communication game

Duration

20 minutes

Learning outcomes

Balancing personal needs and finding a compromise within the group dynamic.

Materials

Ball of string, scissors

Feedback questions

Did you make compromises? What happened when there were conflicting needs?
Did you do everything you wanted? How did you decide what to prioritise first?
Was it forbidden to cut the string? (It was not!)

Notes for trainers

Encourage participants to embrace this discomfort and try to articulate their needs.
Use the learnt communicational tools.



Activities

Story of my name

Short description

Each participant is invited to talk for 5 minutes about the story of their first name, with questions like Who gave your name and why? What does it mean to you? Are there stories concerning your name? How do you want to be called here? Our name is a big part of our identity; usually, it tells something about you, your family, and your culture, even the same names could tell a different story! It reminds us that everyone has a unique tale, and we should not put all in the same label.

Type of activity

Debate, reflection on identities

Duration

15 minutes

Learning outcomes

Reflect on identities and diversity

Materials

-

Notes for trainers:

How is this related to our cultural frameworks?

What can these stories tell about our regions, families, the time we were born, etc?



Activities

The rain dance

Short description

Physical warm-up exercise.

Type of activity

Movement activity

Duration

3 minutes

Materials

-

Learning outcomes

The participants are gathering their attention into the workshop space. Warming up their bodies, according to their abilities and strengthening the non verbal information processing.

Assignment for the participants

"We're going to perform a quick body warm-up to wake up our muscles. Try to mirror my movements."

Notes for trainers

1. Rub the hands like you'd be rubbing in a hand cream (repeat many times).
 2. Lift your fists like you'd be lifting weights (repeat many times).
 3. Tap your shoulders and arms with opposite hands (crossing them in the chest area), gently tapping to wake up the muscles.
 4. Repeat the tapping on the thigh and bum area (remember to mention that the participants don't have to touch or tap themselves on places they're not comfortable with)
 5. Finally, start stomping on the floor with both feet, like to run in place and start loudly calling the letter "A".
 6. Then, come back to the thigh tapping, arm tapping, lifting fists and rubbing hands in this particular order.
- The exercise also creates a space for non-verbal communication, like positive facial expressions while demonstrating the movements. Self-touch is a delicate tool. Remember to try to indicate and tell the participants that it is rather a self-massage, self-soothe exercise than self-hitting. So the movements you're presenting should be falling within your and everyone else's comfort zones.

Activities

Points of You - evaluation exercise

Short description

Points of you cards are a powerful tool for training contexts and working with groups. It is a deck of cards with images/photographs that we use to provoke more intuitive insights and reflections. In this context, we use it to reflect on the training week.

Type of activity

Intuitive, reflection, emotions

Duration

15 minutes

Learning outcomes

Self-reflection, active listening, empathy

Materials

Deck of cards, table

Assignment For Participants

How was this training week for you? What are you taking with you back home?

Choose 2 pictures that represent your state of mind about this week.

No one will comment on each others sharing. Listen with care!

Notes for trainers

It is important to create a safe space; participants' sharing should be voluntary, do not comment on each other's sharing.



Cercibeja Workshops

Loco, Nisa, Reka, Bianka, Ioana

We had a chance to visit a farm where lovely people work with disabilities. We didn't know exactly what to expect but we prepared our workshops upfront for the occasion. Paid attention to making the games easy and doable with a small group of people and also had some backup ideas in case we needed to change the plan. We planned to do three different types of activities: physical, artistic and intellectual.

The first game was called Fanta, Cola, Sprite which is an energiser game to make everyone a bit more freshened up, have fun and laugh right at the beginning so we are creating more bond between each other.

Then we continued with some drawing where we coupled up and every pair got one pen and one paper. They had to share it between each other and successfully draw a figure, for example a fish or house. We shortly understood that this game made some of many feeling a bit monotonous, therefore we kept it short.

The third game was interesting with some animal sounds, and the chosen participant had to guess what animal is missing from the group. This was a great practice for memory and all the players were putting much effort in it and they were on point with their focus.

Shortly after, the farm facilitators showed us around the property with fields and little workshop factories where they would prepare all the products and sell them in their local shop.

We had such a great time in general and our team was blessed from the love all people showed us in this magical cute place.



Cercibeja Workshops

Ali, Barış, Emi, Karolina, Nina

Some youth workers in our group work with people with disabilities regularly, while others never had that chance before. It was a balanced combination, everyone had their opportunity to lead and the less experienced could find security and advice in the others.

As we hadn't met our workshop participants yet and weren't sure of the severity of their intellectual disabilities, we decided upon keeping things clear and simple and making a flexible plan with backup activities to implement in case our main idea wouldn't work out.



Firstly, we introduced an icebreaker to get to know our names and different personalities and warm up to each other, as for our main activity ("Mirrors", which you can read about in this handbook) we would have been working in couples.

We were delighted to see such enthusiasm for the task, and for that reason we decided to keep it going and take "Mirrors" to another level, making it a fun guessing game we all played as a group.

After the workshop ended, we quickly noticed how the initial awkwardness had disappeared: we weren't strangers coming together anymore, we were a real group. Even some participants who did not express themselves much verbally, were not shy to take the lead, showing us how powerful of a tool body movement can be.

Cercibeja Workshops

Anna, Andrea, Lorenzo, Amina, Zach



Pass the paper: group drawing workshop

What is it?

A super fun drawing workshop at the end of which everyone will get a self-portrait made by all participants.

Number of players?

2+

How do you play?

- Give each person a piece of paper and pen/pencil/crayon to draw with
- Each player first writes her/his name at the top of the page
- Set the timer (we tried 30 seconds at first, but one minute was better)
- Draw!
- Pass the paper to the person on their right once the timer dings.
- Keep going as many times as needed to create what you all agree seems like a finished drawing.



Testimonials

I am happy to have had the chance to attend this training course which enriched me with fresh knowledge on inclusion and disability, movement and theater as tools to address rights of people with disability. I got motivated and inspired to continue youth work and bring new methodologies to my organisation.

The workshops were interesting and helpful for youth workers and young people while it was balanced and wisely planned. The learning process went from inside out and I received a lot of insights about myself too. I liked the safe space we created among each other and the feeling to share experience, knowledge and motivation. Moreover the TC enriched me with new connections and friends for life.

-Karolina

For me, this training was like a well-timed gift from life. Through each game, exercise, and task, I rediscovered myself because they prompted me to think, act, and self reflect. It was just the icing on the cake that I experienced all of this in an accepting, open, inspiring, and supportive environment. Wonderful people, very valuable thoughts - I keep them in my heart!

-Réka

The "Mirrors of Society" training course has been an immensely transformative journey for me, marked by a series of impactful activities, exercises, and workshops. This training course provided a unique opportunity to explore and celebrate diversity through artistic means, fostering personal and professional growth. Surrounded by inspiring individuals, I absorbed diverse perspectives that fueled my energy and motivation, enhancing my ability to work effectively with youth and individuals with disabilities. Appreciated for the chance to contribute my own insights and learn from others, this experience has been enriching and fulfilling, leaving me inspired to make positive strides in both self-improvement and my work with youth and individuals with disabilities.

-Lukman

The training course was a week of sharing: sharing opinions, sharing our own individual experiences and previous knowledge as youth workers and volunteers; sharing spaces, memories and cultures. It was a week of challenging the preset schemes in our minds, listening to what the others have to say and, many times, opening our eyes to a new perspective we never explored before as abled people. If large scale change begins from individuals we are following a good track.

-Nina

Testimonials

I am grateful of the given opportunity to experience and learn about how to approach and cherish diversity through the artistic and meaningful activities of the training program, while having the chance to add up my own knowledge and point of view and share it with others. All in all, it was a fulfilling week with amazing people, that were very inspiring and giving me the energy to do improvement on myself and my field of working with youth.

Thanks <3

-Andrea

I am deeply thankful for the training course “Mirrors of Society” and all the experiences that I had a chance to have. It was a deep journey with all the activities, exercises, and workshops that we did together. I learned how to trust when I moved to a spot with closed eyes, I learned how to improvise when we created a theatre, I improved my public speaking skills, and many many other things. I hope I will have an opportunity to meet you again. Many thanks to you Dora, Alexandra, and Luis.

-Anna

This course gave me the opportunity to get to know a lot of different opinions, perspectives and aspects around the idea of inclusion. As I see these perceptions are formed by our experiences with the topic in the past.

Due to this course everyone gets the chance to get familiar with the discussion around disability, and the participants can get connected through the experiences shared by others. By participating in this course we could make remarkable memories which will follow us in the future

-Emi

I feel lucky because I had the opportunity to take part in this project.

I had the chance to watch myself in situations that otherwise I couldn't met in my life.

In conclusion, what I want to say is: the only way to build something new is to combine something that already exists; we did it with ourselves, we built knowledge, friendships and more; that's why I am so grateful.

~Lorenzo

I appreciate the opportunity to engage in the training program, where I've had the chance to explore and celebrate diversity through artistic and meaningful activities. This week has been incredibly fulfilling, surrounded by inspiring individuals who have shared their perspectives, providing me with the energy and motivation to enhance both my personal growth and my work with youth. It's been a truly enriching experience that I'm grateful for.

-Ali

Testimonials

Mirrors of Society workshop was a true experience of learning, sharing and caring. Not only providing me with new practical and theoretical knowledge but ensuring a fertile ground for exchange.

What I'm taking back home above all is motivation gained from listening to the participants and passionate professionals.

-Amina

This transformative experience fostered self-reflection, self-discovery, and expression within a nurturing environment alongside unique people. Engaging in the project provided not only an opportunity for personal growth and the acquisition of new knowledge but also facilitated the development of meaningful friendships. Taking part in caring for people with disabilities allowed me to relate to them on a much deeper level. I am profoundly grateful for the beautiful lessons gained from this project.

-Zach

This project was an opportunity for me to acquire new knowledge but also grow on a personal level. Through every activity, exercise or workshop we learned not only to relate to people with disabilities in an inclusive way, but we were given the opportunity to look inside each of us and express what we discovered in a safe environment with wonderful people, stimulating and motivating. I am extremely grateful for everything I brought back home with me after this project and I truly believe this was a cathartic experience for myself. Thank you!!

-Ioana

I feel truly blessed to be part of this project which turned out way better than I ever imagined. The fact that the whole group was so passionate to create something together and everyone kept their focus on the project was truly appreciated from my side. The subject of the training and the workshops we did made a deep connection to diversity which allows me to have a wider range of knowledge about people with disabilities and acceptance towards people in general. This knowledge I take with me will be definitely useful in my life to create connections and spread information. Last but not least, please allow me to mention what I am most grateful for is the people I met during this program, I treasure them dearly and also the richness I feel because of them. Thank you

-Bianka

BEST EXAMPLES

on disability inclusion from our countries



The success of people with disabilities in sports and art in Türkiye.

Turkey national amputee football team is the team that represents Turkey in amputee football competitions.

It was founded in 2003. The team, which was the European Amputee Football Champion in 2017 and 2021, became the world champion by placing first in the Amputee Football World Cup held in Istanbul in 2022.



BEST EXAMPLES

of disability inclusion from our countries



Wheelchair fencing athlete Beatrice "*Bebe*" Vio won two gold medals at the Paralympics (Rio 2016 and Tokyo 2020), after losing parts of all of her limbs due to meningitis at age 11. Hers and her family's foundation **Art4Sport** was able to donate more than 200 of the very expensive athletic prosthesis to amputee children since 2009.

The organization's newest project was implemented in 2021 with the name of **Bebe Vio Academy**.

Both disabled and abled children, from age 6 to 18, can take part free of charge in Paralympic sport lessons

- wheelchair fencing
- wheelchair basketball
- sitting volley
- paralympic athletics
- amputee football

while also meeting relevant athletes like Bebe Vio herself.

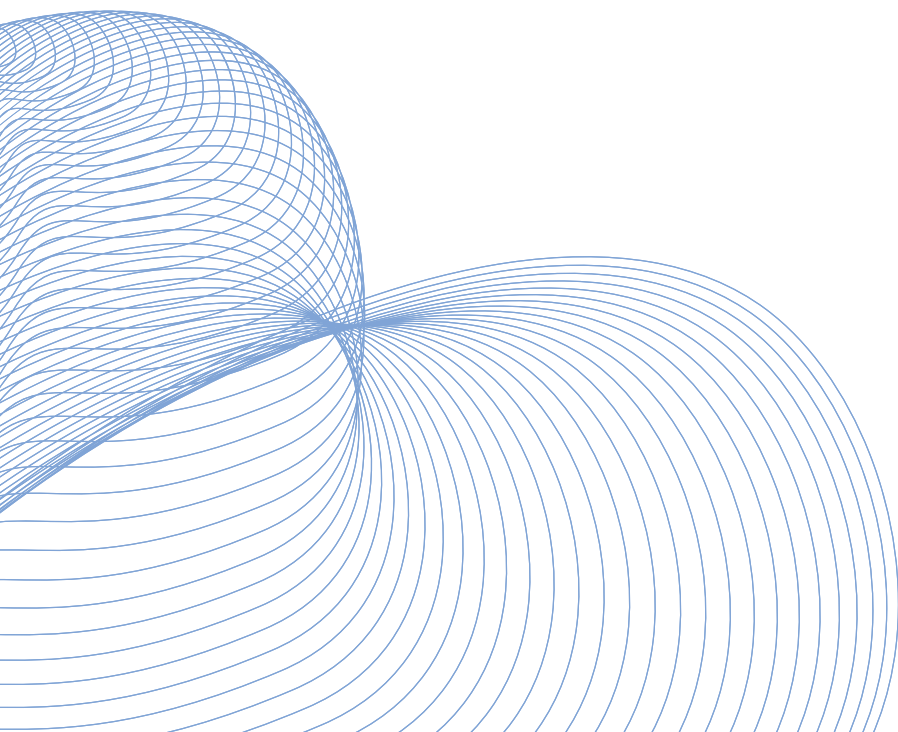


BEST EXAMPLES

of disability inclusion from our countries




Polio Plus is a DPO in Macedonia with a strong competency in media awareness-raising and lobbying. One of their most provocative public campaigns was 'Nobody's Perfect' which depicts icons of beauty and celebrity such as Venus de Milo, Spider Man and Marilyn Monroe with prostheses. These images were placed on billboards throughout the city of Skopje with the words 'Nobody's Perfect' accompanying the images. Nobody's Perfect is the second in a trilogy of campaigns that Polio Plus created to raise awareness of the general population as to the existence of people with disabilities in the wider community and their equal rights to full citizenship. The aim of this campaign was to challenge the social representations of disability. At the core of the 'Nobody's Perfect' campaign is a shift in the perception of disability from viewing people with disabilities as defective individuals to viewing disability as a part of the human experience.



BEST EXAMPLES

of disability inclusion from our countries



The Tasty Restaurant (in Hungarian: Ízlelő Étterem) is a very special example of employing individuals with disabilities in Hungary. In this place, people with various disabilities have the opportunity to utilize their diverse skills in the hospitality sector within a well-equipped, sophisticated, and aesthetic environment. They approach everyone with openness and acceptance, and not only is the atmosphere they create unique, but the prepared dishes are also of high quality. Their first restaurant opened in Szekszárd, and now they are enriching Hungarian gastronomy with a restaurant in Budapest as well.

BEST EXAMPLES

of disability inclusion from our countries



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About our Foundation

Mission: Accessibility

We work in culture – popularizing texts, works of art, events, cultural spaces. We want to make sure that everyone – regardless of their disability, or financial or family situation – can fully and independently take part in events like movie screenings or theatre performances, visit museums or galleries.

Photo album



Photo album





**DISABLED
PEOPLE ARE
THE MIRRORS
OF SOCIETY**