



Enhancing Digital Tools for an Inclusive Dyslexia Adult Education

2022-1-IT02-KA220-ADU-000087842

Policy Recommendations

for the Development of Working with Dyslexic Adults to Improve Their Wellbeing

According to substantiated scientific estimates, the group of European Citizens with dyslexia and specific learning disorders encompasses between 9 and 12 percent of the population, navigating through life in a largely non-“dys” friendly world. Dyslexia is the most widespread specific learning disorder, making the acquiring and using of reading, spelling and writing skills and other communication-related cultural abilities difficult .(European Dyslexia Association)

Research, carried out in the frame of ERASMUS+ project “**Enhancing Digital Tools for an Inclusive Dyslexia Adult Education**”2022-1-IT02-KA220-ADU-000087842 (Executive summary “Transnational Report on regulatory frameworks, policy interventions and best practice initiatives”) demonstrates disparities in the concept of dyslexia, legislation, intervention policy in the case of adult population across European countries. This report provides an overview of the current situation in Bulgaria, Greece, Ireland, Poland, Italy and Latvia with regard to Specific Learning Disorders (SLD) and, in particular, dyslexia. There are no official statistics on adults with dyslexia, only some surveys conducted in small samples. Furthermore, the views of adults with dyslexia have been little studied. There is a lack of research that focuses on the subjective experience of learning difficulties and the timelessness of their possible psychosocial effects. Access to this special population of adults is difficult since they are rarely referred to psychoeducational services for learning assessment or if they have been assessed in a younger age they don’t follow up. The topic of dyslexia is only considered at school level in most countries, it is difficult to find appropriate courses or training for dyslexic adults. Students with dyslexia form the largest group of students with disabilities, are significantly under-represented in higher education. There is a number of gaps in the university curricula with no special courses and practical applications in the field of learning difficulties in order for both teachers and other professionals involved in the treatment of learning difficulties to acquire knowledge and skills to handle these students. There is a lack of a holistic strategy to plan for financial support and activities to raise the awareness of employers how to overcome problems of dyslexia and guarantee the well - being for all people with in their lives and implementation of their full potential to be satisfied and happy with the life.

The proposed recommendations outline a comprehensive framework for cooperation and collaboration addressing the needs of dyslexic adults through political and policy measures, focusing on inclusion, support, and empowerment that could be carried out on European , country, community and institutional level across the following key domains:

1. Policy and Legislative Framework

Inclusive Education Policies: Mandate accommodations in adult education programs, including assistive technologies and dyslexia-friendly materials.

Anti-Discrimination Laws: Recognize dyslexia as a disability under legal frameworks to prevent discrimination in education and employment.

Workplace Accessibility: Strengthen policies to ensure dyslexia-friendly hiring and workplace practices, including flexible schedules and assistive tools.

2. Awareness and Advocacy

Public Campaigns: Increase understanding of dyslexia's challenges and strengths already through community education, thus strengthening their self- esteem.

Training Initiatives: Educate adult educators, employers, and policymakers about supporting dyslexic individuals effectively in their every- day life.

Diversity Promotion: Encourage representation of dyslexic individuals in leadership and policymaking roles.

3. Educational Support

Adult Literacy Programs: Fund dyslexia-specific literacy initiatives using multisensory and flexible learning approaches.

Mandatory Educator Training: Include dyslexia-focused theoretical and practical training in teacher certification and professional development.

Accessible Curricula: Integrate Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, ensuring diverse and adaptable learning process.

4. Workplace and Economic Support

Subsidies and Incentives: Provide grants, financial support for employers and employees for assistive technology adoption and workplace adaptations.

Educating of Employers: Create and implement special programs for employers to foster understanding of dyslexia and creating of supportive work environments.

Equitable Hiring Practices: Adapt traditional job application processes to accommodate dyslexic candidates.

5. Community and NGOs Integration

Support Networks: Develop local and online peer groups and mentorship programs for dyslexic adults.

Inclusive Events: Organize activities that reveal and develop dyslexic strengths, such as creativity and problem-solving.

Accessible Municipal and NGOs Services: Ensure public services, including forms and notices, are available in dyslexia-friendly formats. Use easy and simple language in activities and documents.

6. Psychological and Emotional Support

Counseling and Therapy: Provide accessible mental health services tailored to address stigma and self-esteem issues.

Stress Management Resources: Develop workshops focusing on coping strategies and time management.

7. Technological and Digital Accessibility

Assistive Technologies: Make tools like text-to-speech software and audiobooks widely available through subsidies or community programs.

Digital Inclusivity: Design government and municipal websites with accessibility features such as simplified navigation and text-to-speech options

8. Research and Data Collection

Impact Studies: Fund research to measure the effectiveness of interventions and understand socio-economic challenges faced by dyslexic adults. Involve universities, research institutions to create data data-based approach in planning.

Data-Driven Policies: Use evidence to create and refine programs and initiatives.

9. Monitoring and Accountability

Annual Reports: Require institutions to track and report on the inclusion of dyslexic adults in programs.

Feedback Mechanisms: Collect input from beneficiaries to continuously improve services.

These recommendations aim to foster environments where dyslexic adults can thrive, ensuring their integration into society and maximizing their potential across educational, professional, and social spheres.