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School-to-Work Transition for Higher education students with disabilities
in Serbia, Bosnia & Herzegovina and Montenegro



**School-to-Work Transition for Higher education students with
disabilities in Serbia, Bosnia & Herzegovina and Montenegro
Trans2Work**

DEV 3.2.	Development of Internship Program for Students with disabilities
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Abbreviations

Term	Explanation
HEI	Higher Education Institution
SwD	Students with Disabilities
PwD	Persons with Disabilities



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1. Theoretical approach

1.1. History of internships

The history of student internships (or cooperative education) originated in the U.S. in the early 1900s (Driscoll, 2006). The history of internships is intimately intertwined with that of experiential learning and experiential education, school-to-work programs and initiatives, career academies and career-exploration programs and service-learning programs.

The development of student internships on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia (former Yugoslavia), started in 1906 when the Faculty of Engineering in Belgrade organized student “practical technical works” in order to acquire practical knowledge (Đurović, 2004). Important relation between the economy and education in the mentioned region happened during the reign of “directed education” from the seventies to the late eighties of the last century¹. Directed education was designed as a comprehensive reform of the school system. The basic idea of the reform was to provide a more functional relation between the type of educational attainment and employment, and between educational activities and associated work². Directed education was based on an exchange between the educational and productive sector, or “school” and “factory” (Šuvar, 1977).

Although the introduction of internships in formal education systems began in more than a century back, despite of developing different models and practical examples, we can say that this area still lacks consideration of young people with disabilities which are even today discriminated group when it comes to participation in professional internships that are essential for gaining work experience and developing professional skills on the way to first job.

The research conducted by ASD and partner organizations in Serbia, Montenegro and FYROM (Former Yugoslav Republic Of Macedonia) in 2012 within the project “Advancing The Social dimension of European higher education area in Southeast Europe” shows that approximately 60% of examinees answered that they did not have an opportunity to take part in student trainings or other development programs at faculties³. The results emphasize that student trainings and briefing programs are not recognized among students and that they are not available in adequate degree, especially for students with disability.

¹ http://www.ibe.unesco.org/National_Reports/Yugoslavia/nr_mf_yu_1975_e.pdf

² http://www.anthroserbia.org/Content/PDF/Articles/bacevic_usmereno_obrazovanje_u_SFRJ.pdf

³ “Advancing the social dimension of European higher education area in Southeast Europe”
<http://www.ush.rs/index.php/en/projekti/istrazivanja/34-regionalni-izvestaj-unapredivanje-socijalne-dimenzije-u-jugoistocnoj-evropi.html>



1.2. The importance of internships in the development of professional skills

There is a general acknowledgement that getting experience in the professional field before graduation is crucial not only for a seamlessly transition into the workplace, but also for enhancing graduates' career progression and prospects for employment after graduation (Calvo, 2011). In this respect, Higher Education Institutions are eligible to reconsider the boundaries between Higher Education and the work world in order to develop curricular mechanisms, such as the internship program, which would prepare students with disabilities for labor market.

Internship program should consist of mandatory teaching activities during studies, which would include practical work in real business environment in order to complete the theoretical, academic knowledge and establishing links with practical knowledge and experience necessary for their future job (Stock, 2004).

The "hands-on" work experiences in complex real-world contexts provided by internships are becoming a central strand of the curricula and syllabi in many undergraduate and graduate degree programs, and this connection between the academia and the world of work has been greatly appreciated not only by employers, but also by participant students who have claimed many benefits of this unique opportunity, including the enhancement of their academic, professional, and personal development (Calvo, 2011).

Students' internships primarily aim to contribute to the final student profiling and verification of the acquired theoretical knowledge in a real working environment. Other important tasks of internship programs are:

- improvement of practical knowledge and skills of students,
- verification of the applicability of theoretical knowledge in a real working environment
- improving employment opportunities for students after graduation,
- facilitating overcoming barriers in the transition of students from the academic to the real business environment,
- improving study programs at universities through the activities carried out as a reaction to the feedback information, comments and suggestions defined during the implementation of student internship,
- ensuring better links between universities and industry and achieving deeper cooperation in the part relevant to work,
- providing quality, planning of human resources management enterprises through the continuous flow of young professionals to practice, and
- testing skills and knowledge of potential new experts, or the provision of trial work through the implementation of student internships.⁴

⁴ Stručne prakse i stručno osposobljavanje u Republici Srbiji: izazovi sprovođenja i moguće perspektive, Beogradska otvorena škola, 2015.



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Nowadays we are faced with problem of mismatch between education and labor market. Many young people coming from the world of formal education are willing to work, but they lack what employers recognize as the most important – work experience. Higher Education Institutions alone cannot produce graduates experts. Therefore, employers should take more active role also during formal education and get involved with the whole organization of internship.⁵

Organization of professional internships is mutually beneficial. On the one side, people without work experience are making their first steps toward the labor market and, on the other hand, employers are using the models of **recruiting young talented people**, but they also get a chance to unburden their employees in operational and less demanding jobs. At the same time, society is getting/creating **more attractive and competent future workforce**. Each company should give an opportunity an intern to negotiate a working position based on intern's skillset. Employers should not employ intern only on jobs that can unburden other employees.

Organization of internship is **a very effective way of attracting talented young people**, but it is also **socially responsible work**⁶. That means that it useful for the entire society and not only for the companies.

1.3. Legislative normative framework

Inclusive education is one of the key preconditions for the creation of an inclusive society, or a society that responds to the needs of citizens and leads the realization of basic human rights and ensuring social and economic conditions for a dignified and independent people from vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities.

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities⁷ highlights the importance of raising awareness of the skills and abilities of persons with disabilities, their contributions to the workplace and the labor market, as well as the importance of encouraging at all levels of the education system (Article 8). The Convention emphasizes the need to take steps in order to create an environment which will enable persons with disabilities to have effective access to general technical programs and programs of vocational guidance and placement services, vocational and continuing training, encouraging employment opportunities and career promotion (Article 27). It is clearly

⁵ Michigan Center for Career and Technical Education, Michigan State University. (1995). A guide to work-based learning programs: Part II—career exposure. East Lansing, MI: Michigan Center for Career and Technical Education, Michigan State University

⁶ <http://www.noois.rs/publikacije/194-polozaj-osoba-sa-invaliditetom-u-republici-srbiji-u-kontekstu-privredizivanja-evropskoj-uniji>

⁷ <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.pdf>



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indicated that the participation of people with disabilities in programs of additional training and practice is important.

The attitude of the European Union in the education of persons with disabilities is reflected in some important documents of the European institutions. It is important to mention the **Charter of Luxembourg**⁸, adopted in 1996, which highlights the principal objectives of promotion of the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the educational process. As the problem of unemployment burdens and limits the development of the community/society, it is, therefore, understandable, that the intention of the Commission in cooperation with Member States is to prepare the necessary strategies and different actions that will contribute to the fight for greater employment and social security. New attitude towards employment policy was introduced by the **Amsterdam Treaty** (2001/C80/01). European Employment Strategy, as a part of it, basis on four main pillars:

- 1) access to employment,
- 2) enterprise,
- 3) adaptability and
- 4) the principle of equal opportunities (Laursen, 2006).

The European social model of disability stresses that the existing barriers are preventing the full social inclusion of people with disabilities. These barriers must be removed. They were described in the act of the Commission, "**Towards a barrier-free Europe for people with disabilities**" (COM(2000) 284 final)⁹. This document has had a significant impact on the development of policies and regulations governing the rights of persons with disabilities. Accessibility and mobility are now reflected through equal rights and freedom of movement and the right to be included in a social environment. It is essential to ensure effective participation persons with disabilities, the knowledge-based economy by removing of both, technical and legal barriers.

EQUAL¹⁰ is an initiative of the Community which aims to examine ways of inclusive policies and actions and bringing the new ones which will contribute to the ongoing reform of employment. All projects are designed and driven EQUAL (Employment & Social Affairs, EQUAL) and have to be accessible to persons with disabilities.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2012 conducted research in the countries that have high numbers of young people involved in some form of vocational training and vocational training with an employer. Findings showed that the unemployment rate of young people is the lowest in three countries with this practice in Europe: Austria, Germany and Switzerland. This can be explained by the existence of institutionally regulated system of organizing professional internship in these countries.

⁸ <https://www.european-agency.org/sites/default/files/CHARTER-of-LUXEMBOURG-November-1996.pdf>

⁹ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/2014-2019/thyssen/announcements/keynote-speech-conference-towards-barrier-free-europe-european-disability-card_en

¹⁰ http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equal_consolidated/



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According to estimates by the famous research experts Eurofound's in 2012, the cost of non-participation of young people in the labor market amounted to 153 billion euros, or 1.2% of European GDP¹¹. This research by Eurofound lasted three years and it serves as a reference basis for designing all EU policies in the area of youth employment.

In January 2012, EU Council of Ministers adopted a political guideline entitled “**Youth Employment Package**” based on the **EU strategy for youth**.¹² One of the actions, as a way for increasing employability of youth, is establishment of **The European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EAfA)**¹³. The Alliance was founded in 2013 in Leipzig. The **EAfA** is a unique platform which brings together governments with other key stakeholders, like businesses, social partners, chambers, vocational education and training (VET) providers, regions, youth representatives or think tanks¹⁴. The common goal is to strengthen the quality and image of interns in Europe. Alliance members are also the countries which are in the EU integration process like Albania, Montenegro and Turkey. Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia have not yet joined the alliance.

1.4. The social dimension of higher education

The social dimension of higher education presents a major challenge for European cooperation since it has been viewed differently from country to country. Not all countries have linked their policy in the development of the social dimension in its commitment to the Bologna process. Although it is not mentioned in the Bologna Declaration (1999) social dimension is an integral and important part of it.

In May 2005, Ministers responsible for higher education met in Bergen to discuss mid-term achievements of the Bologna process. In the Bergen Communiqué¹⁵, ministers enlarged their priorities for 2007, which include:

- Strengthening the social dimension and removing obstacles to mobility;
- Creating opportunities for flexible learning paths in higher education, including procedures for recognition of prior learning.

"The social dimension of the Bologna Process is a constituent part of the EHEA and a necessary condition for the attractiveness and competitiveness of the **European Higher Education Area**. Therefore, efforts are being made

¹¹ NEETs - Young People not in Employment, Education or Training: Characteristics, Costs and Policy Responses in Europe”, European Foundation for Improving Working and Living Conditions-Eurofund, 2012

¹² http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth-strategy_en

¹³ <http://www.noois.rs/publikacije/194-polozej-osoba-sa-invaliditetom-u-republici-srbiji-u-kontekstu-pridruzivanja-evropskoj-uniji>

¹⁴ <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1147&langId=en>

¹⁵ <http://www.ehea.info/cid101762/ministerial-conference-bergen-2005.html>



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to make higher education equally accessible to all, including inclusive environment, which would enable students with disabilities to complete their studies without obstacles related to their social and economic status. The social dimension includes different measures to help students, especially from socially disadvantaged groups, in financial and economic aspects and provide them with guidance and counselling in order to expand access to education."¹⁶

The concept of the social dimension has been further developed in 2007, when the London Communiqué defined the objective of the social dimension as a "social aspiration of the student body that reflects the social structure, and in its filling in higher education at all levels where the representatives of all minority groups should participate in order to reflect the diversity of the population.

The report on Social Dimension and Data on Mobility identifies that "there is no comprehensive survey which covers the necessary aspects of the social dimension: not all Bologna countries are covered, there is no common deadline for surveys, requirements for indicators need to be matched with data availability and comparability, statistics from different sectors need to be brought together to get a fair picture of the social dimension"¹⁷. The measures and support mechanisms that have been implemented to stimulate participation of mentioned groups have not been accompanied by the establishment of monitoring mechanisms, nor systematic data collection. The most common national measures to widen participation are the provision of targeted financial support and the development of alternative access routes and/or admission procedures.

Inclusive Higher Education is a mechanism to provide equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in all aspects of daily life - employment, personal development, participation in local communities, etc.

1.5. Support for students with disabilities at Higher Education Institution

Persons with disabilities have the same needs as well as persons without disabilities and the needs are not what makes the difference between the two groups in society. The difference is caused by the barriers in the surroundings, which limits opportunities for persons with disabilities. Various forms of support are needed to reduce the impact of barriers and create conditions for the equal status of people with disabilities. This is the situation in all areas of society, such as education and employment. A European

¹⁶ The European Higher Education Area - Achieving the Goals - Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, Bergen, 19-20 May 2005

¹⁷ Key issues for the European Higher Education Area – Social Dimension and Mobility. Report from the Bologna Process Working Group on Social Dimension and Data on Mobility of Staff and Students in Participating Countries, p. 10



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Strategy for Persons with Disabilities recognizes that every sixth person in the society is faced with some kind of barrier and thus belongs to the category of persons with disabilities. This fact should be kept in mind when planning support because EU countries recognize the need to support and provide the same benefits to almost 17% of the population. In Serbia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina in this category is identified 10-12% of the population which indicates that therefore there is a risk that approximately 5-7% of the population is not recognized as someone who has no equal conditions in society. It should be noted that the percentage of 5-7% in the general population is actually almost 40% of persons with disabilities and that the lack of support for so much persons in the vulnerable subpopulation is an important indicator of the unfairness of society. It is important to bear in mind that for the part of the population that has been identified to belong to the category of socially vulnerable does not have an adequate means of support in 3 countries participating in the project.

Education and employment are areas where you can see the most exact consequences of the barriers faced by persons with disabilities in society. There is a social imperative to be educated, and later to have a job. Achievement of these goals shows the success of an individual, when it comes to people with disabilities the failure to do so shows impact of barriers.

1.6. Barriers in education and employment of persons with disabilities

The barriers limit permanently a person's ability, consequently decreasing abilities of an individual to participate in a labor market.

Overcoming the circumstances of daily life for students with disabilities is more difficult and they need additional support to gain competences that make them competitive in the labor market. The acquirement of practical skills next to achieved academic knowledge gives the opportunity for each student with disability to acquire a position in the labor market.

The results of the research show that professional internships are opportunity for graduate students and students of basic studies to get more perspective and to reduce the amount skills omitted in academic activities. When it comes to students with disabilities, the significance of professional training is additional because it gives the student an opportunity to improve their knowledge in real working environment, to develop adequate professional but also interpersonal skills and also to recognize parts of their professional functioning in which they should make a further effort in order to independently or with some way of support, attain necessary qualifications. Because of all this it seems that the role of mentors, career counsellors and accommodations of the environment is of the crucial importance for adequate progress of students with disability. This should be in mind when planning professional training for students with disability.



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The significance of mentor and career counsellor in the implementation of professional internships and development of professional skills, is in a mediating function between the student and his previous knowledge, and also in facilitating the integration of practical knowledge and skills into a comprehensive portfolio of student like future professional. This significance is the same when it comes to students with disability, but the contribution and influence of people who have the role of mentor in the process of acquiring knowledge and skills is more sophisticated and thus more responsible for the professional development of the student with disabilities. It is so because mentor should help with providing conditions that will decrease the negative influences of the barriers with which person in the role of the student is faced by in daily life. To be able to deal as a professional with the challenge of the barriers for students with disabilities one must develop abilities to recognize barriers. Usually barriers are categorized into three groups: physical, informational and socio-psychological. If we look deeper, (we have to bear in mind that people are creators of everything in our environment) we can conclude that the basis of all barriers, including information and physical, is people's awareness, or lack of awareness, which is mainly manifested in prejudices and stereotypes. When it comes to students with disability the lack of awareness causes barriers that limit their opportunities to access information and this is a basic process in the acquisition of knowledge and skills. Therefore, the functioning of each student depends on what is accessible to him, and availability depends on the access and adequate support. Although the barriers and medical conditions in some ways are classified at least in harsh categories, adequate means of support is difficult to predict on the basis of information that we take from categories in which certain person is classified. It is necessary to know the person for the following reasons:

- People with the same medical diagnosis and the same medical condition largely function differently;
- People who face barriers know best how to overcome them;
- The same kind of support is not often adequate for the different people who are faced with the same type of barriers.

For all these reasons it is necessary that people who are the role of mentor and career advisor have in mind at least two things:

1. Persons with disabilities, and therefore students with disabilities do not have special and specific needs in relation to individuals from the general population but a way of satisfying the needs is different
2. Individualistic approach is crucial in the planning of career counseling and practicing of professional training.

The conclusion is that it is of major importance the role that mentors and career counsellors for students with disability as well as all the other students. Also, it is possible that a student with a disability may need some different form of support. The significance of this finding is also reflected in the fact that



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in this way students with disability are seen as partners in the whole process of professional practice and career guidance.

When it comes to customizing the working environment and didactic material as part of the support for students with disabilities in the process of creating equal opportunities we primarily have to have in mind the suggestions of students with disabilities on appropriate forms of support, and then promptly provide adequate resources to overcome the barriers.

The most dominant aspects of support are: a) the adaptation of surrounding and removal of physical barriers, b) adapting literature and didactic materials, c) the use of assistive technologies and d) hiring of personal assistants.

Adjusting literature and didactic materials and the use of assistive technology should be absolutely custom tailored for the specific student. For example a student with visual support in the form of adjustments can read literature with text font size 18, and another student will need visual support in the form of an increase font text to 26 while the third student will need conversion of the text in electronic format and to read or edit electronic text using speech software. A form of support which is increasingly possible to plan in advance is the removal of architectural barriers and physical adjustment of premises or engagement personal assistants. What is significant when removing architectural barriers is that the surroundings needs to be in compliance with regulations and standards and to be absolutely functional. After that a person who uses a wheelchair or has difficulty moving can access to all necessary places in which he or she performs his or hers professional practice (workplace).

Hiring a personal assistance primarily requires a professional approach. Another aspect of the preferred engagement is peer support in the role of a personal assistant to a student with disabilities. When it comes to these two-forms of engagement it is desirable that there is a brief period of adjustment of personal assistant with the user and his or her functioning to make the support more efficient.

It is not desirable that in role of a personal assistant is a family member (especially parent) of a student with a disability for many reasons, of which the most significant are:

- Inhibition of students with disabilities in the presence of parents in situations of working engagement
- Greater social distance and aloofness peers to achieve an informal interaction with student with disability;
- Focus the environment and working environment on the parent, not the student so that the people in the area in which the student with disabilities are often involved with the parent and communicate with him even though the student should be a major figure in the interaction;
- Protective approach of parents and restraint of student.



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The only advantage of this approach is a better understanding of the functioning of students with disabilities by parents or a family member. With a professional approach of personal assistant this advantage after a short time loses significance. Of course, the main purpose of any form of support increasing is autonomy persons with disabilities and their active participation in the activities.

An important aspect of support for students who communicate using sign language can be a sign interpreter engagement. This kind of support has the potential to be the most expensive. An alternative solution is to train employees, or a small number of employees on the sign language, which again could be significant as it will provide support for the next student with disabilities who use sign language as a basic form of communication.

Supporting students with mental disabilities could potentially be the most complex, but also with the smallest material costs, because the support is realized with the correction planned engagement and creating more favorable terms on the daily level of engagement, which should be done in cooperation with the student.



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2. Need analysis of Students with disabilities and Employers¹⁸

The internship program provides the framework for the operationalization of specific activities whose main goals are to develop the skills and competencies of students adjusted to the labour market needs. It offers general objectives and areas of development, which are differently achieved in practice due to the presence of contextual factors relating to **the generic or transferable skills**.

These competencies employers recognize as very important and necessary and they are considered as an indispensable element of strengthening employability of potential employees. So, the internship program actually has a role of mediation, as well as empowerment of the relationship between employers and students. Internship programs should be planned and implemented in the career centres, which are usually positioned in the higher education institutions. **Mentor** should be the person responsible to manage the process of planning and implementation of the internship program.

Planning the internship program requires an analysis of the current situation and the need to define objectives and directions of further action. In this regard, the needs analysis ensures that the internship program is truly structured in line with the expectations and needs of both, students and employers. Therefore, the initial phase of the project Trans2Work was need analyses aiming to facilitate the transition of SwD from HEI to the labour market. The comprehensive need analysis of SwD and employers has been done in all three countries in which the project is being implemented (Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro). The analysis did not determine substantial differences in the patterns of the three countries, and therefore they could be considered as common conclusions that serve as a basis for planning the Internship program.

The need analysis has shown that students generally consider that the study contributes to the development of their skills necessary for the labour market. However, they also think that the preparation is insufficient regarding the needs for an extra training that would make them capable for entry into the labour market. Students with disabilities do not have information on available legal subsidies nor on the right to cover the costs for the purchase of additional technical and technological resources necessary for adapting the workplace to their needs.

As the most important item, in terms of the expectations from employers, students with disabilities emphasize ensuring the accessibility of buildings and rooms as well as ensuring new or adaptation of existing equipment. In fact, the results of the research indicate that most students expect ensuring basic conditions for work that will respond to their needs in accordance with the specifics of their disability. The students express the willingness of equal participation in work tasks, which indicates their confidence and self-esteem.

¹⁸ Need analyses done in the first Trans2Work Project phase.



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Since the results on items, measuring the expectations of higher education institutions, are very high, we can conclude that students perceive the role of institutions of higher education as extremely important in the process of transition to the labour market.

Needs analysis also provided the information about the fear that employers have regarding possible employment of Persons with Disabilities. Employers mostly do think that PwD cannot adequately do the job, which they are applying for. Thus, employers avoid hiring persons with disabilities because they anticipate series of difficulties that the PwD can face and, therefore, reduce productivity. In addition, employers cite a fear that PwD might not be able to fit into the working environment and whether they would be accepted by the rest of the collective. The Internship Program, observed in the light of these findings, has a double meaning. On the one hand, it serves to strengthen personality and competence of students with disabilities, while the other leads to breaking prejudices of employers about the abilities of persons with disabilities to be a productive part of the labour organizations and community in general.



3. Internship program

The main goal of an internship is generally preparing students for the challenges they will face when entering the labor market. The context of the working environment is much different from the studying and it requires a special set of generic skills that can only partially be learned by teaching in the higher education institutions. As the position of students with disabilities is even more sensitive, an adequate preparation for them is even more important. The internship program should be implemented by mentors within the center for career counseling. Below are defined areas of development presenting the general objectives of the Program.¹⁹

Modules	Skills	Objectives
Self determination	Independence/ Behavioral autonomy	Managing to act independently in everyday life Making decision and problem solving independently from undue external influence or interference
	Self regulation	Making decisions about how to act, to act, to evaluate the desirability of the outcomes of the action and to revise the plan (self monitoring, self instruction, self evaluation and self reinforcement)
	Self realization	Knowing the strengths and limitations and act accordingly
	Psychological empowerment	Achieving perceived or actual control in one's life Achieving desired outcomes such as social inclusion and involvement in the community Achieving personal efficacy
Self Advocacy	Self awareness	Be aware of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ interests, strengths and preferences ○ goals and dreams ○ support needs ○ accommodation needs ○ characteristics of one's disability ○ responsibilities
	Knowledge of rights	Knowing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ community rights ○ human service rights ○ consumer rights

¹⁹ Detaljan opis kompetencija dostupan je u Tranzicijskom kurikulumu (DEV 3.3.b.).



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ educational rights ○ steps to advocate for change ○ knowledge of resources
	Communication	<p>Being able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ act with assertiveness ○ negotiate ○ understand and use body language ○ use of assistive technology ○ listen ○ compromise
	Leadership	<p>Have the knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ of group's rights ○ to advocate for others or for causes ○ of resources ○ of organizational participation
Employment	Personal information	<p>Compiling a database of personal information</p> <p>Use personal data information to complete forms and applications (CV writing)</p>
	Job survey/assessment/ career	<p>Completing job surveys/ assessments to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) determine job interest and career areas or (b) determine employability strengths and weaknesses (c) determine job roles and responsibilities, training, pay, availability and career outlook
	Behavior on the job	<p>Demonstrating appropriate behavior expected on the job (reporting on time, requesting services, use of leave time etc)</p>
	Job listings	<p>Selecting jobs from job lists and determine responsibilities, location, hours, pay and gain time</p>
	Job seeking skills	<p>Listing the essential steps to apply for a job</p> <p>List, plan and use various methods of seeking a job</p>
	Job application	<p>Completing all questions on a job application</p> <p>Reading and completing related forms</p>



	Interviewing skills	Demonstrating the essential step for a successful interview
	Work ethic	Developing a personal concept of a good work ethic by examining the qualities, attitudes and behaviors of a successful employee
	Vocational rehabilitation	Knowing the referral process to Vocational Rehabilitation for evaluation and possible services

Self-Determination is concerned with supporting our natural or intrinsic tendencies to behave in effective and healthy ways. Self-determination is important for all people, including students with disabilities. The skills leading to enhanced self-determination, like goal setting, problem solving, and decision making, enable students to assume greater independence, responsibility and control (Wehmeyer, 1995). Moreover, when students with disabilities show they can make things happen and take responsibility for planning and decision-making, others change how they view them and what they expect from them. People with disabilities have emphasized that having control over their lives, instead of having someone else make decisions for and about them, is important to their self-esteem and self-worth.

Teach the skills and knowledge students need to become self-determined. The educational programs of all students should promote the skills needed to:

- Set personal goals
- Solve problems that act as barriers to achieving these goals
- Make appropriate choices based on personal preferences and interests
- Participate in decisions that impact the quality of their lives
- Advocate for themselves
- Create action plans to achieve goals
- Self-regulate and self-manage day-to-day actions.

Self-Advocacy is, one form of advocacy, occurring any time people speak or act on their own behalf to improve their quality of life, effect personal change, or correct inequalities. Self-advocacy is referred to as the ability to articulate one's needs and make informed decisions about the supports necessary to meet those needs.

Self-advocacy refers to:

- an individual's ability to effectively communicate, convey, negotiate or assert his or her own interests, desires, needs, and rights. It involves making informed decisions and taking responsibility for those decisions.



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- Self-knowledge is the first step towards advocating for your rights. You need to know your strengths, needs, and interests before you can begin to advocate.

Why is Self-Advocacy important for students:

- Adolescence is the usual period during which students without disabilities begin to question authority and generally move toward becoming autonomous, self-determined individuals (Wehmeyer, 1995).
- Rather than breeding dependency, it is important that students with disabilities also be given opportunities to establish personal goals, make choices and become involved with the adults who have usually been making decisions for them (Wehmeyer, 1995).
- In postsecondary school, it is considered the student's responsibility to advocate for himself/herself. Therefore, self-advocacy training in previous grades is of paramount importance (Brown, 1999).
- Self-advocacy skills are needed before commencing post-secondary education, which is usually a much larger, depersonalized setting. (Brown, 1999).
- Learning self-advocacy skills also develops self-determination skills, which could foster increased personal satisfaction and happiness.
- All students, whether or not they have a disability, must learn through opportunities and experiences to explore, take risks, learn from consequences, become self-motivated, develop positive self-esteem and gradually gain control over their lives. *All* students would benefit from being directly taught these skills at any age level.

Employment is a relationship between two parties, usually based on a contract where work is paid for, where one party, which may be a corporation, for profit, not-for-profit organization, co-operative or other entity is the employer and the other is the employee. Employees work in return for payment, which may be in the form of an hourly wage, by piecework or an annual salary, depending on the type of work an employee does and/or which sector she or he is working in. Employees in some fields or sectors may receive gratuities, bonus payments or stock options. In some types of employment, employees may receive benefits in addition to payment. Benefits can include health insurance, housing, disability insurance or use of a gym. Employment is typically governed by employment laws or regulations and/or legal contracts.



3.1. Training modules

Topic(s) name	Self-determination
Learning goals	Understanding self-determination as basic human right and a requirement for self-advocacy
Outcomes	Students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understand the importance of selfdetermination and selfevaluation - Identify the elements of self-determination (self-regulation, self-reliance, self-realization, psychological empowerment) in everyday situations - Make decisions and solve problems - Understand the importance of self-evaluation in relation to their potential (strengths and limitations) - Demonstrate / practice self-control in different situations - Understand the possibility of achieving the desired objectives such as social inclusion - Self-evaluate own competences for independent action in different situations
Learning material (references, sources, ppt)	https://kuscholarworks.ku.edu/bitstream/handle/1808/6197/SD5_A%20Functional%20Model%20of.pdf;sequence=1

Topic(s) name	Self-advocacy
Learning goals	Understanding the importance of self-advocacy skills of students and the basic ways of encouraging these skills
Outcomes	Students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raise awareness of their own interests, needs, dreams, goals; - Act responsibly - To understand basic human rights and the possibilities / ways of achieving the same - Understand assertiveness and apply negotiating skills - Demonstrate/practice skills verbal and nonverbal communication and application of assistive technology - To understand and apply leadership skills
Learning material (references, sources, ppt)	https://teachingselfadvocacy.wordpress.com/teaching-self-advocacy-skills/

Topic(s) name	Employment
Learning goals	Understanding the importance of adequate preparation of students



	to enter the labour market Knowledge of basic expertise that students should have after graduation in order to successfully move on to the labour market
Outcomes	Students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Know the elements of CV - Write an adequate CV for the position they are applying for - Understand personal professional interests - Understand your own strengths and weaknesses with regard to labor market needs - Position yourself in the labor market - Demonstrate professional behavior in the workplace - Know and understand the current opportunities - Be prepared for a situation assessment in the recruitment process
Learning material (references, sources, ppt)	http://www.neglected-delinquent.org/sites/default/files/docs/transition_curriculum.pdf

Achieving specific targets in relation to the defined competence depends on the characteristics of the student (his personality, the nature of his disability, interest he or she is being trained for) and the working environment he or she is coming to. Therefore, the Internship Program, in addition to a general framework which it provides, includes also the individualization in accordance with the needs of students with disabilities. The process of training and competence development should be monitored and evaluated in accordance with established criteria in order to obtain insight into the impact achieved. For this purpose it is necessary to create tracking forms of monitoring and evaluation of students which are filled by the mentor and potential employer. The internship program is aligned with the transition curriculum, which also aims to develop and strengthen the competencies of students with disabilities. However, the transition curriculum is the framework used by academic staff in preparing students for the labour market, while the internship program is implemented by supervisors with the exercise of direct contact and communication with employers. In this way, the unique action of all actors in the process of transition of students from institutions of higher education to the labour market is being provided.



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