

# Fact Sheet on the impact of accessibility in service provision, with a focus on education & training

## Key Facts

- There is a societal consensus that accessibility and assistive technologies (AT) are beneficial for the individual, for service providers and society as a whole. Recommendations, guidelines, standards and tools are accordingly put in place. Political will and programmes are, in turn, implemented.
- Service providers serve as human rights enablers. Many diverse support services have been put in place over the years to meet the needs of persons with disabilities, and considerable expertise has been developed around those.
- The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) Committee highlights that support systems should be broad enough to cover all needs related to the spectrum of life. More innovation is needed to enlarge the scope of support provision and, at the same time, existing support systems should be improved to incorporate the human rights approach of the Convention fully.



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## ENTELIS+ Overview

- The ENTELIS+ project aims to reduce the digital divide by strengthening organisations to collaborate in the development of strategies and policies for digital skills development of persons with disabilities of all ages.
- Work package 1 of the ENTELIS+ project focused on the exploration and collection of state-of-the-art research in digital skills and teaching in relation to assistive technology (AT), accessibility, and information & communication technology (ICT). The collection of information was focused on examining existing resources, publications, practices, and various perspectives on gaps and needs in relation to digital literacy/skills for service providers: AT, accessibility and ICT, including attitudes, with a particular focus on inclusive education. Digital skills in managing or implementing the holistic process of AT implementation and use (AT is a service, not only a tool) are identified, covering the diversity of persons with disabilities.

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## Methodology and Outcomes

In order to carry out this research, three main methods were used:

- Resources Collection Tool
- Consultation Questionnaire
- Training Needs Survey

The primary outcomes come from the Consultation Questionnaire tool. This tool is used to collect stakeholders' views and opinions to understand better the existing situation and the needs related to accessible education and digital skills of different stakeholders. Stakeholders include service providers, education and training providers, web designers, software developers, local and regional authorities etc. The main outcomes identified from using this tool are:



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### Experience in accessibility

- Lack of clarity around accessibility as a concept and its role within an organisation.
- The provision of accessible websites and documents is far more common than the provision of accessibility courses (internal/external) as well as counselling and support services on accessibility.

### Accessibility education and digital skills in society

- There is a need to generate more awareness and interest in the subject amongst governmental funding bodies, policymakers and society in general.
- There is a need to improve the level of knowledge for all target groups. However, targeted actions should be focused on persons with disabilities, older people, governmental funding bodies, policymakers and society in general.
- There is a distinct need for education on accessibility across all stakeholder groups.

### Training needs and desires

- Blended learning, including practical exercises, are preferred.
- Guided hands-on training is preferred over self-organised study courses.