

# CORTTEX

## Newsletter

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# CORTTEX

COGNITIVE RESOURCES  
FOR TODDLERS TEENS  
AND EXPERTS



Employing novel teaching strategies, methods, technologies and knowledge to increase learner quality of experience, improve learning process and cognitive development.

## Presenting CORTTEX results to an International audience

Spring 2022 has been an amazing period for CORTTEX, not only because the partnership met under the Romanian sun, but also because partners were able to organize the dissemination events in each Country involve to present the advancement of the CORTTEX Project.

At the end of May almost 100 teachers of pre-school, primary, secondary, general, special education, special scientific staff (like psychologists, speech therapists), as well as parents participated at the presentation of the CORTTEX project at the University of Bucharest aiming to know more about different ways of supporting and integrating their children with learning difficulties using cognitive education tools.



During the event the project was introduced as well as its main results.

Senior Lecturer Ruxandra Folostina presented the necessity of training the teachers in cognitive education tools in order to support and integrate children with learning difficulties into the education process and then into vocational process and society.

The educational platform and the characteristics of the digital lessons were explained, as well as the steps that the trainees have to follow in

order to complete the lessons and receive the certification of attendance.

Dr. Claudia Iuliana Iacob presented the report on the training needs of teachers in the three partner countries: Romania, Greece, Belgium.

Mrs Maria Karavelaki presented a software for language difficulties assessment called **Logometro**. The software offers a formative assessment of communication and language difficulties, being especially useful for specialists working with children with learning difficulties.

Mrs. Maria Gelastopoulou presented the e-learning platform dedicated to Universal Design and development of accessible digital educational material. The e-learning platform was developed by Institute of Educational Policy of Greece and contains materials developed for the in-school and distance training of teachers of special education.

The presentation ended with a discussion about the features and material included in the digital lessons, the project's next steps, while the trainees expressed their strong interest to participate the training through the platform.

On the 17<sup>th</sup> of June, a multiplier event was also held in Brussels by EAMHID. More than 50 stakeholders attended the event where EAMHID Coordinator, Federico Camporesi, presented the project and its results.



In particular, the project was presented in details and particular emphasis was given to the main objective of providing training, education and familiarizing professionals with communication and teaching approaches to develop, integrate, deploy and disseminate state of the art cognitive strategies through e-Learning techniques.

A session was dedicated to the training needs identifies in IO1 for Romania, Greece, and Belgium. The Report developed in IO1 was presented and the audience took advantage of this session to enquire on the methodology followed for collecting data. This report, which presents the current state of affairs regarding the situation of students with learning disabilities in Romania, Belgium, and Greece, and analyses the needs of specialists working with students with learning difficulties, it is also the base document for the development of a platform for educational resources addressed to specialists in their work with these students with learning difficulties.

Particular attention given to the training modules and training platform that the partnership is developing. The audience manifested great interest and proven the partnership that the work is going in the right direction.

In particular, eight Training lessons have already been developed in English and are now under evaluation by the partnership. These lessons have been developed as e-Learning multimedia interactive digital lessons (O4). Each digital lesson contains: the educational material, photos, links and supportive material, bibliography, questionnaires, user's progress report. The digital lessons are accessible from PC or mobile devices. These digital lessons were uploaded on the e-learning platform in order to be evaluated by the partners and to identify areas that need improvement. They will be tested in dedicated pilot actions in Romania and Greece and results will be discussed in the final multiplier events.

This event was also an important occasion to engage stakeholders in the project network.

## Universal Design and Development of Accessible Digital Educational Material: a Greek experience

During the Rumanian multiplier event, a special session was dedicated to an interesting project carried out in Greece by Maria Gelastopoulou, Counselor A' for Special and Inclusive Education of Institute of Educational Policy.

The project, called Universal Design and Development of Accessible Digital Educational Material (here after Project), is a continuation of a previously co-financed project of IEP and aims to ensure an equal public education without exclusions for all students through the support of students, teachers and caregivers and those involved in the educational and learning process utilizing technology and providing a plethora of free accessible digital materials, tools and media, open to all. Thus, Greece responds to the commitment to achieve the goals of the UN International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The ultimate goal is to ensure effective, continuous and quality learning for all regardless of specific characteristics, conditions or geographical boundaries through the use of technology.

In the development of the Project, various actions were developed at multiple levels. Specifically but not limited to:

- a) The development of digitally accessible educational material including material for coronavirus protection available to all,
- b) The awareness of society, students and caregivers for the acceptance of diversity,
- c) The development of open digital applications for the education of students with mobility disabilities, which is used by all students, caregivers, teachers, etc.,
- d) The adaptation of textbooks to all accessibility formats to meet different educational needs (Greek Sign Language, easy to read, acoustic format, braille writing, etc.).
- e) The development of tools for the pedagogical evaluation of students by teachers regarding the

drafting of the Individualized Educational Plan and

f) In-school, face-to-face training and Synchronous and Asynchronous Distance Learning (teachers, caregivers, students) through Open Online Courses (MOOCs).

The implementation of the Project utilizes principles of Inclusive Education, Universal Design for Learning and modern technological achievements for learning and education. The platforms that host all the material (<https://prosvasimo.iep.edu.gr/el/>), the distance learning platform iepX (<https://iepx.iep.edu.gr/>), but also all the developed material meets the accessibility criteria according to international accessibility standards and the current legislation (WCAG2 AAA).

The sustainability of the project is demonstrated by the utilization of its deliverables on multiple levels (individual and collective) and by different agencies in Greece, even in the most remote areas, and in other countries, such as schools, universities, research centers, private treatment centers, etc. Finally, in the context of disseminating the project, publications and presentations were made in foreign and Greek conferences and scientific journals, in radio shows and speeches in the local community.

Target groups of this amazing "Project are students (with and without disabilities), teachers, caregivers, students, involved in the learning and educational process. In addition, the program covers the learning and educational needs of all forms of disability (deafness, blindness, mobility difficulties, mental disability, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) and special educational needs.

The Project aims to ensure an equal inclusive public education for all students through the support of students, teachers, caregivers and those involved in the educational and learning process utilizing technology and providing multiple free digitally accessible materials, tools and instruments. It is the only Project that covers permanent needs in the field of Special and Inclusive Education at multiple levels and in

addition contributes to meeting the contractual obligation of our country according to law 4074/2012 ratified by the UN International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol, under which Greece undertakes:

a) to ensure equal access and participation of persons with disabilities in the educational process through the development of accessible educational material and the provision of reasonable accommodations and alternative script, augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication and orientation and mobility skills (Article 24) and b) to inform the International Commission on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities with a report on compliance with the commitment made by the above-mentioned actions.

The Project main goal is the development of appropriate digital media and materials, the implementation of actions and good practices that contribute to the inclusion of all students with disabilities and/or special educational needs in the general school as well as ensuring equal opportunities to participate in education for all students. Its ultimate goal is to ensure effective, continuous and quality learning for all, regardless of specific characteristics, conditions or geographical boundaries, through the use of technology.

This Project foresees a variety of actions are implemented in multiple axes as follows:

1) Informing / raising awareness of students, teachers, parents/caregivers and the wider local community about the Inclusive philosophy and disability as well as the acceptance of diversity

2) Training of general and special education teachers and others involved in the educational and learning process on issues and good inclusive practices related to disability and acceptance of diversity through:

- In-school face to face training.
- Training days at national level.
- Creating an asynchronous training platform.

- Development of teacher guides that include activities and good practices for the formation of an inclusive culture in school.

3) Adaptation of textbooks in different formats, so that they are accessible to all students with disabilities. All deliverables are available to all schools nationwide.

4) Development of universally designed educational material above and beyond the school curriculum textbooks and digital applications for student education.

5) Development of tools for the pedagogical evaluation of students by teachers regarding the development of the Individualized Educational Plan.

The Project is currently in progress and is a continuation of a previous Project co-financed by the European Union entitled: "Design and development of accessible digital educational material for students with disabilities". The Project's continuation in the new period of implementation of NSRF programs 2021-2027 has been approved.



## CORTTEX Project Partnership



**University of Bucharest (RO):** It is considered to be the most important educational, research and cultural institution in Romania and one of the most important scientific research centres nationwide. Within the University, there are over 50 research institutes, departments and centres, most of them collaborating with similar scientific centres abroad. The University of Bucharest is part of a reliable network of international collaboration – 300 bilateral collaboration agreements have been signed with universities in 52 countries. [www.unibuc.ro](http://www.unibuc.ro)



**University of Macedonia (GR)** The Department of Educational and Social Policy at the University of Macedonia is the only Department of Higher Education in Greece that is responsible for training teachers and other professionals working with children with Autism Spectrum Disorders. The Department implements contemporary teaching models on Autism Spectrum Disorders and places students for apprenticeships in special, mainstream, preschool, primary, secondary, technical vocational school units all over the country as well as in institutions abroad through several programs like Erasmus, AISEC, etc. [www.uom.gr](http://www.uom.gr)



**TEACHER TRAINING CENTRE BUCHAREST - CCD (RO)** The mission of the centre is to promote innovation and education reform, optimal framework for the professional and personal development of pre-university education staff, and to ensure the continuous training of the pre-university education staff. Activity areas: training of pre-university education staff, field of methodical, scientific and cultural activity, information documentation consulting, offer of continuous annual training through accredited / approved courses, initiation, development and implement of continuous training programs [www.ccd-bucuresti.org/](http://www.ccd-bucuresti.org/)



**Inte\*Learn (GR)** INTE\*LEARN was founded in April 1989 by a team of experts in Computer Assisted Learning. It aims at introducing and consolidating information technology in the educational process. It is specialized in instructional design and implementation of digital educational environments and applications; implementation of tests to measure developmental characteristics of students (ie language difficulties); implementation of tools to support the educational process, and research and development [www.intelelearn.gr](http://www.intelelearn.gr)



The **European Association for Mental Health in Intellectual Disability (EAMHID)** provides a platform for academics, health professionals and policy makers. The purpose of the Association is to facilitate international cooperation and exchange of knowledge and experience in the field of mental health in people with an intellectual disability [www.eamhid.eu](http://www.eamhid.eu)

Welcome to our newsletter! We will keep you updated of what we have been doing in the framework of the **CORTTEX project**, including events and the outputs produced by this Erasmus+ initiative

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