



Project No.: 618103-EPP-1-2020-1-PS-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP

## **Edu4ALL**

### **Disability as diversity: The inclusion of students with disabilities in higher education**

<b>Deliverable D4.2.1</b>	<b>Edu4ALL Project: Launching Inclusive Education Units at UUC and PTUK for Students with Disabilities</b>
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<b>WP Leader</b>	The University of Jordan
<b>WP members</b>	Palestine Technical University Kadoorie National & Kapodistrian University of Athens Irbid National University Partners for Sustainable Development The University of Jordan Al-Ummah University College Palestine Technical College Int@E UG
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### Project information

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## List of Acronyms

This table shows the acronyms used in this deliverable in alphabetical order.

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Description</b>
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution





## 1 Executive Summary

As part of Task 4.2, titled "Organizing a conference for opening the Edu4ALL to students with disabilities and launching the Inclusive Education Unit at both PC HEIs," Al-Ummah University College (UUC) and Palestine Technical University Kadoorie (PTUK) organized two conferences on July 30, 2023, and December 19, 2023, respectively. These conferences, held at UUC and PTUK, were entitled "Edu4ALL: Empowering and Including Students with Disabilities in Higher Education."

This document is a deliverable related to the Edu4ALL project, aiming to report the main activities conducted at these conferences.

## 2 Introduction

The level of care provided to people with disabilities is a basic criterion for measuring the civilization and development of nations. By 2050, it is anticipated that 937.5 million people with disabilities will be living worldwide. People with disabilities have the right to equal opportunities in all areas of life, including education, and to live in dignity and freedom. According to the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, all individuals have the right to equal education without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity. The convention states that people with disabilities should have access to inclusive education on an equal basis with others in their communities. Inclusive education means that all students, regardless of any challenges they may have, are placed in one classroom to receive high-quality instruction, interventions, and supports that enable them to succeed in the core curriculum.

On July 30, 2023, and December 19, 2023, Al-Ummah University College (UUC) and Palestine Technical University Kadoorie (PTUK) organized two conferences respectively at UUC and PTUK. These conferences were titled "Edu4ALL: Empowering and Including Students with Disabilities in Higher Education." The conferences hosted talks and round tables for decision-makers and revealed success stories of students with disabilities from both HEIs.

The main vision of the unit is to create an academic environment conducive to students with disabilities by supporting their academic, social, and psychological needs with suitable equipment, tools, and relevant policies. The modernized lab, trained staff, developed tutorials, committee of practice, and the modernized curricula are the main components of the unit.

The unit aims to achieve its mission of adapting the university's academic environment to the requirements of students with disabilities, providing them with equal opportunities, bolstering their independence, nurturing their cooperative spirit, and bringing out their full potential. The goal is to cultivate confident, active individuals



who can contribute to community development and advancement. Higher education levels for people with disabilities improve their chances of integrating into society and employment, allowing them to sustain themselves financially with dignity.

More than 150 participants attended the conference, including the PS NEO. A detailed list of participants is included in this report. The conferences are part of Task 4.2, organizing a conference for opening the Edu4ALL to students with disabilities and launching the Inclusive Education Unit at both PC HEIs.

### 3 Objectives of the Deliverable

This document is a deliverable related to the Edu4ALL project and aims to report the main activities conducted at the conferences.

### 4 Methodology

Each conference was structured as a one-day event. The following figures show the invitations and the agenda of the workshops.





Figure 1. PTUK opening conference Invitation



Figure 2. UUC opening conference Invitation



The English version of the agenda is shown below.

**ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME**

**Capacity Building in the Field of Higher Education**

**Agenda of the opening conference**

**Edu4ALL**

**Disability as Diversity: The Inclusion of Students with Disabilities in Higher Education**

Project No.: 618103-EPP-1-2020-1-PS-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP

**Time-Date:** Sunday, 19. December, 2023, 10:00 – 14:00

Palestine Technical University Kadoorie (PTUK)

Engineering Building, H021

Registration	10:00 - 10:30
Official Opening	
(Holy Quran and National Anthem)	10:30-10:40
President's Speech	10:40 – 10:50
Disabled Union Speech	10:50-11:00
Speech of the General Administration for Persons with Disabilities	11:00 – 11:20
Break	11:20- 11:30
Success Stories	11:30 – 12:30
Opening the Edu4ALL unit	12:30
Education for All and Supportive Assistive Technology	12:40-12:55
Panel discussion	12:55 – 13:55
lunch	14:00

**Figure 3. Agenda of the opening conference (english version)**

**4.1 Opening Edu4ALL unit at PTUK**

The opening conference for the ERASMUS+ project, titled "Edu4ALL: Disability as Diversity - The Inclusion of Students with Disabilities in Higher Education," was held on Sunday, December 19, 2023, from 10:00 to 14:00 at Palestine Technical University Kadoorie (PTUK), in the Engineering Building, Room H021. More than 100 participants from Palestine attended the conference, including the President of Palestine Technical University, the Secretary-General of the Union of Persons with Disabilities,



and the Director General of the General Administration of Persons with Disabilities in the Ministry of Social Development. Additionally, several civil and community associations and institutions, as well as persons with sight, hearing, and motor disabilities, participated in the workshop. To ensure accessibility for all deaf or hard-of-hearing persons, the workshop was interpreted with sign language.

The conference discussed a number of issues facing persons with disabilities, especially in terms of integrating them into university education, in addition to the mechanisms for overcoming all obstacles and difficulties that may hinder their path, and how to overcome challenges in front of them. Registration took place from 10:00 to 10:30, followed by the official opening with the recitation of the Holy Quran and the National Anthem from 10:30 to 10:40. The President's speech was delivered from 10:40 to 10:50, followed by a speech from the Disabled Union from 10:50 to 11:00. The General Administration for Persons with Disabilities addressed the attendees from 11:00 to 11:20. There was a short break from 11:20 to 11:30. Success stories were shared from 11:30 to 12:30, after which the Edu4ALL unit was officially opened at 12:30. A session on "Education for All and Supportive Assistive Technology" took place from 12:40 to 12:55. A panel discussion followed from 12:55 to 13:55, and the event concluded with lunch at 14:00.

Dr. Eman Daraghmi, the project coordinator, welcomed the attendees and thanked them for their participation in this conference, which aimed to support and empower students with disabilities and mark the opening of the Edu4ALL unit at PTUK. Dr. Daraghmi explained that the conference was part of the Erasmus+ project funded by the European Union, which aims to establish an "Edu4ALL unit" adhering to international standards with the objective of achieving equality in education, activities, and services for students with disabilities. The project aims to empower students with disabilities academically, socially, and psychologically through four goals: reach, development, equity & quality, and sustainability.

The Edu4ALL unit at PTUK is equipped with the latest assistive technology to integrate students with disabilities into the university's programs by addressing their academic, personal, and psychological needs, providing an environment and means considerate of their personal and physical conditions, ensuring equality in education, student activities, and services, and thus enhancing their potential and independence. Dr. Daraghmi mentioned that several local, regional, and international universities are participating in the project, with Kadoorie University being the main coordinator.

The President of PTUK highlighted the university's commitment to the right to education for all, especially persons with disabilities, and stated that PTUK strives to serve as a university for the state and all Palestinians. He confirmed that the university utilizes all its capabilities and laboratories to serve the local community and ensures that its infrastructure is equipped to meet the needs of students with disabilities, providing a university environment that supports their educational pursuits and contributes to building a generation capable of establishing an independent Palestinian state.



The Secretary-General of the Union of Persons with Disabilities emphasized the importance of ensuring a safe university environment that accommodates the needs of disabled students. He stressed the need for universities to fulfill their social responsibility and for active societal institutions to work together to create an inclusive society that embraces diversity. He also noted that the government has taken many steps to integrate persons with disabilities and cited several successful examples of individuals with disabilities holding significant positions.

The Director General of the General Administration of Persons with Disabilities in the Ministry of Social Development presented the reality of persons with disabilities in Palestine, highlighting statistics from the Palestinian Central Statistics Authority that show an increase in their numbers. He detailed the history of education for persons with disabilities in Palestine and emphasized that the country has been a pioneer in implementing the right to education for people with disabilities in legal and practical terms. He also outlined various obstacles, including the absence of unified regulations for universities and societal attitudes, that hinder access to higher education for persons with disabilities.

During the meeting, some success stories were presented of individuals who have overcome audio-visual and motor disabilities and achieved high efficiency in their professional and educational lives. The Jerusalem Electricity Company, in cooperation with the Palestinian Energy Incubator, also presented innovations to improve the lives of persons with disabilities.

Dr. Yousef Daraghma presented the devices and tools included in the Edu4ALL unit to serve individuals with audio, visual, and movement disabilities and demonstrated how to achieve digital accessibility by designing suitable websites. The workshop concluded with a panel discussion on the conditions and needs of people with disabilities. The participants agreed on the necessity of strengthening partnerships between educational, civil, official institutions, and the private sector to enhance the capabilities of persons with disabilities, seek creative solutions to their challenges, and further integrate them into discussions on issues of interest at various levels.

#### **4.2 Opening Edu4ALL unit at UUC**

Under the auspices of the administration of Al-Ummah University College, represented by Dr. Heba Barakat, and the supervision of Al- Awqaf and Islamic affairs Department in Jerusalem and the Palestinian Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, funded and supported by the European Union, Erasmus+.

On Sunday morning, corresponding to 30/7/2023 AD, the Accessibility Unit was opened for students with disabilities at Al-Ummah University College, in the presence of the Director of the Erasmus Office in Palestine, Prof. Dr. Abdul Karim Daraghme, and a delegation on behalf of the Palestinian Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research led by the Director General of Education Technician, Eng. Samer Musa, in the presence of Mr. Majdi Marei, Secretary General of the Palestinian General



Union for Persons with Disabilities, and Dr. Dhafer Hassouna, Director of the Accessibility Unit at Palestine Technical University - Kadoorie.

The Dean of the College, Dr. Heba Barakat, and a group of academic, administrative and technical staff. And the project team "Edu4all" led by Eng. Abdul Mohsen Al-Qwasmi and Mr. Ayman Al-Galayini welcomed them.

Barakat welcomed the guests and thanked the supporters in the European Union, and she also thanked Al-AWqaf department that covered the shortage that was not covered by the project.

Daraghmeh emphasized Erasmus' special interest in this group of society and the projects related to them, foremost of which is the Education for All project. He affirmed his admiration for the new unit and the quality of the devices, equipment and systems that were provided to the unit. And the crew who did the shows around. He also affirmed Erasmus' keenness to help Al-Ummah University College, as it is a newly joined Erasmus family, and encouraged the college's management and staff to apply and run for leadership of new projects in the future.

In his turn, Merhi emphasized the human rights aspect, they have the right to learn on an equal basis with the rest of the students.

In addition to developing the culture thoughts about how to deal with this group of society and spreading awareness among them.

Eng. Samer mentioned that the Ministry's is developing itself and its affiliated institutions, including universities and colleges, to be advanced and pioneering in the field of comprehensive higher education, to meet the requirements and needs of various types of disabilities.

He added that Al-Ummah College, through this project, would have taken a big and giant step towards achieving that goal.

Al-Qawasmi said that with the support provided by the European Union for the Education for All Project - Erasmus Plus, the college now has a unit equipped with modern equipment and systems at a cost of approximately 57,000 euros. In addition to qualified staff from various academic and administrative departments, they received advanced local and international training, especially in European partner countries such as Greece, Spain and Germany. The college can now receive various cases of students with disabilities and provide them with the necessary assistance to enable them to access information, curricula, and various digital and smart devices.

The technical staff gave presentations and explanations about the systems, equipment and programs that were provided to the unit through the project, methods of using them, and the assistance they provide for various types of disabilities among students.

### 4.3 *List of Participants*



### Edu4ALL D4.2.1 Edu4ALL project: Launching Inclusive education Units at UUC and PTUK for Students with Disabilities

This section lists the participants and displays some pictures taken from both conferences. More than 150 participants from Palestine attended both events.

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Figure 4. List of Participants 1

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Figure 6. List of Participants 3





مشروع التعليم للجميع Edu4ALL

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Figure 7. List of Participants 4



Edu4ALL D4.2.1 Edu4ALL project: Launching Inclusive education Units at UUC and PTUK for Students with Disabilities

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Figure 8. List of Participants 5

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Figure 9. List of Participants 9



WP4: Dissemination & Exploitation – Task 4.2: Organising a conference for opening the Edu4ALL to students with disabilities and launching the Inclusive Education Unit at both PC HEIs

Edu4ALL D4.2.1 Edu4ALL project: Launching Inclusive education Units at UUC and PTUK for Students with Disabilities

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2	2	2	معاذ صالح طالب
2	2	2	روضه مراد بكشير طالبية
2	2	2	حامد زهير تاسم طالبية
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Figure 10. List of Participants 10



## Edu4ALL D4.2.1 Edu4ALL project: Launching Inclusive education Units at UUC and PTUK for Students with Disabilities

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Figure 11. List of Participants 11



Figure 12. Edu4ALL unit opening at UUC



WP4: Dissemination & Exploitation – Task 4.2: Organising a conference for opening the Edu4ALL to students with disabilities and lunching the Inclusive Education Unit at both PC HEIs

**Edu4ALL D4.2.1 Edu4ALL project: Launching Inclusive education Units at UUC and PTUK for Students with Disabilities**

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*Figure 13. Edu4ALL at UUC*



**Figure 14. Opening the Edu4ALL unit**



WP4: Dissemination & Exploitation – Task 4.2: Organising a conference for opening the Edu4ALL to students with disabilities and launching the Inclusive Education Unit at both PC HEIs



Figure 15. The Secretary-General of the Union of Persons with Disabilities, “Mr. Magdy Marei” during the conference



Figure 16. Edu4ALL workshop - blind participant





Figure 17. During the workshop – Assistive technology 1



Figure 18. Opening the Edu4ALL unit at PTUK



## 5 Results

The participants in the conference agreed on the need to pay attention to the category of persons with disabilities by strengthening the partnership between them and the various educational, civil and official institutions and the private sector to enhance their capabilities by searching for ideas and creative solutions, enabling them to overcome the difficulties of daily life, in addition to integrating them further in the discussion of various issues of interest to them at various levels.

## 6 Conclusions

The Edu4ALL conferences, held at Al-Ummah University College (UUC) and Palestine Technical University Kadoorie (PTUK), marked significant milestones in promoting inclusive education for students with disabilities in Palestine. These conferences not only facilitated the launch of the Inclusive Education Unit at both institutions but also underscored the commitment to providing equal educational opportunities for all students, regardless of their disabilities.

The conferences highlighted the importance of creating an academic environment that addresses the academic, social, and psychological needs of students with disabilities. Through the modernized labs, trained staff, developed tutorials, and relevant policies, the Edu4ALL units are well-equipped to support students with disabilities in achieving their full potential.

The participation of more than 150 attendees, including key figures such as the President of PTUK, the Secretary-General of the Union of Persons with Disabilities, and the Director General of the General Administration of Persons with Disabilities, demonstrated broad support for this initiative. The sharing of success stories and discussions on overcoming challenges provided valuable insights and inspiration for all participants.

Both conferences reinforced the need for continued collaboration between educational institutions, civil society, governmental bodies, and the private sector. This collective effort is essential for enhancing the capabilities of persons with disabilities and ensuring their full integration into higher education and society at large.

In conclusion, the Edu4ALL project represents a significant step forward in empowering students with disabilities in higher education. By fostering an inclusive academic environment and leveraging modern technologies and practices, the project aims to ensure that all students can achieve academic success and contribute meaningfully to society. The success of these conferences sets a strong foundation for future initiatives and reinforces the commitment to inclusive education in Palestine.



