

4 Facilitator

Stakeholder involvement, collaboration & partnerships

Context

The main objective of the Strategic Partnership EICON is to **support organizations / institutions providing vocational education and training (VET) to become more inclusive using information and communication technology (ICT)**. Organizations / institutions that are active in VET are particularly in need for guidance on how to further develop, as they often have to work towards multiple aims simultaneously, i.e. inclusion usually is one among many other aims. **EICON particularly explores the inherent potential and synergies in the overlapping section between education, inclusion and digitalisation.**

How to use this list of inclusion opportunities?

There is no 'one best way' for any organization / institution active in VET to increase its inclusive capacity with ICT. Rather, each organization / institution needs to find its own solution that then fits perfectly to its respective situation and requirements. Therefore, this list of inclusion opportunities aims to guide organizations / institutions through a process of reflection and planning. List entries contain both examples of good practice and innovative examples and focus specifically on inclusion potential in an organisation.

Lists of opportunities may be used by different groups: **teachers, managers** of VET institutions / organizations and **facilitators** that support these organisations in organizational change processes. These lists have a slightly different focus depending on the respective role, so make sure you select the ones that fit to your role. Teachers use them, for example, to formulate requirements for their management with regard to the procurement of new ICT. Facilitators in turn can use the lists to discuss and decide on possibilities for specific ICT change projects together with the organisation's representatives. Managers can also use the lists to identify potential uses of ICT for inclusive leadership.

EICON (Enhancing inclusion capacity of educational organizations / institutions providing VET with information and communication technologies (ICT)) is an ERASMUS+ KA2 Strategic Partnership for vocational education and training during 2018 - 2020 (Grant Agreement No.2018-1-DE02-KA202-005110). This list of inclusion opportunities has been developed in the context of EICON. It represents the results of discussions among the experts involved in the project as well as a subsequent public consultation process that involved a wider audience in reviewing the intermediate results.



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This list of inclusion opportunities explores links between an educational organization and its surrounding world. One of those links, namely towards employment and labor market, has been addressed in an own list of inclusion opportunities due to its outstanding importance for VET. Hence, this list of inclusion opportunities deals with links to other stakeholders and how to involve them for collaboration and partnerships.

This list aims to guide you through a process to ...

- **Step 1:** identify which other external stakeholders are of relevance to increase your organization's inclusive capacity,
- **Step 2:** assess your organization's set-up / preparedness for stakeholder involvement with regard to processes and technologies, and to
- **Step 3:** reflect to which extent ICT can be supportive or beneficial to establish or maintain the links to these stakeholders.

Step 1: Identification of relevant stakeholders

Please select / tick the **(maximum) five most relevant stakeholder groups** which in your opinion could contribute significantly to increasing the inclusive capacity of your organisation (add further if needed):

☐ Parents / families / legal guardians

☐ Co-workers

☐ Members of the local community (forming the learners' social context / space)

☐ Municipality

☐ Special and mainstream VET schools / special teachers & mainstream teachers

☐ Youth care

☐ Youth guidance centres

☐ Service providers

☐ Voluntary organisations

☐ Employment services

☐ Labour market representatives

☐ Job coaching support

☐ Non-governmental organisations

☐ Ministries

☐ Chambers of commerce

☐ Trade unions

☐ Financial providers

☐ National agencies

☐ Other: *please specify*



Step 2: Your organization's set-up / preparedness for stakeholder involvement

The following ideas look at processes and technologies that could be helpful to involve stakeholders in general, irrespective of the particular purpose of involvement. Think about the previously selected stakeholders when you are considering these items.

Processes

Consider establishing processes that ...

- ☐ help you to **understand and serve** appropriately each stakeholder's specific **information needs**.
- ☐ help you to **understand and serve** appropriately each stakeholder's specific **collaboration needs**.
- ☐ allow you to **probe** continuously the **expectations** of each stakeholder towards your own VET organisation, as these may develop and change while the cooperation evolves.
- ☐ allow you to **perform** regular, sometimes also anonymous, **surveys** through which stakeholder's interests can be explored more in-depth.
- ☐ facilitate you to **collect feedback or input** from stakeholders regardless of which part of the organisation this feedback or input enters.

If you do not cover any of the points above, you should consider establishing and formalising appropriate processes first to involve stakeholders in a more structured way. ICT alone can only be effective if it is integrated into suitable processes. Therefore, setting up these processes is a prerequisite for subsequently considering the procurement or appropriate use of ICT.

Technologies

Consider hardware or software that ...

- ☐ helps you managing the **periodic contacting** of stakeholders (e.g. by setting regular reminders).
- ☐ allows to set up, run and evaluate **online surveys** for your stakeholders so that they can provide feedback on relevant issues.
- ☐ allows to **track all communications** with your stakeholders, so that other colleagues can access this information and can follow-up these communications in case the original internal contact is not available (e.g. on vacation, absent, or retired).
- ☐ **limits access to personal data** of learners exclusively to eligible stakeholders inside and outside the VET organisation.

Each of these four points gives direct indications of the potential of ICT to better understand and engage stakeholders in the organisation. If you seek to implement one or more of these points with the help of ICT, you can also benefit from this beyond the topic of increasing inclusion capacity.



Step 3: Purpose / intention of stakeholder involvement

The last block deals with a number of ideas why it makes sense to involve stakeholders in an effort to increase the inclusion capacity of your organisation.

None of these ideas, however, necessitates the use of ICT. For example, you could use traditional means to assess outcomes for the verification of the effectiveness of your inclusion approaches, e.g. by performing regular written assessments of learning. For those ideas where you are already using approaches other than ICT-based ones, you should consider the extent to which this goal can be achieved either (1) more efficiently or (2) even qualitatively better through ICT.

Only if at least one of these two criteria is met does it make sense to replace the current approach with an ICT-based approach. If ICT contributes neither to improving the quality nor to increasing the efficiency of activities with stakeholders, there is no need to change existing practices.

Consider hardware or software that enables you to ...

- ☐ advance a **learning community** (with parties external to the own organisation) to further develop inclusive capacity.
- ☐ **assess** (academic and/or non-academic) **outcomes** to verify the effectiveness of inclusion approaches.
- ☐ **assess / monitor** the level of the organisation's **inclusive capacity** (status quo).
- ☐ **challenge** basic **assumptions** or traditional **practices** from a relevant but different point of view.
- ☐ **co-create** learning and teaching against the background of inclusion.
- ☐ **co-operate / collaborate** to improve the level of inclusive capacity.
- ☐ **co-ordinate activities** to exploit synergies for inclusion purposes.
- ☐ **create** inclusive learning / teaching conditions.
- ☐ **guide** state-of-the-art pedagogy, technology or management for inclusion.
- ☐ **get input** that serves to further develop inclusive capacity.
- ☐ **involve these stakeholders in teaching / learning activities** to enrich the experience or to illustrate the practical relevance of a topic.
- ☐ **perpetuate learning** beyond the educational organisation to safeguard achievements.
- ☐ **share inclusive practice** in teaching, learning, training, administration, curriculum development etc.
- ☐ Other: *please specify*

