

Skills for Inclusive Working - Project Report

Skills for Inclusive Working Umiejętności pracy włączającej

Projektbericht / Raport z projektu / Project Report



Erasmus+

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2. Basic Facts

Skills for Inclusive Working

Erasmus+ project „Small-scale Partnerships“

2021-2-AT01-KA210-VET-000050866

Project Duration: 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024

-) Bundes-Blindenerziehungsinstitut Wien/Wiedeń/Vienna
-) Centrum dla Niewidomych i Słabowidzących Krakau/Kraków/Krakow
-) Vienna Business School Schönborngasse Wien/Wiedeń/Vienna



Funded by the European Union

3. Introduction

Author: Mag. Horst Ganitzer, Director of the Federal Institute for the Education of the Blind in Vienna



Dear Readers,

I am delighted to provide you with an overview of the objectives and joint meetings held with our colleagues from Krakow, who teach children and young people with blindness or visual impairments, in this publication. The „Vienna Business School“ in Schönborngasse served as a partner.

„Skills for Inclusive Working“ was funded by Erasmus+ and initiated by the Federal Institute for the Education of the Blind (BBI). Thanks also to our Erasmus+ counsellors!

Thank you to all the teachers, supervisors, and helping hands from the administrative staff who were present in Vienna and Krakow and ensured that everything ran smoothly. A special thank you to the director of the school in Krakow, Marcin Dębski, and his core team, who developed the four curricula together with the team from the Federal Institute for the Education of the Blind and the Vienna Business School in Schönborngasse.

Every idea and every project has an origin and needs people who are willing to turn their ideas into reality with great passion and commitment. Without these fellow campaigners who put themselves at the service of a project, it would not be possible to realise it. I would like to acknowledge two colleagues from the BBI.

At the end-of-school party and in a conversation with Anetta Ocytko, a social pedagogue from Poland, I mentioned that I had visited the school for the blind in Krakow years ago and really enjoyed the training there. The decision was quickly made: Let us do something with this school again. No sooner said than done; Ms. Ocytko established contact with Krakow and found that there was a willingness to start a project with the BBI.

At the BBI, Erich Schmid is my first point of contact when it comes to finding and realising ideas for international cooperation with other schools. With him, I drew up the documents for the project submission for Erasmus+. We prevailed against many competitors, and our project was categorised as worthy of funding.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Anetta Ocytko and Erich Schmid for their commitment to implementing this idea for the benefit of our pupils! Thanks also to all those

who worked on the project and translated, as well as for the layout and printing of this report and for the support provided by the National Agency!



4. What is SkiWo?

Author: Mag. Horst Ganitzer

The employment of individuals with disabilities remains a significant challenge, requiring action in various areas. In many cases, the expectations of jobseekers do not match the requirements of companies. „Everyone may do everything, but not everyone can do everything.” This sentence applies to all employees and includes people with disabilities.

In our Erasmus+ project, we started from the following:

Our target group is young people with blindness or visual impairments. What vocational training and activities could individuals with disabilities pursue to gain a foothold in the labour market? When one considers that more than 60,000 people with disabilities in Austria are not in employment, one realises that there is a need for action.

The school in Krakow served as a model for us, and our long-term goal is to establish two branches of education at the Federal Institute for the Education of the Blind:

[The editing of audio files], a skill achievable for individuals with blindness, was effectively introduced in Krakow. This educational opportunity has been offered in Krakow for a long time and during my first visit I was convinced that it would make sense to set up such a course in Vienna.

|Garden design|, a school programme in Krakow, is primarily aimed at trainees who still have sufficient vision. Certain sub-areas and niches could be defined for people with blindness.

The BBI contributed its expertise in two areas:

|Obtaining the European Computer Driving Licence| facilitates employment in the administrative sector.

|In basket and furniture weaving|; specialising in Thonet canework can be advantageous.



Curricula have been drawn up for all four branches of training, which provide the basis for im-plementation in the classroom. All sub-areas are presented in separate short reports in this bro-chure.

In the Erasmus+ project „Skills for Inclusive Working“, social skills were addressed and included in the curricula alongside vocational qualifications and professional aptitude. These skills are essential for successful integration into the world of work.

This project is also intended as a contribution to supporting and promoting inclusion in everyday working life and seeing it as an enrichment.

Thank you for your interest and support.




Erasmus+

ZAŚWIADCZENIE
Certificate Zertifikat

Pan/*niemka*
Bernhard Woznika

bragi udziału w spotkaniu partnerskim projektu Erasmus+ (2021-2-AT01-
KA210-VET-000050866/ Projekttitlel „Skills for Inclusive Working- School
in Krakow & Wien”), które odbyło się w dniach 17-20.04.2023r. w Krakowie.

Ich udział w spotkaniu partnerskim projektu Erasmus+ (2021-2-AT01-
KA210-VET-000050866/ Projekttitlel „Skills for Inclusive Working- School
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participated in the meeting of the project Erasmus+ (2021-2-AT01-
KA210-VET-000050866/ Projekttitlel „Skills for Inclusive Working- School
in Krakow & Wien”), which took place on 17-20.04.2023 in
Krakow.

M. Woznika

Kraków, 20.04.2023

5. Sound Engineering as an Additional Qualification

Author: Lukas Vendl

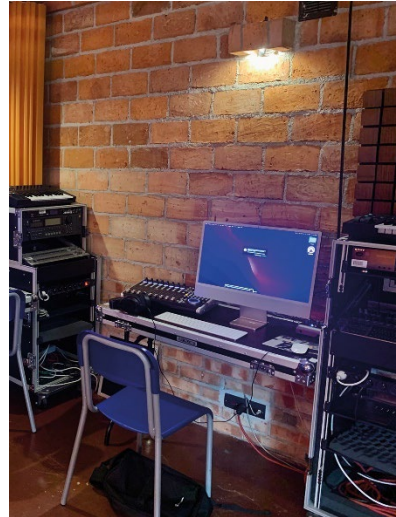
As we currently offer music lessons exclusively on various instruments at the BBI, it was an exciting task to look at the sound technology training programme in Krakow.

Nowadays, thanks to technological developments, it is quite easy to produce thoroughly professional voice and sound recordings.

The Centre for the Blind and Partially Sighted in Krakow has a 20-year tradition, and the training room is in very good condition. In terms of recording technology, both the hardware and software equipment are state-of-the-art.

Furthermore, the experience gained in Krakow has given us a good idea of the current needs of students and enabled us to formulate more specific learning objectives. The combination of language and recording technology, coupled with voice training, and enhanced musical education, provides additional qualifications for students' future professional life.





6. Sound Engineering, Speech and Language Training

Author: mgr Paweł Kostuj

The meetings organised as part of the Erasmus+ project covered several areas, including the area of curriculum implementation: „Sound Engineering, Speech and Language Training“.

This was based on the experience of the Centre for the Blind and Partially Sighted in Krakow and the teachers teaching the profession of sound engineer at this institution.

The primary goal of these meetings was to develop a curriculum tailored to the needs of blind and visually impaired individuals, preparing students for an interesting profession.

The initial meetings within the Erasmus+ project took place in Krakow. During this phase, guests had the opportunity to observe students' work at the Centre for the Blind and Partially Sighted in Krakow, specifically in sound engineering lessons. They visited the recording studio and engaged in conversations with students about the profession and their experiences.

A visit to Vienna was combined with a tour of the school of the Federal Institute for the Education of the Blind in Vienna (BBI). Here we learnt how visually impaired people are taught in Austria, what the education system looks like and what facilities are available for implementing the new curriculum. Mr. Erich Schmid presented the ICDL standard for digital education in the Austrian education system, followed by the framework curriculum for Austrian schools. We also had an opportunity to visit „work co-operatives“ where individuals with disabilities can gain work experience. During the visit, we collaborated with BBI teachers to jointly create an overview of how the profession could be implemented in their organisation. We presented a framework curriculum based on our experiences and explained the spatial and technical requirements.

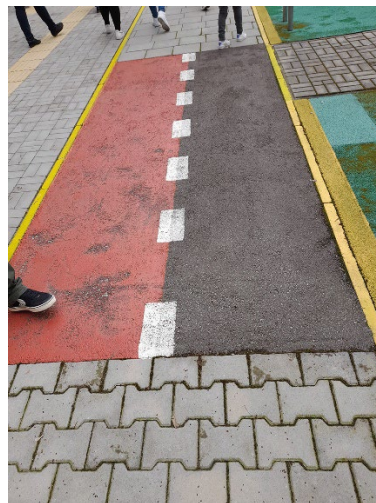
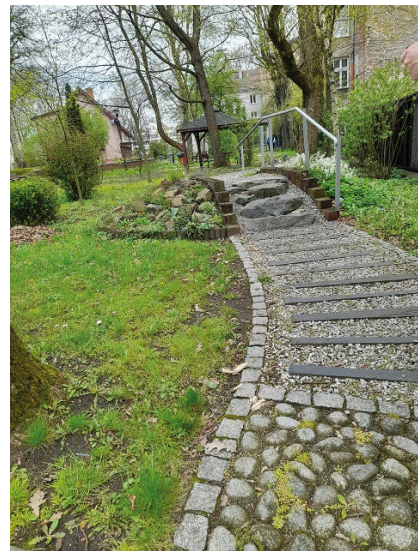
At our next meeting in Krakow, Mr Lukas Vendl took part in the lessons. These were held in English for our guest, enabling him to actively participate in the lessons, talk to the students and get to know the teachers' working techniques in the profession of sound engineer.

Thanks to the conversations during the lessons and the subsequent discussion, we were able to refine the concept of the curriculum for Austrian students.

7. Garden design

Author: Mag. Horst Ganitzer

During our visits to Krakow, we gathered valuable ideas for redesigning the entrance area of the BBI. In order to familiarise pupils with various ground characteristics, we established demarcated fields. This allowed them to practice walking on gravel, sand, bark mulch, cobblestones, or tarmac. Additionally, scented shrubs planted along the path stimulated olfactory senses and provided a focal point for orientation. The training opportunities for mobility were interesting. We recreated pedestrian crossings and traffic lights to allow pupils to simulate situations in public transport without any danger. A small garden shed can be used to grow plants, and these are then later transplanted into the school garden. In summary, it can be said that training in garden design is more suitable for pupils who still have sufficient eyesight. This profession is less suitable for trainees with blindness.



8. Occupational profile of gardeners

Author: mgr Jan Lukasek

The meetings organized as part of the Erasmus+ project dealt, among other things, with the occupational profile of gardeners in relation to the European Certificate of Vocational Qualifications. The aim of these meetings was to formulate a curriculum tailored to the needs of blind and visually impaired individuals. The curriculum should prepare students for work in this profession and for the open labour market.

In the initial meetings, a partner from Vienna Business School presented solutions and demonstrated how students could be prepared for professional examinations. During a subsequent meeting at the Centre for the Blind and Partially Sighted in Krakow, visitors from Vienna gained insight into lessons related to the professions of gardener and landscape architect. The conclusion drawn from these lessons was that this type of course is only available to a select group of visually impaired students and is not suitable for blind students. However, the school in Krakow does offer a profession for blind pupils, namely 'basket weaver.'

In horticulture lessons, pupils demonstrated the staking of cuttings in multi-plates and the transplanting of seedlings into individual pots. Technology students presented techniques for mapping a garden using computer programs.

During the next visit to Krakow, we attempted to develop a joint framework program. Following collaborative activities, the group discussed the idea of simplified gardening and garden design- specifically, vertical gardens and plant pictures. This approach proved to be a more accessible way of creating gardens for blind people.



9. Proof of Quality for Administrative Skills

Author: Mag. Erich Schmid

Today, individuals with blindness or visual impairments can still secure jobs in local authorities or hospitals handling administrative tasks. However, the requirements have changed considerably. Instead of exclusively managing calls on a telephone switchboard, knowledge of computer programs for everyday office work is now required.

The European/International Computer Driving Licence (ECDL/ICDL) is a reliable certificate, providing proof of relevant qualifications when seeking employment. Computer associations in each country have agreed on standardized teaching content for various software modules. After reviewing training courses in Krakow and Vienna, a curriculum was created that considers the special needs of individuals with blindness or visual impairments. During the visit to the Vienna Business School, their expert participated in developing the curriculum.

Given the variation in examination tools from country to country, ensuring that ECDL examinations are accessible will remain crucial in the future.





10. Administration and ECDL

Authors: mgr Robert Czort, mgr Katarzyna Kasprzyk

The meetings organized as part of the Erasmus+ project SkiWo covered, among other things, the administrative and office skills element of the European Digital Skills Certificate. The aim of these meetings was to develop a curriculum adapted to the needs of blind and visually impaired individuals, preparing them for the internationally recognized ECDL certificate. This certificate validates computer skills in today's information society and strengthens the school leaver's position in the labour market and their mobility.

During the initial meetings, the Erasmus+ project partner Vienna Business School, Schönborngasse, presented its solutions and demonstrated how it prepares its students for the ECDL exam. At the Centre for the Blind and Partially Sighted in Krakow, visitors witnessed the work of pupils in an office setting. They demonstrated the addressing of letters using a word processing program with mail merge.

A visit to Vienna combined with a tour of the Vienna Business School, Schönborngasse, focused on the planning phase of the „Administration“ (ECDL) curriculum. Mr. Erich Schmid, from the BBi, presented the Digital Education Standard - ICDL Standard in Education Austria, followed by the ECDL framework curriculum. The program comprises six compulsory modules and four optional modules. The compulsory modules include computer basics, word processing, spreadsheets, and data presentation.

At a subsequent meeting at the centre in Krakow, Ms. Claudia Neuhold and Mr. Schmid participated in a teaching unit in which they observed the implementation of issues related to the scanning of documents, their processing, and the storage of these documents in various file formats on the local computer memory or in the school network. They pointed out that working with text documents - entering text via the computer keyboard or a scanner - and then saving these documents in various formats is an important skill for blind and visually impaired people.



11. Basket Weaving in Vienna

Author: Martin Dobernig

My name is Martin Dobernig and I have been teaching basket and furniture weaving at the Federal Institute for the Education of the Blind in Vienna since 2000. My teacher was the late Robert Hissek, who, in turn, learnt this profession from his father in Romania.

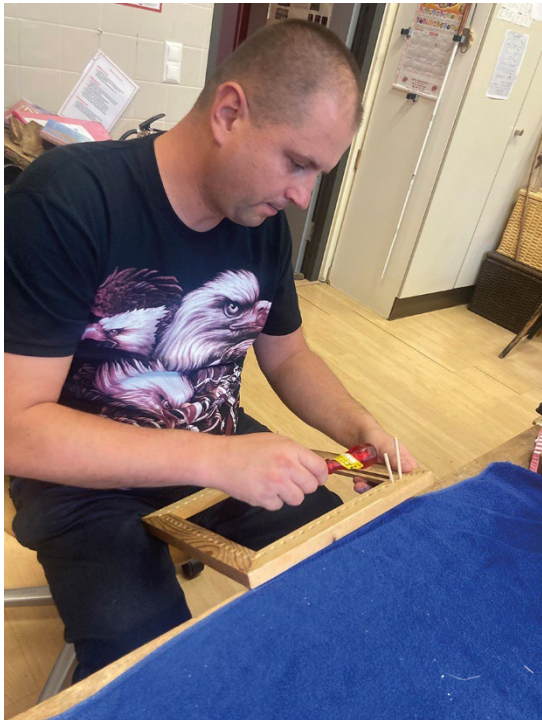
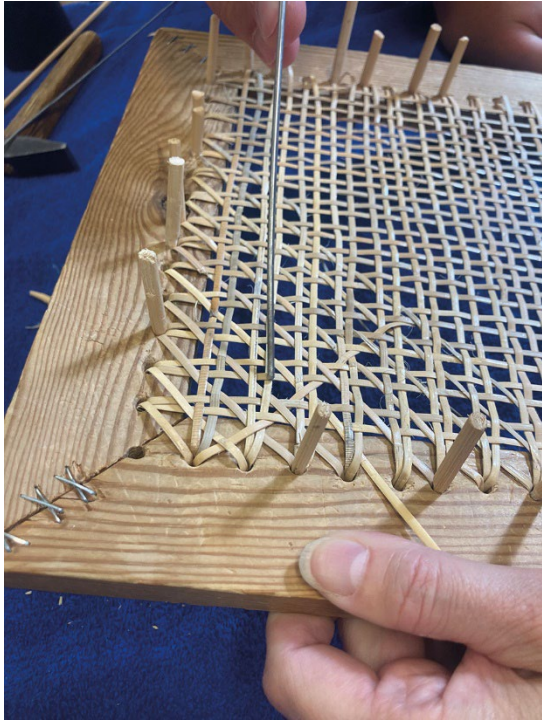
Robert Hissek, who also ran the workshop at the BBI before my time, changed the raw materials from willow to cane in practical work. He explained that this material was easier to work with tactilely.

The theoretical background for the teaching of materials and machinery was and still is the „Textbook for Basket Weavers for use in teaching at technical schools, training workshops and specialised advanced training schools for basket weaving“ by Prof. Gustaf Funke, Director of the “K.K. Lehr- und Versuchsanstalt für Korbflechterei” in Vienna.

To learn how to process willow rods in practice, I was able to work with Mr. Patoczka, a basket weaver at the Austrian Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired in Vienna. In the following years, students of basket and furniture weaving were able to take a state-recognised final apprenticeship examination under the supervision of the Vienna Chamber of Commerce.

As part of a reform of apprenticeships in Austria, the profession of basket and furniture weaver was removed from the list of apprenticeships and changed from a tied trade to a free trade. This means that a certificate of competence is no longer required to practice this profession. Since this time, we at BBI have endeavoured to provide our graduates with a recognised certificate upon successful completion.

My visit to the workshop at the Centre for the Blind and Partially Sighted in Krakow has left me with a positive outlook for the future. For one, the workshop in Poland is equipped in the same way as ours. For another, the structure of the practical and theoretical learning content is comparable to that at the BBI. In addition, this institution offers a recognized final examination for basket weavers based on the national qualification framework in European Union countries. Since then, and on behalf of Director Mag. Ganitzer, I have been looking for a school in German-speaking countries that also offers this certificate.



12. Basket Weaving in Krakow

Authors: mgr Rafał Kozik, mgr Barbara Bogacka-Galon

As part of the basket weaving programme, the teachers then visited schools in Krakow and Vienna. They were introduced to various school workshops, including those in which basket weaving lessons take place. This afforded them the opportunity to observe the workshops and pose questions regarding the focus and unique aspects of the lessons. Workshops were held during the reciprocal visits in 2023. Teachers from Krakow learned the technique of weaving Viennese canework, commonly used to fill seats and backrests in chairs and rocking chairs from companies such as Thonet. In autumn, the Krakow teachers held a workshop on weaving baskets with a round base. This was in line with the guidelines recommended in Poland for students' vocational examinations. At the same time, the Krakow teachers provided the school management in Vienna with documents on the required training guidelines, including the curriculum and syllabuses. They also shared knowledge about the PRK (Polish Qualifications Framework) and its connection to the EQF (European Qualifications Framework). Thanks to this framework, qualifications in different countries and systems in Europe become more comprehensible and easier to understand, and the skills acquired are comparable and can be recognised.





13. Meeting of Pupils in Krakow

Authors: Mag. Barbara Bräuer und Mag. Claudia Neuhold

The networking meeting, a part of the Erasmus+ project, took place in Krakow from the 17th of April to the 20th of April 2023. As part of the project, selected students from the 2nd advanced course at Vienna Business School, Schönborngasse, had the opportunity to share several days filled with new experiences alongside blind and visually impaired students from Austria and Poland. The students chosen had previously participated in an integration class the year before, wherein a visually impaired student took part in regular lessons.

In addition to cultural highlights such as a visit to the „Bochnia“ salt mine, the phonography museum in Niepołomice, and a guided tour through the Jewish quarter of Krakow, the primary focus was on social interaction. During a guided tour of the Centre for the Blind and Partially Sighted in Krakow, sighted students were able to experience firsthand what everyday school life is like for visually impaired and blind pupils. They gained insight into various subjects typical of the school for the blind, explored sound engineering, garden design, basket weaving, and massage techniques. The joint sports afternoon was particularly enriching, during which all pupils were able to gain experience with various blind sports such as goalball and blind football.

In conclusion, we would like to emphasise that the networking meeting in Krakow was a great enrichment. The positive experiences that the students had during the project contributed significantly to the promotion of inclusion. The cooperation between the blind, visually impaired and sighted pupils was inspiring for all participants. Some personal contacts still exist today. We hope that the experiences and impressions gained will continue to be incorporated into the everyday life of the three schools and that inclusion will be strengthened in the long term.







POCO
SHOT ON POCO F2 PRO

14. An Evening of Viennese Song (Wienerlied)

Author: Walter Bass

On the 20th of September 2022, the BBI had the opportunity to invite guests from Poland to a Viennese song and wine tavern evening in the auditorium. With music being an essential part of such an evening, and in addition to the culinary delights from the in-house kitchen, our colleague Edith Völk and Mr. Anton Much provided the appropriate musical accompaniment. I had the privilege of accompanying them on the piano.

In addition to classic Viennese songs by Heinrich Strecker, Hermann Leopoldi and Robert Stolz, the most well-known piece of this genre, „Wien, du Stadt meiner Träume“ (Vienna, city of my dreams), was added to the programme. The composer Rudolf Sieczynski came from a family with Polish roots and his main profession was a career as a civil servant until he became a court counsellor. As a sideline and until after the Second World War, he was the creator of many other, now forgotten, Viennese songs. Additionally, he was also president of the Austrian Composers' Association for many years.

In between musical pieces, the evening was enriched with readings of Vienna-related texts by Joseph Weinheber, Trude Marzik, and others, translated into Polish for our colleagues from Krakow.

During our Polish colleagues' last visit, on the 18th of March 2024, we will commemorate the 200th anniversary of the death of the blind composer, pianist, flautist and founder of a music school, Maria Theresia Paradis in the BBI auditorium.





15. Getting to know the project partners

Author: MMag. Dr. Anetta Ocytko

The two-year co-operation within the framework of Skills for Inclusive Working was rich in knowledge, experience, and exchange. Joint meetings of teachers, both in Krakow and Vienna, provided an opportunity to get to know the partner schools and discover each other's best practices. The meetings also made it possible to get to know the cities of the project partners. Visiting monuments in Krakow proved to be extremely interesting for the BBI guests, as it allowed them to familiarize themselves with the architecture of many significant places in the city. This was made accessible for the blind thanks to the tactile models located next to the most important monuments in Krakow.

On the tourist route for the blind and visually impaired, participants discovered tactile models of monuments such as the Barbican, the Town Hall Tower, the Cloth Hall and Wawel Castle. Participants were also able to „feel“ the secrets hidden deep underground in Wieliczka and Bochnia, as well as on a walk through the Krakow Market Square subway. Each participant could witness firsthand what makes the Wieliczka Salt Mine a centre of attraction for millions of visitors from all over the world.

The Małopolskie Centrum Dźwięku i Słowa - a branch of the Museum of Phonography in Niepołomice - also opened its doors to us, where participants learned about the history and development of phonography, immersing themselves in the atmosphere of times gone by. In the listening room, they could choose and listen to selections from the collection of 2,000 records. The oldest devices in the museum are up to 130 years old.



In Vienna, the visit to the Vienna Museum of the Blind was very valuable for the teachers from Krakow. The museum's collection dates back to the beginnings of education for the blind in Vienna. Johann Wilhelm Klein, who founded the Institute for the Education of the Blind in Vienna in 1804, laid the foundations for the museum in the 1830s.

The Hundertwasser Museum in Vienna, part of KUNST HAUS WIEN, inspired visitors from Krakow. The museum showcases a unique cross-section of the work of Austrian artist Friedensreich Hundertwasser (1928-2000). His paintings, graphics, applied works, architectural designs and evidence of his ecological commitment are on display. For participants interested in basket weaving and the techniques of „Thonet Canework,“ it was intriguing to learn that the architectural reconstruction of the former Thonet furniture factory is based on Hundertwasser's designs.





16. Closing Remarks

Author: mgr Marcin Dębski, Director of the Centre for the Blind and Partially Sighted in Krakow



The „Skills for Inclusive Working“ project, carried out between 2022 and 2024 as part of the Erasmus+ programme by educational institutions from Vienna and Krakow, aims to jointly develop curricula for training in the following professions: Landscape Architect, Sound Technician, Basket Weaver, and Office Technician. During the cooperation, issues of enhancing the ability of the students in our institutions to pass the ECDL exam were also discussed, fully considering the needs and abilities of visually impaired individuals.

The project facilitated the exchange of knowledge, experience, views, and best practices. It has local, national, and European dimensions. We want to actively participate in developing European standards in the field of vocational training for blind and visually impaired individuals to improve the professional mobility of our graduates. The project's results will help teachers organise teaching and tutoring in a way that allows students to acquire a broader range of employable skills according to their individual needs.

One of the partner schools is a mainstream school, so an important aspect of the project is to raise awareness of the needs and challenges of blind and visually impaired individuals. Especially as social awareness of people with disabilities is, unfortunately, still too low and characterised by negative stereotypes. We are convinced that the activities carried out as part of the project will have a positive impact on the professional and social life of visually impaired people, not only in Poland but also across Europe.

Project Partners:

-) Federal Institute for the Education of the Blind, Vienna (BBI) - Project Coordinator
-) Centre for the Blind and Partially Sighted in Krakow
-) Vienna Business School Schönborngasse, Vienna (VBS)

17. Imprint

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