

Accessible Digital Education at the center of DAISSy-HOU work

The inclusion of people facing barriers to their access to education due to fewer opportunities, including learning disabilities, is one of the key points of the European Education Area and it is included in the European Pillars of Social Rights, in which it is stated that *"everyone has the right to quality and inclusive education, training and lifelong learning"* (Pillars 1, 3 and 17 on the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities). It is also in line with the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the implementation guidelines of Erasmus+ and many other European Union (EU) Programmes, as well as relevant European and national policies.

Young people with learning disabilities are particularly at risk of early school leaving and statistics show that fewer people with disabilities complete tertiary education. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need to address this issue, particularly in terms of providing digital skills training. Furthermore, this issue is usually raised in relation to children, i.e. supporting schools and teachers in the inclusion of students with disabilities, while similar initiatives and specific support and training programmes for adult students are less common.

Supporting the inclusion of students affected by learning disabilities in education, is even more complex, but also imperative in the current phase of digital transition, leading the discussion to the need for accessible platforms and content, adapted educational methodologies, as well as appropriate digital skills for educators.



On this basis, the "Accessible Digital Education (ADEDU)" project was developed, which is an Erasmus+ project co-financed by the European Education and Culture Executive Agency and has a duration of thirty (30) months, from 01.01.2024 to 30.06.2026. The ADEDU consortium includes a total of five (5) organizations from three (3) countries, under the Coordination of "ALL DIGITAL" (Belgium), having as partners the "European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD)" (Belgium), the "Media Education Centre (MEC)" (Serbia), the "IASIS" NGO and the "Hellenic Open University-DAISSy Research Group" (Greece).

Specifically, the ADEDU project aims to reduce barriers to the active participation of all, without discrimination, in the educational process and ultimately in society, and to address the digital skills gap. In this context, educators and trainers will leverage the individual elements of the project, such as the educational curriculum, development activities, peer learning, networking, guidelines on inclusive communication and digital learning environments, which facilitate innovation and inclusion at any stage of the learning process.

The DAISSy Research Group of HOU participates in the vast majority of the project's activities and deliverables. Based on its expertise and long-term experience, DAISSy is responsible for the work package that concerns the understanding of learning disabilities, the mapping of teachers' educational needs, the development of a Course as well as the assessment of the accessibility of the ALL DIGITAL Academy (ADA) digital environment for participants with learning disabilities. In addition, the Research Group is responsible for the Quality Assurance, the technical development and maintenance of the project website as well as the ADEDU online platform which will soon host the corresponding Course.

➡ For more information about the **ADEDU** project as well as other projects and actions of DAISSy-HOU:

- Websites: <http://daissy.eap.gr/> and <https://ad-edu.eu/>
- Facebook: @DAISSyResearchGroup
- LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/daissyresearchgroup/>
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