

**Ethical approach,
stereotypes,
prejudices and
discrimination**



European regulations

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Participants

Do you know the difference between ethics and morality? What is ethics and what is morality? Elaborate!



Ethics and morality

Ethics denotes a set of principles regarding moral behaviour of a certain society. It is a philosophical discipline that studies morality.

Morality denotes a system of unwritten social rules that members of a certain society accept as virtuous; they submit to them and regulate interpersonal relationships accordingly. These rules are not absolutely valid and their violation does not (always) lead to legal consequences.



Participants

Who are persons with disabilities?

Elaborate!



Persons with disabilities

~~DISABILITY~~

Persons with disabilities are people who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others (UN, 2006).

The term “person with disabilities” is based on legal grounds, and the legislation clearly prescribes the degree and type of impairment required to obtain the status of a person with disabilities. Furthermore, said status is associated with other legal outcomes, such as compensations, types of healthcare services, employment priority, etc.

Adult education



The term “lifelong education” denotes the ever-increasing demand of modern society for continuous learning at all ages of life.

On the other hand, the privilege of modern society is a mandate, based on legal grounds, that every person has a right to education.

Ethical approach towards persons with disabilities in adult education - what does that mean?

Ethical approach towards persons with disabilities in adult education is an approach that society members perceive as moral. The definition of moral is determined for each individual situation separately.

Ethics is a philosophical discipline, so the decision about the definition of morality is left to society. However, when immoral behaviour causes substantial harm to a member of that society, then the usual course of action is the implementation of such behaviour into legislation, i.e., such behaviour will result in particularly prescribed consequences for that person.

Therefore, it is important to consider the ethics of society's actions so that everyone is equally protected by the law.



Participants

Should the inclusion of persons with disabilities in adult education even be expected? Should their inclusion in adult education be allowed?



Society's attitude towards PWDs through history



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Society's attitude towards persons with disabilities is characterized by models that have changed through history, with each of them having a particular approach and understanding of disability.

According to the merciful model, or the religious model, a PWD is a victim. Person with disability is perceived as unable to lead an independent life and take care of themselves. Disability is considered a deficit, and people, depending on the type of disability, are portrayed as unable to study, work and participate in normal, real-life activities.

It is considered that they are in need of help from charity, institutions, specialty schools, etc. Due to the obtrusiveness of such attitudes, sometimes persons with disabilities themselves start thinking that way and feel “powerless”, even though that is not true.

The medical, or genetic, model focuses on the medical particulars of a person, on their impairment, viewing the person as an object of clinical intervention, i.e., a problem that requires correction and rehabilitation.

According to the medical model, PWDs are medically categorized, and the individual is seen as being the problem, i.e., a person with a disability is seen as requiring medical assistance in order to integrate into society. As the society developed, this model was replaced with the social model because it labelled people according to their impairments.

According to the social model, the individual is placed at the centre of the decision-making process when making decisions about themselves and it is emphasized that the problem lies with the social structure, and not with the individual.

This model points out that the society's attitude, ignorance, prejudices and fears put persons with disabilities in a disadvantageous position, that is, that social obstacles lead to their discrimination.

Therefore, the problem are not individual limitations of any kind, but rather the failure of society to institute adequate measures which would lead to full inclusion of persons with disabilities in the social environment.

Rights of persons with disabilities



Core documents that prescribe the rights of persons with disabilities in the field of adult education are the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, which clearly states that all people have the right to education, and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which prescribes specific procedures that must be implemented in order to achieve the right to education for PWDs.

Capabilities of persons with disabilities

The capabilities and difficulties of persons with disabilities are as varied as the disorders and illnesses that these people have, in interrelation with the diverseness of the persons themselves in terms of many other important characteristics.

It is clear, therefore, that the range of capabilities of persons with disabilities is extremely wide and impossible to predict purely based on the information about the status of a person with disabilities.

Each person represents a complex equation of physical and psychological characteristics on the one hand, and for a person with a disability, that equation is further complicated by the specificity of the type and degree of their impairment.

Finally, due to everything stated above, it is of utmost importance that we approach a person with a disability as a human being that has a unique set of characteristics and capabilities.



Adult education programme flexibility



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The flexibility of adult education service providers is an important aspect that predetermines the possibility of involving a wider range of people.

Recommendations for adult education service providers:

- **Be open to diverseness during the creation and implementation of the programme**
- **Clearly point out the willingness to adapt to the aforementioned diverseness**
- **Include all the educational process stakeholders in the adaptation process**

Programme implementation
circumstances can change and are
difficult to fully predict. The key is to
be flexible in your implementation,
to look for resources from different
sources and to use them in a
creative manner.



Participants

You are the organizer of a sculpting class intended for the public. A person without both arms applied. They are very interested in it and very much aware of the fact that they can hardly follow the class programme without their arms. They want to get involved anyway. What will you do?



Stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination



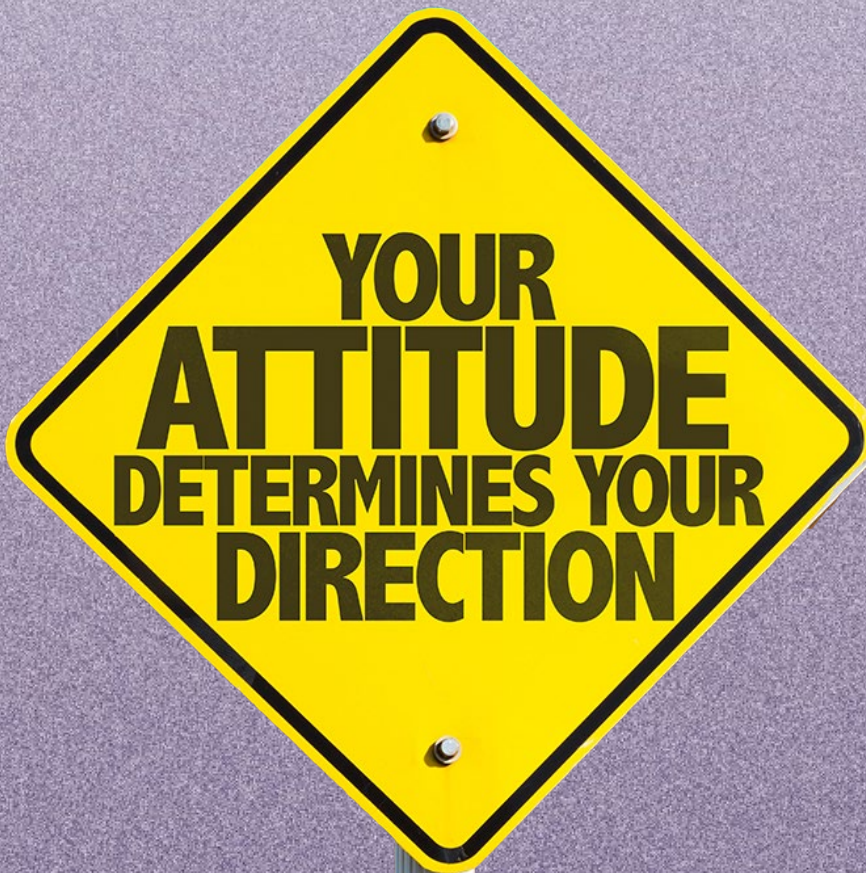
Attitudes

Attitudes denote permanent assessments of people, objects or ideas.

When attitude is determined only by the cognitive component, i.e., when it encompasses only the informative aspect, then we are dealing with a stereotypical belief.

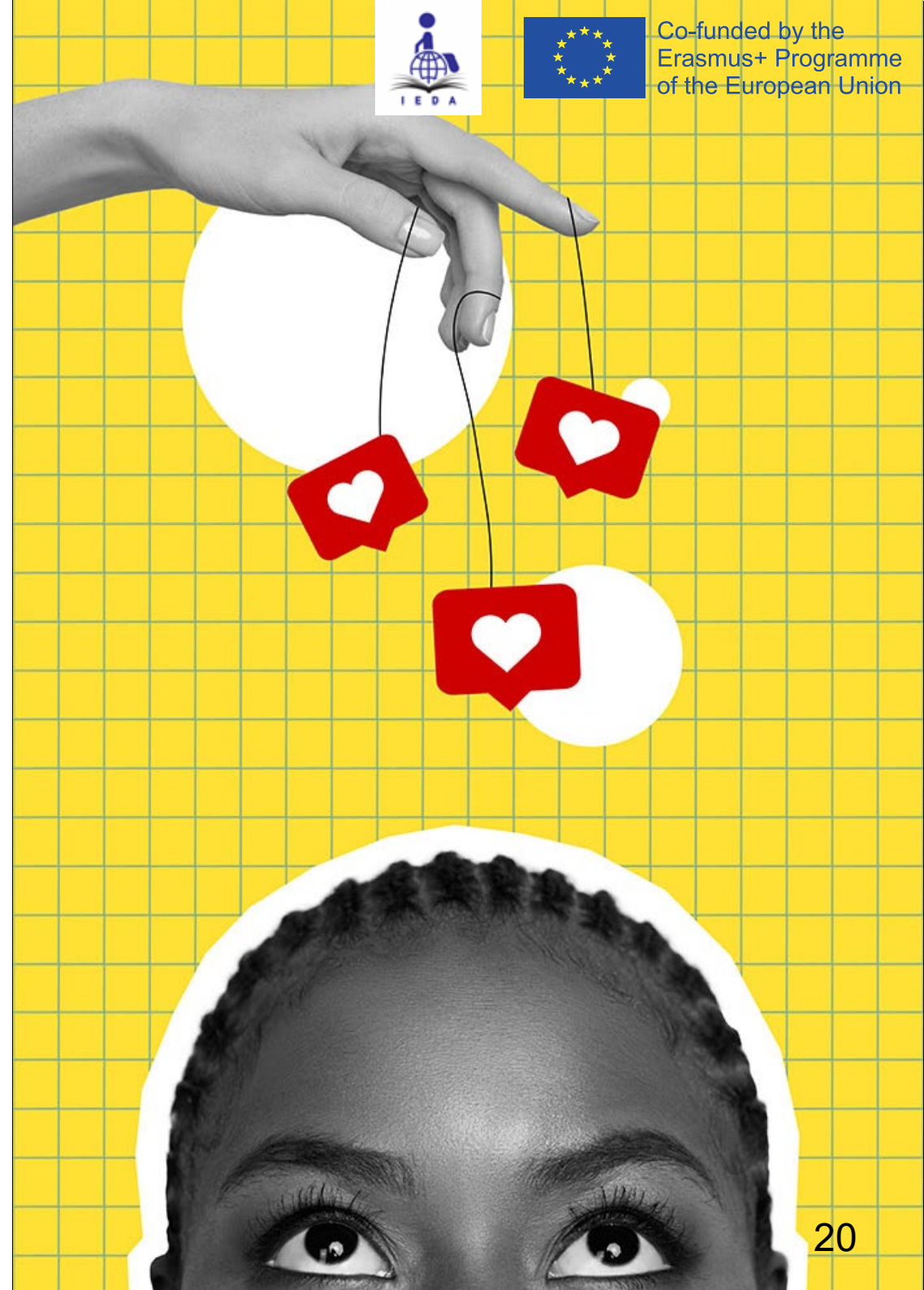
When an emotional component is added to the mix (i.e., to the informative aspect), we are talking about a stereotype.

And finally, if an attitude results in behaviour derived from a certain belief, we are talking about discriminatory behaviour.



The sentence “People are not neutral observers of the world, but rather constant evaluators of what they see” means that each person makes their own assessments and judgments and develops a distinct opinion about the world which they are a part of.

At the same time, that opinion is often not based entirely on reality, but rather on other, often unreliable sources of information or the lack thereof.



Stereotype



A stereotype is a generalization about a group of people, used to attribute the same characteristics to almost all members of the group, regardless of the actual differences between its members.

It is used to attribute the same characteristics to a person just because of the idea of them belonging to a certain group. The description of a human being as a “cognitive miser” indicates his tendency to think in categories.

There is simply not enough time to carry out a detailed analysis of every circumstance, object and being in order to form as accurate opinion about them as possible.

Therefore, we tend to perceive the world using “mental shortcuts”, i.e., make conclusions about an individual on the basis of a group to which they belong.

What stereotypes about persons with disabilities are you familiar with?



Prejudice

Prejudice denotes a hostile or negative attitude towards members of a recognizable group of people, which is based solely on their membership in that group.

It involves an emotional aspect, i.e., a disagreeable feeling towards an individual just because of the idea of them belonging to a certain group.

Are there prejudices against persons with disabilities?

What do you think, which emotions are displayed towards persons with disabilities?

Discrimination

Discrimination is a behaviour that deviates from the usual one due to the idea of a person belonging to a certain group.

In this case, the emphasis is on the behavioural component of the attitude, which is derived from stereotypes, i.e., prejudice.

Positive discrimination denotes a situation in which an individual is given an advantage solely due to the fact they belong to a certain group, despite their actual characteristics.

The result of this is the impossibility of self-realization because a person's realization is the result of their belonging, not the qualities they possess.

Have you ever heard of a person with a disability who was discriminated against due their impairment?

Elaborate!



Persons with disabilities

Persons with disabilities are (the largest) minority group. “Invalidus” in Latin means powerless, weak, incapable. This group consists of members who share a common feature – “possession” of an impairment – which is pronounced enough to significantly interfere with their everyday functioning.

As such, persons with disabilities represent a vulnerable group. They are linked by a deficit in some characteristic form.

This is fertile ground for the development of stereotypes, prejudices and the manifestation of discriminatory behaviours. There are numerous terms used for this population of people (“invalid”, “disabled person”, “handicapped person”, “person with special needs”); however, the correct term to use is “person with disabilities”.

In this way, we put the person first, and only then their impairment.

Persons with disabilities do not have special needs; they just satisfy them in a different way, so the term “person with special needs” is also incorrect.



What can we do to lessen the effect of prejudices and to reduce discrimination?

- **Raise awareness about the existence of stereotypes, prejudices and discriminatory behaviours**
- **Become educated about the consequences of such attitudes**
- **Find motivation to combat them**
- **Increase interest in an individual (a member of a group—PWD)**
- **Become informed about a certain group**
- **Come into direct contact with a person belonging to a certain group**
- **Develop empathic listening**

Participants

Is it discrimination if a PWD is given a job when it is clear they will not be able to perform it fully?

This is often done with good intentions; the idea being that the person will not be able to find employment anywhere else.

Why is that wrong?



European regulations and recommendations



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International documents

International documents that are important in the area of adult education of PWDs, and which we will present in more detail below, are the following:

- **Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms**
- **Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**
- **Directive (EU) 2016/2102 of the European Parliament and of the Council**

Convention for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms



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Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms was adopted on 4 November 1950 and entered into force in 1953. It obliges the member states of the Council of Europe to ensure the protection of fundamental civil and political rights and freedoms.

Convention for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms: Article 14



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Article 14 stipulates that “the enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this Convention shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.”

Right to education, as part of the Convention, is mentioned in Article 2 of the Protocol to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

According to said Article, “No person shall be denied the right to education. In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and to teaching, the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions.”



Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 13 December 2006. This document focuses on the promotion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities.

Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities: Article 2



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Article 2 of the UN Convention deals with the topic of discrimination on the basis of disability, including all forms of discrimination, as well as the denial of reasonable accommodation. It also emphasizes the importance of using an universal design in the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities: Article 24

Article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities deals with the topic of education of persons with disabilities. That said, States Parties must ensure the following:

- **Protection of persons with disabilities and children with developmental disabilities from being excluded from the general education system on the basis of disability or difficulties**

- **Access to quality and free primary education and secondary education for persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live**
- **Reasonable accommodation of the individual's requirements**
- **Adequate support system within the general education system**
- **Providing effective individualized support measures in environments that maximize academic and social development, consistent with the goal of full inclusion**

By ratifying the UN Convention, the legislature shall be obliged to implement the required measures for facilitating access and creating an inclusive environment, the training of professionals, the employment of teachers with disabilities and combating discrimination.

Inclusive education requires the provision of any necessary support, technical assistance, and teaching the skills which would facilitate full and equal participation as members of the community.

Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities: Article 24, Paragraph 3

Article 24, paragraph 3 of the UN Convention stipulates that States Parties shall enable persons with disabilities to learn life and social development skills to facilitate their full and equal participation in education and as members of the community. To this end, States Parties shall take appropriate measures, including:

- **Facilitating the learning of Braille, alternative script, augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication and orientation and mobility skills, and facilitating peer support and mentoring**

- **Facilitating the learning of sign language and the promotion of the linguistic identity of the deaf community**
- **Ensuring that the education of persons, and in particular children, who are blind, deaf or deafblind, is delivered in the most appropriate languages and modes and means of communication for the individual, and in environments which maximize academic and social development**

- **Furthermore, in order to help ensure the realization of this right, paragraph 4 of said Article stipulates that “States Parties shall take appropriate measures to employ teachers, including teachers with disabilities, who are qualified in sign language and/or Braille, and to train professionals and staff who work at all levels of education. Such training shall incorporate disability awareness and the use of appropriate augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, educational techniques and materials to support persons with disabilities.”**

Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities: Article 24, Paragraph 5

Paragraph 5 stipulates that “States Parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities are able to access general tertiary education, vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning without discrimination and on an equal basis with others. To this end, States Parties shall ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to persons with disabilities.”

Directive (EU) 2016/2102 of the European parliament and of the council



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Directive (EU) 2016/2102 of the European Parliament and of the Council was adopted on 26 October 2016 in order to ensure the accessibility of the websites and mobile applications of public sector bodies.

In the context of this Directive, accessibility should be understood as principles and techniques to be observed when designing, constructing, maintaining, and updating websites and mobile applications in order to make them more accessible to users, in particular persons with disabilities.

Digital accessibility is based on the four principles of accessibility, requiring that all users, regardless of their capabilities, are able to do the following:

- **Perceive the information and user interface components (perceivability)**
- **Operate the user interface (operability)**
- **Understand the information and the operation of the user interface (understandability)**
- **Access the content, regardless of the technology involved (robustness).**

Those principles of accessibility are translated into testable success criteria, such as those forming the basis of the European standard EN 301 549, which is applied to the creation of websites and software solutions for the mobile devices of public sector bodies, their appearance, content navigation mode, search function and structure.



Dig In: Ethical approach, stereotypes



European Convention on Human Rights



Race and identity: What Is Inclusion?



Manifesto for Adult Learning in the 21st Century: The Power and Joy of Learning



Crip Camp: A Disability Revolution (2020)



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The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities



Inclusive Education & Disability: Good Practices from around Europe



UNESCO: What is inclusion?



Red Squirrel: Promoting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Adult Education



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