

Empowering Inclusion: Assessing the impact and potential of the IN-WORK programme to increase the employability of youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

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INTRODUCTION & KEY TERMS

The 1st Inclusive Sports Day at URV, held on April 19, 2024, was an initiative of WIL where students with special educational needs from the Specific Training Itinerary at Cal·lipolis Institute in Tarragona organized an event that integrated academic learning with workplace learning, promoting inclusion and social awareness. Students assessed space accessibility, planned activities, managed logistics, and promoted the event. Through work-integrated learning initiatives, students develop a broader set of skills, leading to a new appreciation of their potential by the business community.

Work-integrated learning (WIL): an educational approach that combines academic learning and workplace practices.

Service learning: an educational approach that combines learning objectives with community service to provide a pragmatic, progressive learning experience while meeting societal needs.

Types of WIL activities: Internships, volunteering, apprenticeships, research projects, project-based placement, industry projects, and simulated and virtual experience.

WIL activities - benefits for students



Communication skills



Adaptability



Networking opportunities



Practical application of knowledge



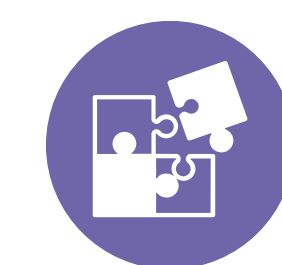
Understanding of the demands of working life



Collaboration skills



Organization skills



Problem-solving skills



Skills for planning & executing projects



Skills to promote social inclusion

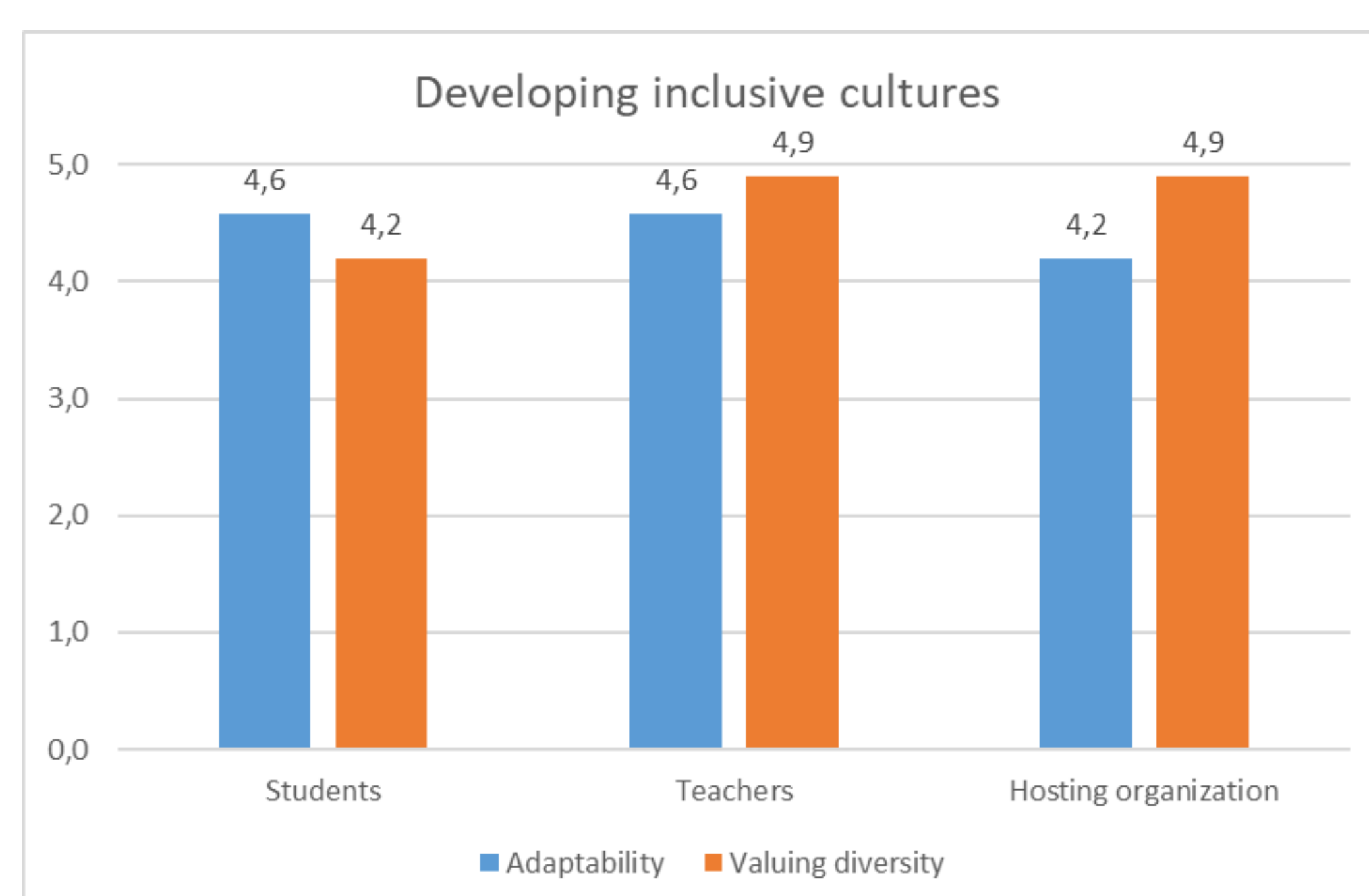
WIL ACTIVITY- INCLUSIVE SPORTS DAY RESULTS

Objective of the study: explore the effectiveness and relevance of integrated work-based learning activities study from the perspective of students (12 participants), university tutors (3) and hosting organization tutors (3).

Common opinion about WIL outcomes:

- WIL activities effectively prepare students with special needs for their future professional aspirations.
- Significant contribution to the acquisition of skills and knowledge relevant to the job market, with a positive perception.
- High level of satisfaction with the integrated learning experience.

To what extent are students, teachers, and hosting organization tutors satisfied with the adaptability and diversity of the WIL activity?



Adaptability: Evaluates the flexibility of training methods to guarantee accessibility for students with special needs.

Diversity: Measures the success of WILs in promoting a deeper understanding of inclusion practices in the organization.

Suggestions for improvement:

- Increase the duration of WIL activities to enhance their effectiveness.
- Improve coordination and more continuous follow-up between institutions.
- Provide more personalized support, including personalized tutoring and additional training for company staff on working with students with special needs.



IMPROVEMENT OF EMPLOYABILITY AND INCLUSIVITY

- Students highly value WIL activities for enhancing employability. They gain practical knowledge and relevant skills for the job market.
- Hosting organizations consider WIL activities highly relevant and effective in improving employability for students with special needs, emphasizing the importance of applying theoretical knowledge in real work contexts.
- Teachers agree that WIL activities are essential for students' professional preparation, highlighting their motivational role and ability to equip students with market-relevant skills.

Reference: IN-WORK project (2023). Needs, resources, obstacles and opportunities for youths with special needs in insertion to work (D.2.1)



Project partners:



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