



Key Action: Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices  
Action Type: Strategic Partnerships for higher education

## Project Title

# Laboratory for Policies and Practices of Social Development in Higher Education

## Project Coordinator

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## Project Information

**Identifier** 2015-1-ES01-KA203-015970

**Project Web Site** <http://www.access4allproject.eu/>

**Start Date** Sep 1, 2015

**End Date** Aug 31, 2018

**EC Contribution** 229,285 EUR

**Partners** INSTITUTO POLITECNICO DE LEIRIA (PT) , UNIVERSITATEA DIN  
BUCURESTI (RO) , JYVASKYLAN YLIOPISTO (FI) , UNIVERSITY OF  
BRISTOL (UK) , UNIVERSITA' DEGLI STUDI DI BERGAMO (IT)

**Topics** Quality Improvement Institutions and/or methods (incl. school  
development) ; Inclusion - equity ; Access for disadvantaged

## Project Summary

### Context-background:

The financial and economic crisis is currently directly or indirectly affecting the middle and lower classes, with controversial policies for reducing the fiscal deficit, which have meant, for example, a rise in the cost of access to higher levels of training, creating in some European countries, newly excluded groups from Higher Education (HE). Inequalities in training for reasons of geographic, ethnic or social origin, and in job opportunities, salaries and incomes are critical dimensions of social. The development of policies, including those concerning education, that extend access to opportunities, is essential in order to combat the permanent nature of the exclusion.

### Objectives:

In this sense, within the framework of the Bologna process and considering the Prague communiqué of 2001, which emphasised the need to work towards the inclusion of students and the need to promote the possibilities of mobility for all, and the successive declarations and communiqués which insist on the need to promote the social dimension in constructing and consolidating the EHEA, the aim of our proposal is to promote the educational and social inclusion of underrepresented groups as well as of nontraditional learners, thereby broadly satisfying one of the main priorities being called for (i.e. the improvement of the capacities of organisations active in the fields of education, training and youth, notably in the areas of strategic development, quality of learning provision, equity and inclusion, qualitative and targeted activities for specific groups) and addressing clearly one of the important features of the Erasmus+ programme: “promoting equity and inclusion by facilitating the access to learners with disadvantaged backgrounds and fewer opportunities compared to their peers” (p.13, Erasmus+ programme guide). This main aim is specified in 4 specific objectives: (1) to establish a map with the institutional policies for attending to vulnerable groups in relation to academic access and success; (2) to establish a plan for the higher education organisations with initiatives aimed at promoting the access and successful development of students who are under-represented in university centres; (3) to develop solutions for the phases embracing the access, permanence (and success) of vulnerable students and non-traditional learners in the institutions of higher education; (4) to create a laboratory for reflection on and the promotion of the social commitment of Higher Education institutions in relation with the most vulnerable student groups.

### N° and profile of the participants:

The consortium is made up of six partners from six different countries. It comprises six HEIs with extensive experience and running international projects. ACCESS4ALL is also endorsed by several stakeholders in each partner country. The managing partner, the UAB, has staff with experience of successfully developing national and international projects in relation to Higher Education institutions, tutoring, student dropout, access by vulnerable groups and non-traditional learners to university, among others (for more information: <http://edo.uab.cat>).

The partners have been carefully selected because of their previous experience, their University curriculums and their links. All of the partners in the consortium have broad and complementary experience, as well as operational and managerial competences in the areas of project management and quality assurance. The current configuration of the consortium ensures not only that skills are

complementary in the areas involved in the project, but in addition fully embraces the diversity of the situations in Europe since it includes countries from southern Europe, severely affected by the current financial crisis (Italy, Portugal and Spain), countries in northern Europe (Finland and UK) and in eastern Europe (Romania).

Methodology, short description of results, impact and long-term benefits:

Carrying out a deep analysis of the different understandings of vulnerable groups and non-traditional students in Europe, identifying good practices, developing a strategic plan model for equitable access and success in Higher Education and creating a

Laboratory for Policies and Practices of Social Development in Higher Education to disseminate the results and to raise the awareness of the subject matter, the project will enable the access and exchange of numerous policies and initiatives that the partners are already developing in order to improve access to and permanence in HE for vulnerable collectives and non-traditional learners. The desired impact at both local and international levels is double: (1) increase recognition, equity and inclusion of vulnerable groups in European HEIs; and (2) to improve the quality and to increase the volume of multilateral cooperation between

higher education institutes in Europe, creating a network of HEIs interested in the development of the social dimension of the EHEA.

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