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Intellectual Output 1 – Final Report

EASIT (Easy Access for Social Inclusion Training)

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Abstract: This report summarizes the results of an online survey involving 128 participants. Its objective was to gather information on the current situation regarding the training and practice of easy-to-understand (E2U) content in the EU, especially in the countries involved in the EASIT project. The results, based on the responses of 128 respondents, have contributed to offering a snapshot of the experience of professionals and to highlight possible areas of need and of improvement in E2U training.

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List of acronyms and abbreviations

E2U Easy to understand

E2R Easy to read

PL Plain Language



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1 Introduction

The document reports on the aims and development of IO1. It gives an account of the results of the survey that has been implemented and used as the main research tool for this IO.

Tangible results produced during the IO lifespan as well as dissemination outputs are included in the report. An account of the impact, transferability and sustainability of IO1 results is offered towards the project resilience.

IO1 represents the starting point of EASIT and the backbone of future IOs, especially IO3, IO4, and IO5. These IOs follow and will be based on IO1 and IO2, and they set out to define the profile, the skills and competences of the easy-to-understand expert, to design a course curriculum and to produce training materials.

IO1, and in particular the questionnaire that has been created for its implementation, relies on the current literature on E2U language, including related areas such as: Plain Language (Fortis, 2013; García Muñoz, 2012), clear communication (Arezzo et al., 2017; CHANGE, 2016), Easy-to-Read (Bredel & Maaß, 2016; IFLA 2010), and text simplification (Arfe et al., 2018; Saggion et al., 2012).



Output identification	IO1
Output title	Common methodological framework for easy reading practice and training
Easy-to-read title	Output 1. Practice and training
Description	<p>Specific training in E2U in the form of digital open educational resources is needed. However, to generate such training contents, a necessary first step is to agree on a common European framework on the practice and training of easy reading. A previous analysis has identified existing guidelines and recommendations at European and national level (for instance, European standards by Inclusion Europe developed under the projects Pathways, IFLA, national Spanish standard under development to which UAB has contributed, etc.), containing shared recommendations and language-specific advice. However, before specific training materials are created, a common methodological framework for the implementation of easy reading, both in practice and in training, needs to be agreed upon, as this will lead to an identification of shared practices across Europe that can be transferred into training content.</p> <p>The innovation of this output lies in the fact that there is currently no structured European methodological framework for either the practice or the training in E2U. This will be the first cross-country approach to the topic and will allow to identify shared practices.</p> <p>The impact and transferability of this IO is very significant. The IO will provide educational centres with valuable information to offer courses to train professionals aiming to work in this area.</p> <p>The tangible output will be a document illustrating the common framework in easy to understand practice and training across</p>



	Europe, possibly with recommendations for improvement that will be taken into account when developing the other project IOs. The contents of this output will be presented as a report, elements of which will be disseminated through the project accessible website, and can be proposed as scientific publications and presentations at upcoming relevant conferences such as Media for All (Stockholm, 2019) or Languages and the Media (Berlin, 2020).
Start date	1/9/2018
End date	28/2/2019
Languages	English + all project languages
Available media	Paper, media, web
Leading organisation	UNITS
Participating organisations	All partners

Table 1. IO summary

2 Aims

The aim of IO1 has been to develop a methodological framework for training in the field of E2U content, and more specifically:

- to understand the situation of E2U training and practice in Europe,
- to identify shared (or new) practices that may be implemented in a future curriculum (IO4), and
- to offer a set of recommendations for the definition of skills cards for new professional profiles (IO3), for the creation of a curriculum



and course design (IO4), and for the creation of open educational resources or training materials (IO5).

In order to achieve these aims, it was necessary to define:

- a shared terminology,
- a set of respondents, and
- a methodological tool to gather the data.

3 IO Development

In order to fulfil the aims of this IO, the following steps were taken:

- Agreeing on the terminology.
- Defining a methodological tool.
- Identifying the respondent profiles.
- Designing the questionnaire.
- Translating the questionnaire into the project languages.
- Dealing with ethical procedures.
- Piloting the questionnaire.
- Distributing the questionnaire.
- Gathering and collating responses (data).
- Processing data.
- Discussing results.
- Providing recommendations.



A more detailed description of the methodology and the materials used for the implementation of IO1 is provided in the paragraphs below.

3.1 Terminology

The project has departed from the definition of E2U and from the search for an agreed and shared terminology.

The development of Easy-to-Read (E2R) and Plain Language (PL) is uneven across Europe. It varies from new in some European countries to well established in others. This is the reason why there is not yet a shared terminological framework, especially in some languages (e.g. Italian).

In English, the terms "Plain Language" and "Easy-to-Read language" may be found in the literature, while in German one speaks of "Einfache Sprache" and "Leichte Sprache" (Bredel & Maaß, 2016). In Italian, the use of the English expression "Plain Language" seems to prevail, although it is sometimes translated as "lingua semplice" (simple language) or "lingua facile da leggere e da capire" (language that is easy to read and to understand). According to some authors, these terms indicate roughly the same concept and, sometimes, are used as synonyms (Kellerman, 2014). According to others, however, they express different ideas.

The two linguistic variants can be confused because they have similar objectives, namely to make a text understandable to those who read it, and they both focus on intelligibility, sentence structure and layout (Institute for the Languages of Finland, n.d.). However, some differences do exist between the two language variants. The major difference is the target audience: While E2R is primarily aimed at people with reading difficulties and at people with cognitive disabilities (Bredel & Maaß, 2016;



Degener, 2016; Matausch & Nietzio, 2012), Plain Language aims to include as many readers as possible, including experts.

Furthermore, the areas in which PL is used are mainly bureaucratic or legal. Its purpose is, in fact, to simplify the language and the terminology specific to these sectors in such a way as to make the documents comprehensible to the greatest number of people. E2R language, on the other hand, applies above all to information concerning daily life, i.e. news, rights and obligations, access to services, transport, information for consumers and information on leisure time (Freyhoff et al., 1998). Making this information easier allows people with intellectual disabilities to be more independent.

A preliminary discussion among partners was therefore needed to establish an effective and shared terminological list that could enable the partners to interact successfully and to translate all IO1 material (and the website) consistently. This proved very useful also to ensure consistency in all project texts.

Specifically, partners have decided to use "easy to understand" (E2U) as an umbrella term covering both Easy-to-Read (E2R) and Plain Language (PL) (Table 2). In fact, content can be made easy to understand through different levels of simplification, that is, through PL and through E2R language. The former involves a slighter degree of simplification. The latter involves major levels of simplification - it is the maximal language reduction form (CHANGE, 2016; Department of Health, 2016; Fortis, 2013; IFLA, 2010; Plain English Network, 2000; MENCAP, 2016; Nietzio et al., 2014; Piemontese, 1996; Tronbacke, 1997; Bredel & Maaß, 2016).



CA	Lectura Fàcil	Llenguatge Planer
DE	Leichte Sprache	Einfache Sprache
EN	Easy-to-read language	Plain Language
ES	Lectura fácil	Lenguaje llano
IT	Lingua facile da leggere e da capire	Plain Language/Semplificazione linguistic
GA	Lectura doada	Linguaxe sinxela
SL	Lahko branje	Preprost jezik
SV	Lättläst språk	Klarspråk

Table 2. Specialized E2U terminology

3.2 Defining a methodological tool: the questionnaire

Taking into account the aims of IO1, we have decided to use an online questionnaire to gather as many responses as possible from experts in the E2U field.



An online questionnaire has been used as the preferred research instrument. An online questionnaire can in fact enable researchers to administer and to collect large amounts of information in a relatively time- and cost-effective way. Moreover, once the information has been transformed into numeric values, it enables researchers to use statistics to analyze the data (Ackroyd and Hughes, 1981).

An online questionnaire is also an effective tool to reach out to a large number of respondents, which is particularly important in a field where the number of experts is still scant and uneven in different European countries.

The questionnaire prepared is the result of several revisions that have enabled us to eventually build a long questionnaire divided into 4 sections and focusing on the main aspects that could serve us to achieve the aims of IO1 aims.

The online questionnaire has been constructed in order for us to gathered both quantitative and qualitative data: the former have been gathered through closed questions and the latter through open boxes where respondents could enter free texts.

In contrast, for IO2 interviews, along focus groups, have been used as the main methodological tool. This has enabled us to structure the IO2 interviews based on the results of IO1 and to work in a more focused way in both IOs.

This methodological approach has been adopted following the National Agency project evaluation. Their advice was to design a unified methodological approach to both IOs. The final merged and improved methodology therefore includes a quantitative/qualitative questionnaire for IO1, and interviews and focus groups for IO2.



The questionnaire has remained available online for 3 weeks.

The construction of the questionnaire has required several re-writing sessions to make sure we have included all the necessary items to accomplish the aims of IO1, and to get the necessary information to gather results that could offer a clear picture of the training situation of E2U experts in Europe. Before getting to the final questionnaire structure, an agreement on the categories of prospective respondents had to be reached.

In the following paragraphs, the categories of respondents to the questionnaire as well as the structure of the questionnaire will be described.

3.3 Identification of respondents

To get more information on the situation regarding E2U training and professional practice in Europe, after a thorough discussion, we have decided to resort to **experts** in the field of E2U content.

Experts are people who are knowledgeable about, or skillful in, a particular area. Talking with experts in the field can in fact offer important information on how

- they create easy-to-understand content,
- they learn to create easy-to-understand content, and
- training in easy-to-understand can be improved.

As a first step, project partners have identified who these experts should be. There are in fact different profiles working on different aspects of E2U content. Experts were grouped into 4 categories:

- trainer,
- producer/creator/writer,
- translator/adapter, and
- validator/advisor.

Trainers are experts in E2U content who teach (as a main or secondary profession) the principles of E2U language in diverse types of courses (academic, vocational, in companies or associations, etc.).

Producers/creators/writers are experts in E2U content who write texts in E2R or PL.

Translators/adapters are experts in E2U content who translate or adapt a standard text into an E2R or a PL text.

Validators/advisors are experts in E2U content who check the quality of existing E2U texts. More specifically, advisors participate in different stages of E2R production, not just in the process of validation. They can, for example, advise on topics, help with challenges on the go, etc., besides checking the generated information. Validators check/test the information (in Slovene they are called "testni bralci" - "test readers").

Defining the 4 categories of respondents has been difficult, because the roles and the terminology used to refer to them differ from country to country.



To mention just an example, in Germany, people with intellectual disabilities who validate the content are called "Prüfer" (validators) but also "Experts" (Bernabé-Caro, 2019, personal communication). Furthermore, in validation processes, there are the users who validate (validators) but also the users managing the group ("dinamizadores" in Spanish). Our survey was addressed to the former category.

3.4 The structure of the questionnaire

IO1 questionnaire (cf. Annex 1) includes a preliminary section related to the ethical procedures and demographics, and four sections with specific questions.

The questionnaire is structured as follows:

- Short introduction to the project and to the questionnaire (in PL).
- Terms of Participation, including:
 - information sheet,
 - consent form, and
 - data policy.
- Section 1: Demographic Profile.
- Section 2: Educational Background and Previous Training.
- Section 3: Current Activity of the Experts.
- Section 4: Skills.



The introduction to the questionnaire provides a brief introduction to the project and to the questionnaire itself. This is followed by the terms of participation and instructions on how to complete the questionnaire.

Section 1 (Demographic Profile) provides a set of demographic questions. Collecting demographic information has enabled us to cross-tabulate and compare subgroups to see how responses may vary between groups and countries. All data are anonymized.

Section 2 (Educational Background and Previous Training) asks questions on the respondents' educational background, their field of studies. It also asks questions on their previous training in easy-to-understand language. At the end of this section, respondents find a text box where they can write their comments.

Section 3 (Your Current Activity) is designed to ask questions on the respondents' current activity as experts in easy-to-understand language. At the end of this section, respondents find a text box where they can write their comments.

Section 4 (Skills) includes 8 questions on the skills that an expert in easy-to-understand content should have. Skills are the ability to do something well. The respondent's point of view on the skills that he/she thinks should be emphasized in training is crucial for the design of the course curriculum.

Items in the questionnaire are the result of research work based on literature (Arezzo & Gargiulo, 2017; CHANGE, 2016; Cortellazzo & Pellegrino, 2002; De Mauro, 1980; Fortis, 2013; IFLA, 2010; Inclusion Europe, 2014; MENCAP, 2016; Department of Health, 2016; Nietzio et al., 2014; Piemontese, 1996; Plain English network, 2000; Tronbacke, 1997) and several revisions.



3.5 The language of the questionnaire

The study of literature has served as a solid theoretical basis for the selection of the questionnaire items. However, a major rewriting work was carried out in order to create an accessible questionnaire for non-academics, and to use PL. The editing work on the technical language and on all the complex formulations that are typical of academic jargon was aimed at: producing a comprehensible questionnaire, avoiding argot and making the language suitable for all respondents.

We have deliberately kept in mind the principles of PL and the needs of the target group of this questionnaire. We knew we would be targeting a very heterogeneous group, including persons who struggle to read.

The questionnaire has been developed in English to enable partners to read, share and work on the same document until the end of the drafting process. The finalized questionnaire has been translated into all the project languages (Catalan, Galician, German, Italian, Spanish, Slovene, Swedish) in order to increase the potential number of respondents.

3.6 Questionnaire distribution and ethics

In order to reach out to as many respondents as possible, and to simplify the gathering of the data, we opted for the online distribution of the questionnaire. We chose Web Survey Creator as the platform for uploading and distributing the questionnaire, given its functionalities for the creation of multilingual pages.

Web Survey Creator is a Web-based survey tool developed and supported by Dipolar Pty Limited. Web Survey Creator has been developed with all the knowledge and experience gained from more than 15 years in the survey software business. Web Survey Creator enables the creation of



online surveys and questionnaires with powerful functionality, respondent logins, data validation and flow control, and the production of a vast array of reports.

The questionnaire distribution was intended to comply with ethical research needs and consent issues (Orero et al., 2017). Based on the ethical protocol approved by UAB ethical committee, we included a consent formulation ("Please, click on the "Yes" button if the following sentences are true: 1) I have read the information or someone has explained it to me in a way that is easy to understand; 2) I have been able to ask questions; 3) I want to take part in the survey. Explicit consent by clicking on "Yes" button: YES"). Participants were also given information on their voluntary participation, confidentiality/anonymity, right to withdraw: "You will fill in this questionnaire because you want to./ You can stop when you want / and you do not need to explain why. / If you stop, there is no problem at all."

The protocol was discussed with and approved by both UAB (project coordinator) and UNITS (IO leader) ethical committees.

To guarantee confidentiality we selected the "anonymous" survey responses type in the platform: "This type of response is perfect for surveys where you want a single generic link to be provided to anyone who wants to complete the survey. The best feature of this link is its simplicity. No tracking information exists in the link – everyone uses the same link and is completely anonymous. Respondents must complete the survey in a single sitting, as there is no way to get back to previously entered responses." (Web Survey Creator, 2017).

3.7 Piloting the questionnaire

Once the questionnaire has been uploaded on Web Survey Creator, it has been necessary to test it. In fact, a few piloting sessions have proven crucial in finalizing the questionnaire and improving its effectiveness.

3.8 Distributing the questionnaire

The distribution of the questionnaire has started on 14 January 2019. The questionnaire has remained online for 3 weeks.

Each partner has contributed to reach out to as many E2U experts as possible. Each partner has compiled an internal list of respondents and has contacted them via a recruitment email in E2R language (see below) providing them with the link to the online questionnaire:

Dear ---,
I am writing to you
to ask for your help in our research.
I take part in the EASIT project (<http://pagines.uab.cat/easit/>).
This is a project about making content easy to understand
through Easy-to-Read Language and Plain Language.
In EASIT, we will create materials
to train experts on making content easy to understand.
To create these materials
we need to know the point of view of experts.
I am contacting you
because you are an expert.
If you wish,
you can help us
and answer the questions we have prepared.
We would be very grateful.
If you are interested,
you can access our questionnaire online [here](#).
If you prefer to receive the questionnaire
in a different format,
let me know.
Many thanks for your help.



The links to the questionnaire in all project languages has also been made available via social media, including the EASIT project Facebook page. Reminders have been sent through social media regularly.

4 IO Results

Results from the questionnaire will be presented in the following order:

1. Demographic data of the respondents.
2. Profile of the respondents: previous training and work.
3. Current practices: modality, fields, formats, and services.
4. Existing training: format, services, length, fields, and activities.
5. Use of guidelines in practice and in training.
6. Teamwork and user involvement.
7. Competences, skills and knowledge of the professionals.

The responses gathered from the online questionnaires provided us with an extensive amount of essential quantitative and qualitative information that will be the basis for future project work. The findings have also enabled us to offer a snapshot of the current situation on E2U training and practice in the countries involved in the survey and to ultimately offer a list of recommendations to create a course curriculum for experts.

In this section of the report, we will discuss results based on the analysis of all responses (cf. Annex 2, containing data regarding countries involved

in the survey, and Annex 3, containing an English translation of all the qualitative comments and open questions gathered in the survey).

4.1 Demographic data of the respondents

Overall, 128 respondents have provided feedback. This number shows that nowadays the topic of easy to understand content is spread out also in countries where E2U is new and still under practiced (e.g. Italy). The number of responses divided per language is also interesting and quite encouraging (Table 3). It appears to reflect whether E2U is more established, which is linked to the way E2U is perceived as an accessibility means for readers.

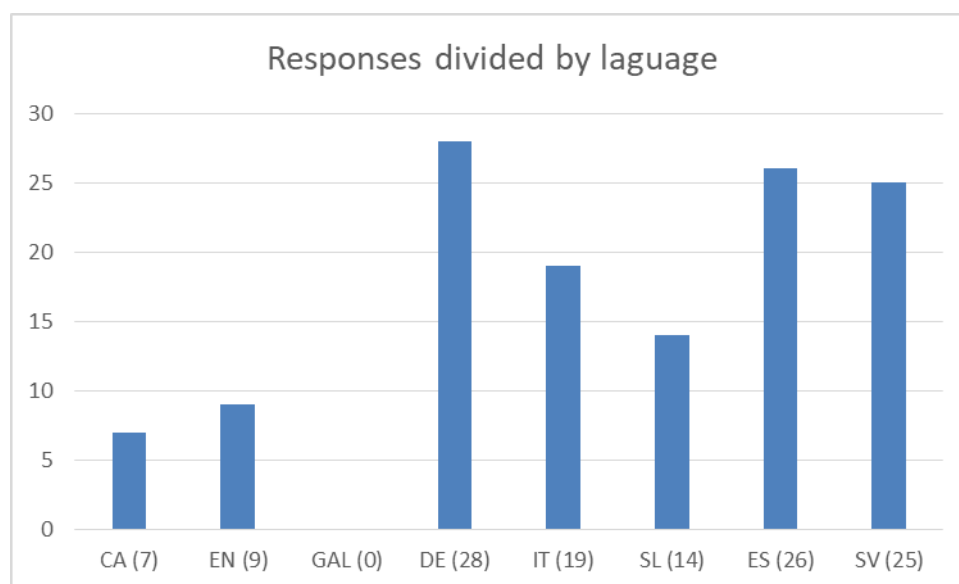


Table 3. Responses by language

Overall, the data indicate that most experts in the field are mainly female (74%). The age range of experts is between 41 and 60 years old. Table 4 illustrates that there are no professionals under the age of 20. We could assume that this is related to the fact that training takes time, or that

professional training in European countries typically starts after 18 and specialisation is often sought after BA degrees (21+).

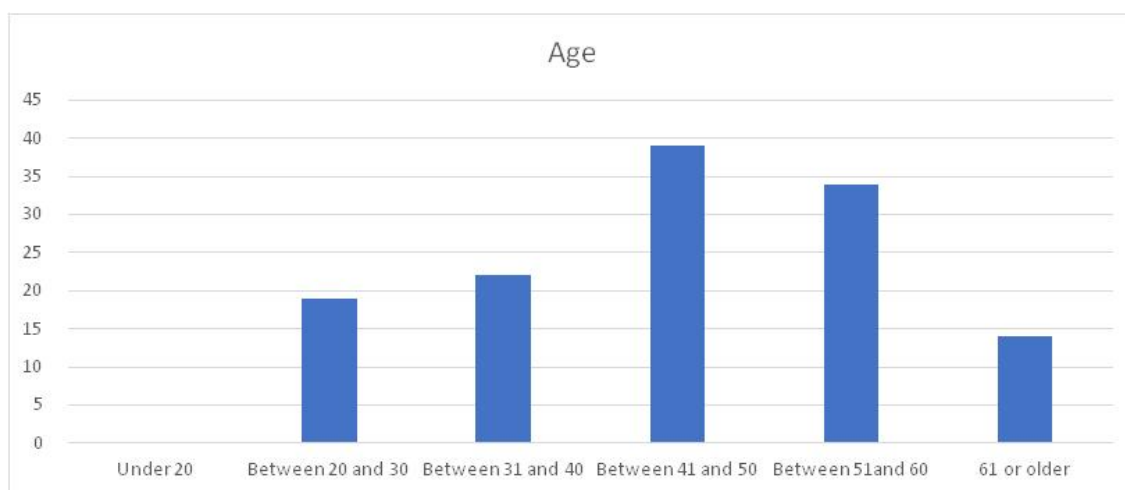


Table 4. Age of the participants

4.2 Profile of the respondents: previous training and work

Most experts (66%) have received formal education (BA or MA degrees) and they come mainly from **study fields** such as language, journalism and communication, that is to say, from areas of study where the use and awareness of language is very important. The fact that most experts come from fields where language is crucial is also confirmed by the open responses (other = 33%). These responses however show that some people working in this field can come from very distant areas (to mention just a few examples, economy and law, music, sciences and math, geography, natural sciences, even sports and veterinary) or from the world of accessibility, universal design and Human Computer Interaction.



Currently, experts **work as** trainers (44%), translators/adapters (41%), producers/creators/writers (39%) and validators/advisors (30%). So most work in the E2U field. However, 20% of the respondents do other jobs or work in settings including (in alphabetical order, from the open responses):

- Agency of information technology.
- Consortium for language normalization.
- Consultant.
- Director.
- Unemployed or retired.
- Dynamizer (x2).
- I support people with intellectual disability and their families.
- Interpreting oral text to (written) text.
- Media officer.
- Occupational therapist.
- Office for easy-to-read.
- Proofreader.
- Psychologist.
- Publishing house.
- Researcher.
- School and social care worker .
- Speech therapist.
- Teacher (x4) or student.
- Translator, adapter and easy to read text writer, dynamizer, trainer (easy to read) and teaching English.



Experts are distributed in several sectors and work for varied institutions. The responses to the questionnaire closed questions show where experts work:

1. Not-for-profit organization (26%).
2. University or research institution (20%).
3. Freelancer (15%).
4. Public institution (13%).
5. Broadcasting company (5%).
6. Volunteer in a not-for-profit organization (4%).
7. Translation providers (4%).
8. Publishing house (4%).

Twenty-seven percent of the respondents however have listed different working places. These include the following:

- Commercial media organization.
- Consortium for language normalisation and publishing houses.
- Consultant in both private and public sector.
- Editing and training company.
- Own public limited company in communication.
- Language consultancy office (x 2).
- Private company/office (x 5)



- Public institution (x 2), international institution, non-governmental organization.
- Retired.
- School.
- Society developing text fonts.
- Student (x 4).
- Technical communication firm.
- Un-employed (x 6).

The data show that the audiovisual sector still lacks experts in E2U. This suggests the importance of applying E2U strategies to audiovisual contents, as per the EASIT project's primary aim.

Most experts (78%) **come from another profession**. These, again, are diverse and varied. Below is a list of professions that have been mentioned by respondents (52%) who have not found the appropriate job in the list we have offered in the questionnaire. So, besides being a journalist or writer (21%), a teacher (16%), a researcher (5%), a social worker (3%) or a translator or audiovisual translator (for example, subtitler, dubbing translator, etc.) (3%), experts mention the following to specify what profession they come from:

- Administrative work (e.g., secretary).
- Art historian, social worker.
- Communications and media professional (x 2).
- Cultural manager and cultural organisation direction museum of photography.



- Editor (of a general publishing company; of non-fiction books; Technical editor; publishing editor).
- Educator.
- Employee in an agency for public relations.
- Engineer and public communication officer.
- General manager in adult education.
- General publishing company's work.
- Graphic designer (x 2).
- Group habilitator.
- I was an editor, project leader and public information officer.
- I worked in it and finance.
- I worked with a lot of different things, for example with nonprofit organisations, as a shop chief (sic!) and in adult education.
- Solicitor.
- Librarian.
- Media producer.
- Museum communication.
- Occupational therapist (x2).
- Pedagogist (x2), educator and psychometrist.
- Political secretary for a party.
- Proofreader for audiovisual media.
- Psychologist.
- Speech therapist (x 3).
- Student.
- Teacher in a special school.

- Therapist (x 2).
- Touristic guide.
- Translator, transcriber, book writer, post office worker.

Twenty-two per cent are volunteers and do not get paid for their activity; 45% work part time and get paid for what they do and the remaining 33% work full time and get paid for their job. These data show that in spite of the importance of producing E2U content, this is not yet practiced consistently as a primary or full time job.

As illustrated in Table 5 below, most experts have been producing E2U content for a relatively short time. This seems to suggest that this is a fairly new profession, or at least that producing E2U content has been practiced regularly and professionally only for approximately a decade.

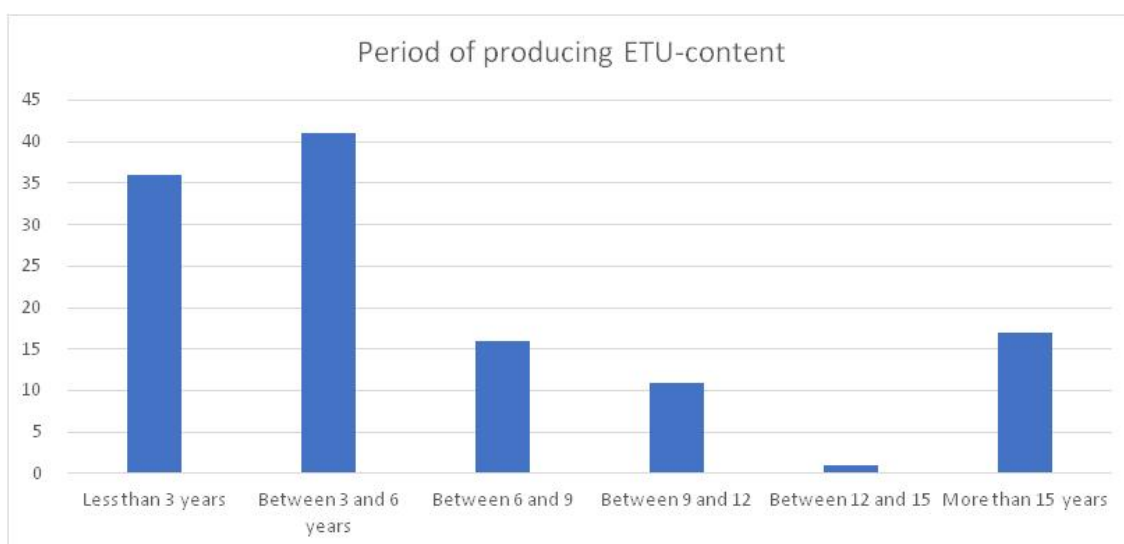


Table 5. How long have respondents been producing E2U content?



4.3 Current practices: modality, fields, formats, and services

E2R is the **modality** that experts produce the most (56%; respondents could choose more than one answer), even though 16% normally produce PL content and 26% normally produce both modalities.

The **format** of easy-to-understand they usually work with (here they could choose more than one answer) is printed content (84%) as well as digital content (63%), followed by audiovisual content (including interpreting) (13%). Not many experts deal with audio content (6%).

The **fields** experts usually produce easy-to-understand content for (here they could choose more than one answer) are public administration and education, although the list below shows a varied situation:

1. Public administration and justice: for example institutional and administrative documents, public and legal documents, government statements, contracts, etc. (39%).
2. Education: for example teaching materials, etc. (37%).
3. I usually produce easy-to-understand content in several fields (34%).
4. Culture and literature: museum brochures or audio guides, opera librettos, theatre plays, other cultural events, novels, etc. (26%).
5. Media and journalism: for example news, press releases, TV programmes, film scripts, web content, etc. (25%).
6. I do not usually produce easy-to-understand content in any specific field (7%).



Nine percent of the respondents usually produce easy-to-understand content for other fields, including the private sector (not otherwise specified).

These responses suggest that there are areas where E2U content is more required, and therefore more practiced. A comprehensive curriculum, however, should cover also the overlooked areas of expertise, to ensure all topics can be created or translated adequately and successfully.

In terms of the **services** performed most often, it is interesting to notice that they all pertain to E2R content rather than to PL. So, adaptation/editing/translation of Easy-to-Read texts (i.e., starting from an original text and turning it into an Easy-to-Read Language text), creation/writing of Easy-to-Read Language, validation/revision of Easy-to-Read Language texts, quality control of the final Easy-to-Read Language texts are performed more often than adaptation/editing/translation of Plain Language texts, creation/writing of Plain Language, quality control of the final Plain Language texts, validation/revision of Plain Language texts.

This is possibly the result of the more established role of E2R vs. PL.

4.4 Existing training: format, services, length, fields, and activities

Most respondents have **received training** in the production of E2U content (72%), and respondents were (57%) or still are (41%) E2U trainers themselves. This shows that training is important and valued, that training contributes to the formation of experts. This is an important indicator that working towards a shared and European training curriculum is really needed and timely.



Interestingly, those who have received training, seem to have been trained **mainly outside academia/higher education institutions**: E2U does not seem to fall within the sphere of competence of higher education institutions, except for some cases (e.g., the situation is somewhat different in Germany with the Research Center for E2R German (SUH) featuring a Master programme on Accessible Communication). These data bring us to believe that academia possibly deals primarily with research rather than with practical training in the form of full modules or degree courses. Training is received mainly through one-off workshops (59%) rather than through a structured series of lessons leading to a qualification, and in-house (42%). This shows that institutions dealing with E2U have to or prefer to cater for the internal training of their employees. Training developed by an organization can have several advantages (e.g. uses real-life examples, problems, and challenges that participants encounter every day at work; is presented in the language and terminology that participants understand and can relate to; develops the skills of employees and cements their own knowledge of the topic; etc.)¹. A number of self-taught experts also exists (23%). The data suggest that the EASIT curriculum should consider providing materials that are usable also for in-house training, and not just for training in academic settings.

Training is received (and offered) mainly in the field of E2R language (62%) rather than in PL (13%). In 29% of the cases it is offered for both modalities. The fact that Plain Language is not fully standardized and does not have strict and prescriptive guidelines makes it more flexible to use but also more difficult to teach in a structured setting (e.g. Bredel & Maaß, 2016).

¹ Cf. thebalancecareers (n.d.) Tap the Power of Internal Training. Retrieved at: <https://www.thebalancecareers.com/tap-the-power-of-internal-training-1919298>



This suggests that in a new curriculum enough space should be devoted to E2R, although PL deserves some training as well.

Respondents have been asked in what services they have been trained, and they could choose up to 3 answers. Interestingly, the **services** that are taught most often are adaptation/editing/translation (75%) and creation/writing (73%) of E2R, followed by the validation/revision of E2R (52%).

The **formats** that receive the most attention in training are printed content (93%) and digital content (65%). Audiovisual content (12%) follows. This is interesting and suggests that the implementation of E2U content in audiovisual material is really a new realm, and needs specific research and training. Current training is in fact still centred on more traditional formats rather than on more modern formats. The need for a curriculum that duly considers this aspect is therefore crucial and timely, given the fact that audiovisual communication becomes more and more prevalent and as such should be made as accessible as possible.

Most trained experts (41%) have received over 60 **hours of training**. Even though this is not a high number of training hours, this indicates that the time devoted to learning the principles of E2U is not limited to very short workshops or courses – although this seems to contradict previous finding pointing to the fact that training is received mainly through one-off workshops (59%). This also highlights that training is important to learn the discipline and to become experts. Therefore, a structured curriculum, such as the one that EASIT aims at designing, is much needed.



As far as the **field of training**, data show that experts have received both general training (i.e., general E2U training on several fields) and thematic training (i.e., E2U training applied to specific thematic areas). In terms of thematic training, the most taught areas are (in order of importance):

- Media and journalism (35%).
- Public administration and justice (34%).
- Education (33%).
- Culture and literature (24%).

Fifteen percent of the respondents have not received training on how to produce E2U language for any specific field.

Seventy percent of the respondents have received a **certificate** after training but only 20% have been asked to show that certificate when they applied for a job. This shows that expertise is considered more important than certification by employees, and that creating a good curriculum should be a primary focus over trying to offer a certification for the training offered.

Moving to the **training activities that are considered more useful** by experts, we need to stress that practice wins over theory, as shown below:

1. Practical **writing** exercises (75%).
2. Internship and **working** with experts (45%).
3. Practical **revision** exercises (40%).



4. Analyzing existing easy-to-understand content (33%).
5. Class discussion based on errors (28%).
6. Lectures (25%).
7. Discussing and comparing E2U guidelines (23%).
8. Writing research assessments (2%).

Five percent of the respondents have chosen the answer "other" and they have specified e.g. that it has been particularly useful to work with people who need easy language, or with a validator. A respondent claims that all would have been of use, but they were not all present in his/her education.

These data point to the direction the curriculum and the materials of the EASIT course should take: writing and editing should be prioritized, and if at all possible, a full course should include a traineeship period that enables trainees to work with experts for a while, see what they do, learn on the job.

Theory should not be overlooked: only during a course will learners have the chance to really study theory, and this aspect should be considered in designing the EASIT course curriculum, one offering an adequate selection of focused literature useful to prospective professionals.

The preference of experts for a practical approach in learning the job emerges from the activities they undertake to improve their skills after training. The list below clearly shows a preference for direct experience on the job and direct exchange with colleagues rather than for more study- or research-oriented activities:



1. I have constant **experience in the field** (77%).
2. I **talk** with other experts (61%).
3. I **talk** with users (58%).
4. I **participate** in conferences, workshops, etc. (55%).
5. I **study** existing material (46%).
6. I analyze existing E2U contents (35%).
7. I do research (28%).
8. I participate in in-house training (27%).
9. I am not doing anything specific (18%).

4.5 Use of guidelines in practice and in training

Overall, guidelines are known and used in training (Tables 6 and 7). According to the answers of the experts, the training received has been based on **guidelines** (only 13% of the respondents have been trained not using guidelines). The guidelines used during training were mainly language-specific (40%). 35% of experts claim that they have used both language-specific and non-language specific guidelines. The fact that only 14% of the respondents have been trained using only non-language specific guidelines can suggest the lack (and consequent need) of comprehensive and useful non-language specific guidelines, or the preference of trainers for language specific guidelines.

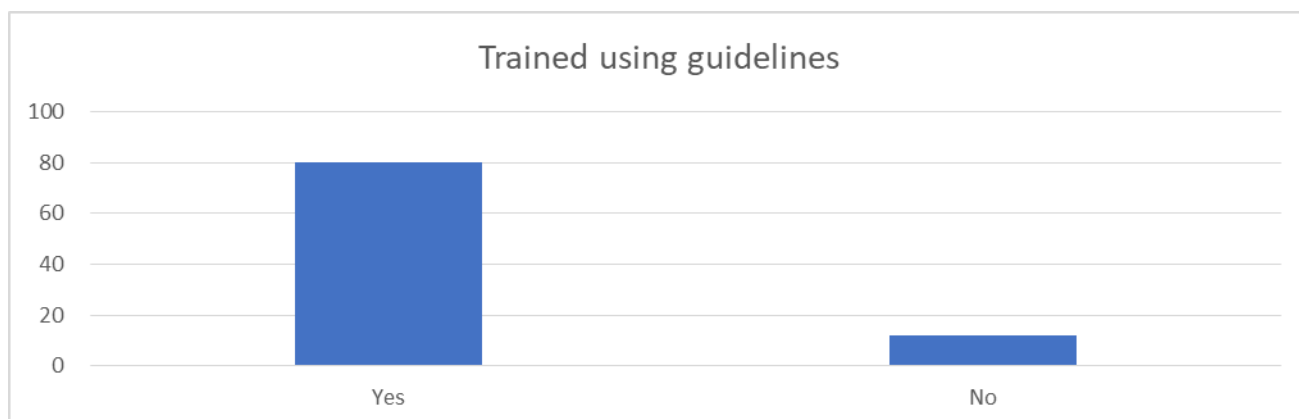


Table 6. Use of guidelines in training

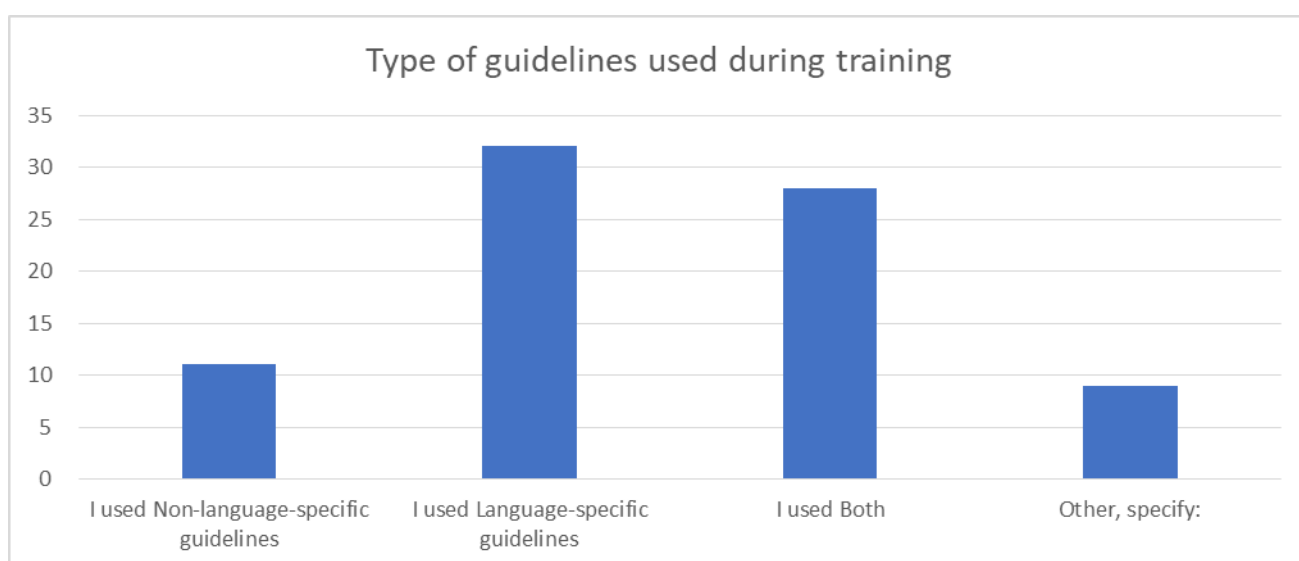


Table 7. Type of guidelines used in training

More specifically, when asked about what guidelines respondents have used during their training, their answers were the following:

- Inclusion Europe Guidelines developed by the Pathways project were mentioned over 28 times.
- The volume *Leichte Sprache* by Ursula Bredel and Christiane Maaß published by Duden (2016) was mentioned by most German respondents (16 times).



- IFLA guidelines (Guidelines for Library Services to Persons with Dyslexia; cf. <https://www.ifla.org/publications/node/9457>) were mentioned 9 times.
- Spanish respondents mentioned *Lectura fácil: Métodos de redacción y evaluación* (García, 2012), Spanish Standard on Easy to Read UNE 153101:2018 EX (3 times).
- The recommendations of Språkrådet (Swedish Language Council), Swedish writing rules (Swedish guidelines for Plain Language, The Swedish Institute for Language and Folklore) were mentioned 4 times.
- The adapted guidelines for Slovenian language (Association Sožitje) were mentioned 3 times.

One-offs, on the other hand, include the following:

- The Finnish Easy to Read Guidelines.
- EKarv Method.
- AP Style Guide, US Government Plain Writing Style Guide, NCDJ Style Guide, Descriptive.
- The guidelines from Bruno Munari about visual communication.
- Criteria from Capito, a social franchise network for accessibility in the German-speaking region between Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

Some respondents mention the fact that different guidelines were used and mixed during training.



We have already mentioned that guidelines are used extensively in training. For this, or for other, reasons, most experts (89%) claim that they know of the existence of easy-to-understand guidelines, and they know that these guidelines can take many forms, ranging from national guidelines, in-house guidelines, guidelines from other countries, or even self-created guidelines.

26% of the respondents felt the need to specify what types of guidelines they use. These responses show that even in practice the most widespread guidelines are:

- European Easy to Read Guidelines (mentioned 13 times).
- IFLA (3 times).
- UNE 153101 (3 times).
- Bredel and Maaß (2 times).
- Capito (2 times).

Also for practice, experts mention (one time):

- NCDJ Disability Style Guide, AP Style Guide, Chicago Manual of Style.
- Guidelines on accessibility and communication from Myndigheten för Delaktighet (The Swedish Agency for Participation, MFD). My guidelines/tips come from MFD but I complimented them with more tips that I learned from journalism and different disability associations. Here are my tips: www.svmusik.se/lattlast/skrivalattlast_b.pdf.
- Språkrådet (Swedish Language Council).

Again, the guidelines that are used most often are guidelines that apply only to one language (63%).

Experts do use existing guidelines when they write easy-to-understand content (Table 8) (always: 55%; often: 28%), and they (71%) think that shared guidelines for all Europe could be useful. This emphasizes the need to focus on recommendations in the EASIT curriculum, but also on the need to create pan-European flexible recommendations (cf. ADLAB guidelines for audio description, Remael et al., 2015) that can serve as a reference point both for learners and for experts in E2U content.

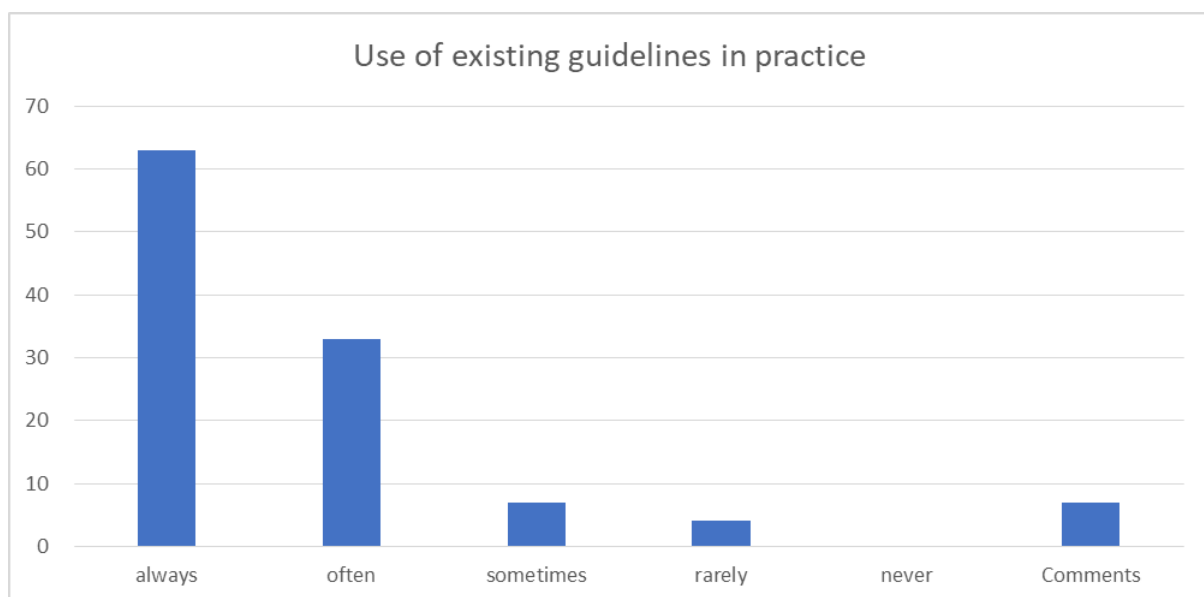


Table 8. Guidelines in practice

4.6 Team work and user involvement

An important aspect that we felt the need to research is the working practice of E2U experts, and their relationship with E2U users.

The following data have emerged.



When experts write easy-to-understand content, they **mainly work alone** (69%) rather than in a team with other experts (cf. always alone: 6%; mainly alone: 26%; sometimes alone and sometimes in a team: 37%). Working in a team is therefore not a custom (31%) (cf. mainly in a team: 16%; always in a team: 15%).

Although they prefer to work alone, experts are used to ask the opinion of other easy-to-understand experts to solve problems (very often: 21%; often: 33%; sometimes: 25%), or claim that the solutions that they find in other easy-to-understand content help their work (a lot: 16%; quite a lot: 49%; somewhat: 27%). So, direct and indirect forms of contact and exchange between experts do exist and seem to contribute to the final versions of E2U texts.

Respondents could specify how other easy-to-understand content helps them in their work. Interestingly, answers show that looking at the solutions of others can work well as an inspiration, and is useful especially in specific subject areas (e.g. math and biology) where it is difficult to find the right simple words. In the texts of others, respondents look for the way abstract words are explained - in these cases it is interesting to take inspiration from the solutions of others. Well-written texts are used as models. Respondents also pointed out that reading the texts of others is a chance to find "examples of good practice in translations. Good combinations of texts, pictures or photography, useful examples... or, for example, readable formats". Experts are always looking for (and open to) new ideas: "I am always looking for fresh ideas and wording, and use whatever works from other writers, editors, translators and practitioners." But they also feel the need to compare their solutions with those of others, which is particularly useful in the early stages of practice to solve doubts.



Apparently, when experts prepare their texts it is more important to **work with people who need and use easy-to-understand content** (71%).

In fact, people who need and use easy-to-understand content make comments on the texts prepared by experts (69%), and these comments are incorporated in the final texts very often (68%) or often (27%).

These data suggest to design a curriculum where enough room is given to end-users and their feedback. Perhaps, when preparing materials, partners could consider preparing specific feedback forms for end-users that can become part of the toolkit of the E2U expert (when they cannot work together with end-users of E2R, which would be the most adequate procedure), or suggest the most adequate procedures to involve end users.

A further aspect that can have an effect on the working practice of experts is their relationship with E2U **guidelines**.

4.7 Competences, skills and knowledge of the professionals

In our survey, we have devoted a section of the questionnaire to understanding what experts think most important in order to produce good quality easy-to-understand content. We wanted to elicit data that could be incorporated in the EASIT curriculum. This curriculum should take into account the perspective of current experts, who know what is still needed in training settings and what should be taught.

We asked respondents **in what areas should an expert have knowledge** to deliver good quality easy-to-understand content. Respondents could choose 3 answers. Results (which are listed below)



show that knowledge of the target group and of easy-to-understand principles are regarded as essential. This clashes, somehow, with the preference of experts for practical (vs. theoretical) activities that we came across when asking them about the most useful training activities.

In a comprehensive curriculum both theory and practice are needed. Following the list below could be a sensible way of balancing the type of theoretical knowledge to be included in the EASIT curriculum.

Percentages in brackets show how often the item has been selected by respondents:

1. Target groups: types of disabilities, needs, perception and cognitive processing (84%).
2. Easy-to-understand principles, guidelines, recommendations and standards (79%).
3. Language and linguistics (for example, knowing the principles of text analysis, text cohesion and coherence, language complexity, simplification methods) (44%).
4. (Media) accessibility (standards, legislation, guidelines, principles and applicable scenarios, technologies, etc.) (34%).
5. Cognitive linguistics (for example, knowing the principles of language processing) (23%).
6. Studies in reading (print and multimodal texts), and in reading disabilities (21%).
7. Multimodality (including the role of paratextual information) (11%).
8. Easy-to-understand history, status, and applicable scenarios (10%).

In terms of **services** that need to be emphasized more in training, most experts (44%) point to the adaptation/editing/translation of easy-to-understand content (i.e., starting from an original text and turning it into an easy-to understand text). This needs to be prioritized in training, followed by the creation/writing of easy-to-understand content (26%). Validation/revision and quality control of final texts appear to be considered less important in a teaching context.

In the questionnaire, we also enquired about **what areas are considered more important** to deliver a good quality easy-to-understand content. Respondents had to rate the answers on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = of no importance, 5 = extremely important). Summative mean scores show that experts do not seem to feel the need to distinguish between more and less relevant areas:

1. Use of simple syntax/grammar that helps understand texts 4.72
2. Design and layout of the page 4.68
3. Skilled and aware use of vocabulary 4.68
4. Clear organization of the information 4.64
5. Use of multimodality, that is, of different channels that convey the same meaning (e.g. text and video, or text and picture) 3.84

For each of the 5 areas, we listed the most relevant items according to the literature, and asked respondents to detect, according to their experience, one item per area that they find most useful in practice and in training. Results are summarized in the Tables 9-13 below. The number of responses in on the Y axis of the graphic.

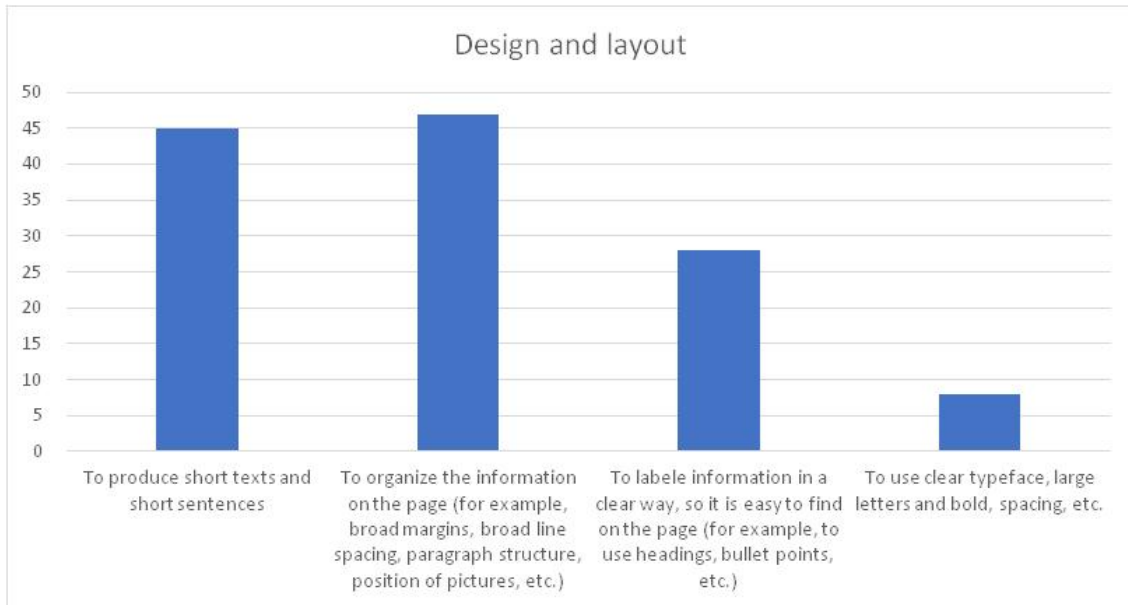


Table 9. Items that experts find most useful in practice and in training within the area design and layout

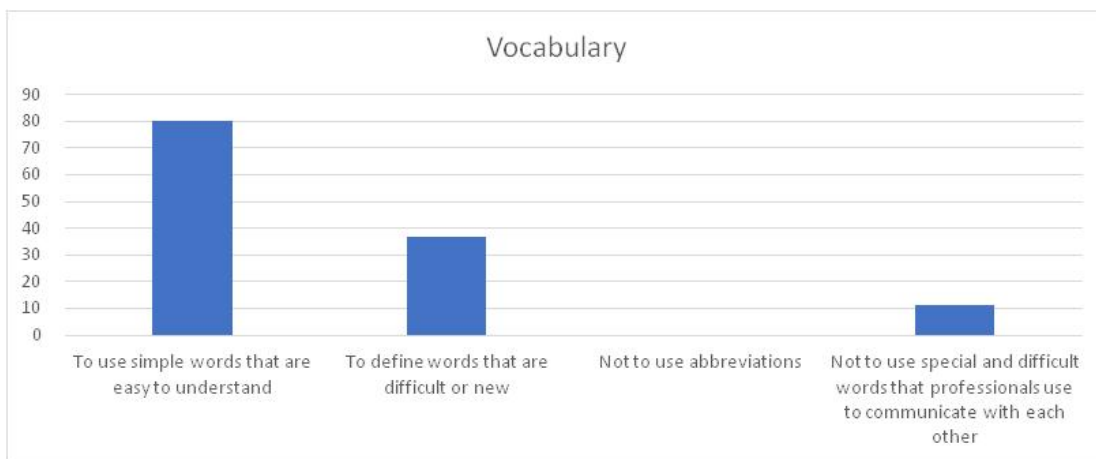


Table 10. Items that experts find most useful in practice and in training within the area vocabulary

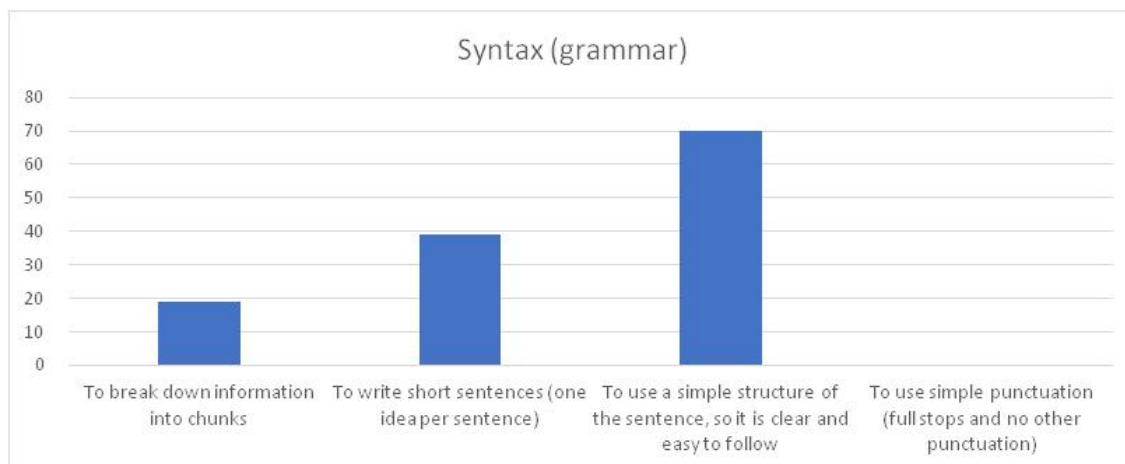


Table 11. Item that experts find most useful in practice and in training within the area syntax

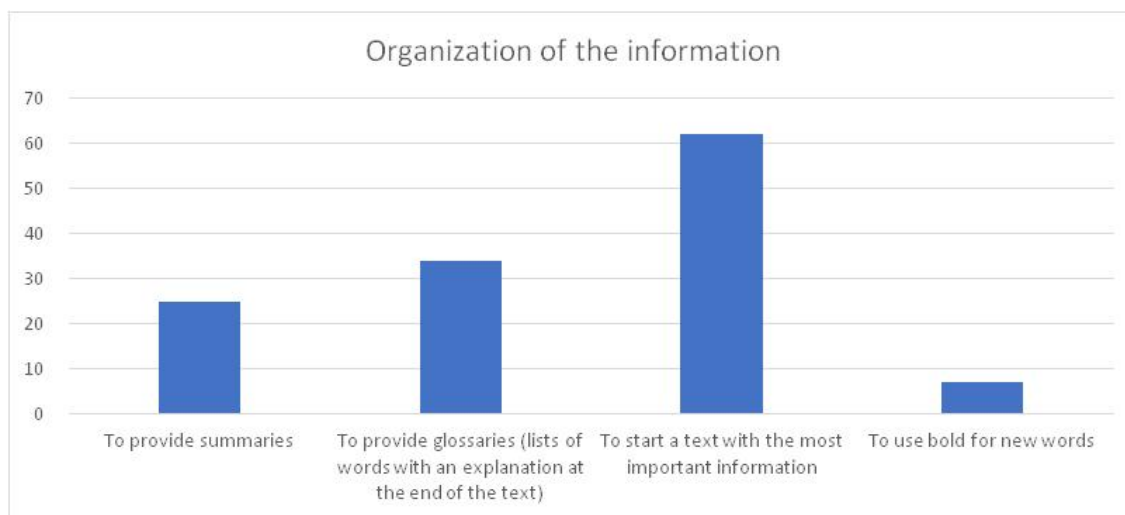


Table 12. Items that experts find most useful in practice and in training within the area organization of the information

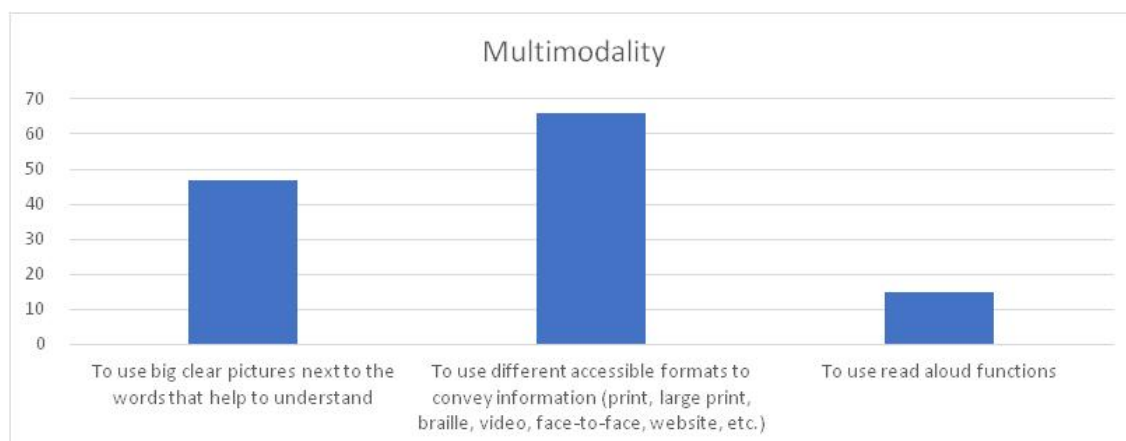


Table 13. Items that experts find most useful in practice and in training within the area multimodality

Having to choose and select where to focus when preparing training materials, we should go for clear organization of the information on the page (for example, broad margins, broad line spacing, paragraph structure, position of pictures, etc.) and production of short texts and short sentences; simple words that are easy to understand; simple structure of the sentence, so it is clear and easy to follow; starting a text with the most important information; using different accessible formats to convey information (print, large print, braille, video, face-to-face, website, etc.).

However, combining the amount of materials based on these results could be a good compromise that can contribute to design a comprehensive and useful curriculum, and to fill in the existing gaps in a successful way.

These results will be used in other Intellectual Outputs and they will constitute the starting point for the next steps in the project.



5 KPI

Key performance indicators (KPI) for IO1 were changed, following the project Executive Management Board (EMB) agreement, because it was decided to revise the methodology of IO1 and IO2 in line with the evaluation of the National Agency. The agency advised on designing a unified methodological approach to both IOs. IO1 therefore uses a questionnaire (more exhaustive, including both quantitative and qualitative data), whereas IO2 is based on interviews and focus groups.

Based on this change, we can list the following KPI which have been included in the original application:

- Number of replies to the survey: 128.

More KPIs however can be mentioned. In fact, after performing the work, we have added further KPIs as follows:

- IO1 description in all project languages: 8 (English, Catalan, Galician, German, Italian, Slovene, Spanish, Swedish).
- IO1 description in E2R in all project languages: 8 (English, Catalan, Galician, German, Italian, Slovene, Spanish, Swedish).
- IO1 questionnaire in all project languages: 8 (English, Catalan, Galician, German, Italian, Slovene, Spanish, Swedish).
- IO1 questionnaire introduction in Plain Language in all project languages: 8 (English, Catalan, Galician, German, Italian, Slovene, Spanish, Swedish).
- IO1 info sheet, consent form and data policy in all project languages: 8 (English, Catalan, Galician, German, Italian, Slovene, Spanish, Swedish).



- IO1 Raw data Responses divided for all project languages: 8 (English, Catalan, Galician, German, Italian, Slovene, Spanish, Swedish).
- IO1 Raw data Responses – comprehensive: 128 for all languages.
- IO1 questionnaire comments and open questions in all project languages: 8 (English, Catalan, Galician, German, Italian, Slovene, Spanish, Swedish).
- IO1 questionnaire comments and open questions translated into English from all project languages (including responses from all 128 respondents).
- Ethic evaluation request: UAB + UNITS committee.
- IO1 overview for Kick-off meeting (file name EASIT-TPM1-UNITS-IO1 Overview-2018-10-22).
- IO1 overview and results for ME1 (file name EASIT-ME1-UNITS-IO1 Results).

6 Dissemination

Dissemination that has occurred during IO1 development, which focuses on IO1 and on the project as a whole, is organized according to the partner responsible for it.

UNITS

IO1 was mentioned and disseminated in the following:

- Publication of adapted Italian Press Release for UNITS (re. EASIT project launch).



- Publication of adapted Italian E2R Press Release for UNITS (re. EASIT project launch).
- Publication of EASIT project launch on the Department Facebook Page.
- Publication of EASIT project launch on Perego's LinkedIn Page.
- Printing and internal dissemination of EASIT brochure.

IO1 was mentioned and disseminated in the following presentations:

- Perego, E. (2018). Il ruolo della traduzione audiovisiva nel percorso verso la fruibilità dell'opera d'arte. PhD Summer School, open conference: Rilievo dei beni culturali e rappresentazione inclusiva per l'accessibilità museale. Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Aquileia, 24/9/2018.
- Perego, E. (2019). Progettazione europea, teoria e pratica: ADLAB PRO e EASIT [European projecting in theory and in practice: the cases of ADLAB PRO and EASIT], presentation of ADLAB PRO and EASIT in PhD masterclass on EU projects. PhD course, Department of Legal, Language, Interpreting and Translation Studies, University of Trieste, 18/01/2019.

Internal dissemination (UNITS) of IO1 questionnaire and discussion with Floriana Sciumbata (PhD student), Prof. Dolores Ross, Prof. Elena Bortolotti (also vice-rector for the disabled people), Prof. Goranka Rocco.

Presentation of EASIT to students of English translation, and class translation and discussion of IO1 questionnaire. Department of Legal, Language, Interpreting and Translation Studies, University of Trieste. / Elisa Perego, 6/12/2018.



DYS

Presentations

- Hedberg, Ester. Introducing EASIT to steering group for project Begriplig text. Stockholm, 09/11/2018.
- Hedberg, Ester. Presenting EASIT to language consultants at a conference on "Pictures and Text in Interaction - a multimodal perspective on communication". Stockholm, 10/11/2018.
- Hedberg, Ester. Presenting EASIT to members in the "Association of Language Counseling and Text Care" at the conference on "Language in change". Stockholm, 10/11/2018.
- Hedberg, Ester. Presenting EASIT to participants at the Swedish Daisy Consortium conference. Stockholm, 15/11/2018.
- Hedberg, Ester. Presenting EASIT during The Swedish Tax Agency (Skattverket - SKV) Language day 2018. Stockholm, 28/11/2018.

Articles

- Hedberg, Ester. Europeiskt projekt om lättare text. Text in the magazine *Läs&Skriv*, 4, 2018

RISA

Presentations

- Knapp, Tatjana (2018). Reading together: conference of Slovenian reading association. Ljubljana, 10/9/2018.
- Knapp, Tatjana (2018). Association for adapted communication LABRA- the annual meeting. Ljubljana, 12/11/2018.



SDI

Presentations

- Bernabé, Rocío. Presentation of the project at the Pfennigparade as part of the Accessibility days. 20/11/2018.
- Bernabé, Rocío. Presentation of the project at the Subtitler forum. Munich, 30/11/2018.
- Bernabé, Rocío. EASIT presentation at the University senate. 16/01/2019.

SUH

Newsletter and interview

- Die Forschungsstelle Leichte Sprache wird international. Newsletter Forschungsstelle Leichte Sprache (SUH). Hildesheim (Germany), 04/12/2018. (<https://www.uni-hildesheim.de/leichtesprache/news/artikel/artikel/die-forschun/>)
- Lange, Isa. 2018. Barrierefreie Kommunikation: Interview mit Sergio Andrés Hernández Garrido. Article for the SUH webpage. Hildesheim (Germany), 15/10/2018. (<https://www.uni-hildesheim.de/internationales/highlights/artikel/artikel/barrierefrei/>)
- Minkov, Marie (2018). Die Verständlichkeit geht vor. *Die Relation - Journal der Universität Hildesheim*. 4, 36-40. (https://www.uni-hildesheim.de/media/presse/relation/2018_DIE_RELATION_Journal_Uni_Hildesheim_Ausgabe_04_WEB-s-v.pdf).
- Forthcoming: Research Center on Easy-to-read German Newsletter publication about IO1 results. To be published after the publication of this report.

E-Mails:

- Direct email to subscribers of the newsletter LEICHT NEU disseminating the questionnaire. (Copy without email addresses and names in Nebula):
<https://nebula.uab.cat/share/page/site/easit/document-details?nodeRef=workspace://SpacesStore/14310720-2811-4213-acde-d805ee6b6523>

UAB

Presentations

- Matamala, Anna (2019). Making specialised discourse in audiovisual content accessible for all: how to deal with terminology. Specialised discourse and multimedia. Lecce (Italy), 15/02/2019.
- Matamala, Anna (2018). Media accessibility: current research and new hybrid scenarios. Tagung Barrierefrei Kommunikation. Hildesheim, 18- 19/10/2018.
- Matamala, Anna (2018). EASIT. Easy Access for Social Inclusion Training. TransMedia International Meeting TIM-7. Barcelona, 15/11/2018.
- Matamala, Anna, Orero, Pilar (2018). EASIT. Easy Access for Social Inclusion Training. Barrier-free Communication Conference 2018. Geneva, 9-10/11/2018.
- Orero, Pilar (2018). EU research on audio description. 1° Giornata d'Audiodescrizione. University of Parma, 19/10/2018.
- Orero, Pilar (2018). Deep learning and AI. EDF Event: Using artificial intelligence to enhance accessibility- opportunities and risks of emerging technologies for persons with disabilities. Vienna, 16/11/2018.



Proceedings

- Matamala, A.; Orero, P. (2018). EASIT. Easy Access for Social Inclusion Training. *Proceedings of Barrier-free Communication Conference* (pp. 68-70). Open access link: <http://ddd.uab.cat/record/199252/>

Announcements in newsletters

- CENTRAS Newsletter January 2018
- TRANS-KOM Newsletter February 2018

UVIGO

Article

- Romero-Fresco, P. (2018). In support of a wide notion of media accessibility: Access to content and access to creation. *Journal of Audiovisual Translation*, 1(1), 187-204.

Presentations

- Romero-Fresco, Pablo. Accessible Filmmaking in Practice. Pre-conference workshop at Languages and the Media Conference. Berlin, 2-6/10/2018.
- Romero-Fresco, Pablo. A investigación en subtitulado en directo. Xornada As tecnoloxías da lingua, unha oportunidade para a sociedade galega. Consello da Cultura Galega, 16/10/2018.
- Romero-Fresco, Pablo. La investigación sobre el subtitulado en directo a nivel nacional e internacional. Congreso AMADIS 2018. Madrid, 8/9-10/2018.



GENERAL

Specific Facebook posts on IO1 were posted on: 1/3/2019, 25/2/2019, 19/2/2019 (x2), 15/2/2019 (x2), 7/2/2019, 29/1/2019 (x2), 17/1/2019 (x2), 14/1/2019 (x2))

IO1 was also disseminated through Multiplier Event 1, an event that took place on 7 March 2018 in Munich (<https://www.sdi-muenchen.de/home/aktuell/veranstaltungen/easit/>). As for the event, there were 15 nationals and 12 foreign participants, plus 9 project partner participants. So, an overall number of 36 participants. The event included a project general presentation by Tatjana Knapp (RISA) followed by an IO1 specific presentation by Elisa Perego (UNITS). This presentation allowed to disseminate the results of the survey and get input from participants, who engaged in a discussion. A series of presentations by invited speaker allowed to consider E2U approached from different perspectives and to get in touch with different experts in the field. A thorough description of this event and its impact is available on a specific ME report.

More dissemination will take place right after the completion of this IO.

FUTURE PLAN

- UNITS: short article for UNITS website on IO1 results in Italy.
- UNITS: article on overall data.
- UNITS: article on the AD professional in Italy.
- UAB: article on IO1 Catalan data together with IO2 focus group.
- UAB: article on IO1 Spanish respondents' data.
- SDI: articles on IO2 results, with some IO1 data, focusing on subtitling and on news.



- RTVSLO and RISA: short article for webpage www.dostopno.si on Slovene data and comparison with other countries. RISA will adapt the article to E2R and publish it on their E2R online newspaper 20 minut <http://www.risa.si/Domov/Knji%C5%BEnica/%C4%8Casopis-20-minut>
- SUH: comparison between IO1 data from Germany and Spain.
- DYS: short article about Swedish data, compared with data from other countries, in DYS magazine Läs&Skriv. It will also be published on the webpage Dyslexi.org and on Facebook.

7 Impact, transferability and sustainability

The impact and transferability of this IO is very significant.

This document illustrates the common framework in easy-to-understand practice and training across Europe and offers recommendations for improvement that will be taken into account when developing the other project IOs, in particular IO3, IO4 and IO5. In this respect, it is the backbone of the course curriculum (IO4) and will be useful when devising materials (IO5).

Overall, IO1 results, communicated through the EASIT website and through academic publications, should foster innovation in the way E2U is regarded and produced both during the life of the project and in the long run.

The interest in the topics dealt with in the project is marked also by the number of stakeholders who are in our list (80 at the moment of writing, March 2019) in the form of both associated partners and interested people who have joined after some initial dissemination activities.



Two project members, UAB and DYS (the latter representing The Swedish Disability Rights Federation), are cooperating in the development of ISO standard 23859-1 "Guidance on making written text easy to read and easy to understand". This standard, which is now in a preliminary work item phase, will benefit from the outputs of EASIT, and more specifically IO1. The input obtained from the survey provides evidence on current practices that will be considered when developing the standard.

IO1 results will be maintained after the end of the EU funding and they will be implemented and/or supported (sustainability) as follows:

- IO1 Report on project website.
- Articles derived from IO1 results circulating in journals.
- IO1 results disseminated in conferences.
- IO1 outputs available in the open access repository with a permanent link at UAB which enables all outputs and data to be open and reusable for future analyses and research (project information will not be closed but sustainable).

8 Conclusions

The aim of IO1 was to identify a structured European methodological framework for the practice and the training in the production of E2U content, and to define a set of recommendations for the definition of skills cards for new professional profiles, for the creation of a curriculum and course design, and for the creation of open educational resources or training materials.



The results of the IO survey give a snapshot of the E2U practice and training in the EU. Based on these, we have managed to gather the following recommendations for the development of the following project IOs, in particular, IO3, IO4 and IO5.

- From a terminological point of view, using the umbrella term "easy to understand" (E2U) to cover both Easy-to-Read (E2R) and Plain Language (PL) can be an effective choice when not referring specifically to E2R or PL. Content can be made easy to understand through different levels of language simplification, that is, through Plain Language and through Easy-to-Read Language. The former involves a slight degree of simplification. The latter involves major levels of simplification (cf. CHANGE, 2016; Department of Health, 2016; Fortis, 2013; IFLA, 2010; Plain English Network, 2000; MENCAP, 2016; Nietzio et al., 2014; Piemontese, 1996; Tronbacke, 1997; Bredel & Maaß, 2016).
- Four categories of experts in E2U have been identified. These include: trainer; producer/creator/writer; translator/adapter; validator/advisor. These have been defined in IO1 but need further specification, especially when creating the professional skills cards. These 4 categories will be important to better define the skills cards (and multiple profiles) associated with each category of experts.
- There are not very young professionals. We can assume that this might be related to the fact that training takes time, or that professional training in European countries typically starts after 18, and specialisation is often sought after BA degrees (21+). The EASIT curriculum could take this into account, and rely on some general competences or even soft skills that prospective learners



acquire in their early years of training. These skills and competences could be considered as prerequisites.

- Experts today tend to come from study fields such as language, journalism and communication, or to come from professions such as journalist or writer, that is to say, from areas of study or of work where the use and the awareness of language is very important. If language related competences are not a prerequisite for the EASIT course, they will have to be tackled in the materials to be produced by the project. In any case, advanced and refined mother tongue knowledge shall be included in the skills cards for the new professional profile(s) linked to the creation of E2U content.

- In terms of modality, fields, formats, and services results show that:
 - The modality of easy-to-understand that experts usually produce (and are trained in) is Easy-to-Read language.
 - The format of easy-to-understand they usually work with (and are more often trained in) are printed and digital content.
 - The fields experts usually produce easy-to-understand content for are public administration and education.
 - Services (e.g. adaptation/editing/translation; creation/writing; validation/revision; quality control) are offered in E2R (vs. PL).

These responses suggest that E2R is more widespread than PL in training and in practice. These responses may also suggest that more E2R experts have approached and responded to the questionnaire. (A possible explanation for this might be the



following: E2R has a more structured nature than PL, so the training and therefore the practice is more structured. PL as we see it is an enriched version of E2R with grammatical structures, that are not allowed in E2R. How much enriched and with which grammatical structures is a decision made by the adapter/writer. So, PL is less clearly defined than E2R, at least in Germany. For that reason, we think that the respondents rather classified themselves as in the field of E2R than PL). This suggests that in a new curriculum enough space should be devoted to E2R, although PL deserves some training as well. The results also show that there are areas where E2U content is more required, more codified, and therefore more practiced (i.e. public administration and education). A comprehensive curriculum, however, should cover also the overlooked areas of expertise, to ensure all topics can be created or translated adequately and successfully in the future.

- In terms of services that need to be emphasized more in training, most experts point to the adaptation/editing/translation of easy-to-understand content (i.e., starting from an original text and turning it into an easy-to understand text). This needs to be prioritized in the skills cards, curriculum design and training materials, followed by the creation/writing of easy-to-understand content.
- Most training is received outside the academic world, mostly in in-house settings. This should be taken into account when creating educational resources (as a result of IO5), which will have to be as flexible as possible to be used in diverse learning situations: academic, professional, but also self-learning (which guarantees a greater impact and transferability potential after the life of the project). Most materials should therefore be focused and self-



contained, so that they can easily be integrated within existing curriculum designs in the field of accessibility, such as those derived from the projects ACT (Accessible Culture and Training) (<http://pagines.uab.cat/act/>), ADLAB PRO (Audio Description: A Laboratory for the development of a new professional profile) (<http://www.adlabproject.eu/>), and ILSA (Interlingual Live Subtitling for Access) (<http://www.ilsaproject.eu/>).

- The training activities that are considered most useful by experts are practical (i.e. practical writing exercises, working with experts; practical revision exercises) and not theory-related. This suggests that the curriculum should include tasks aimed at boosting these activities.

- The importance of E2U guidelines both in training and in practice has emerged, and some guidelines have been mentioned as particularly relevant and established. These include:
 - Inclusion Europe Guidelines, developed by the Pathways project.
 - The volume *Leichte Sprache* (Easy-to-read German) by Ursula Bredel and Christiane Maaß, published by the German publishing house Duden (2016).
 - IFLA guidelines (Guidelines for Library Services to Persons with Dyslexia; cf. <https://www.ifla.org/publications/node/9457>).

These guidelines should be the starting point for the creation of the project resources (IO5). Language-specific guidelines have also been mentioned and will be used for IO4 and IO5 when relevant.



The interest and relevance of guidelines for the experts emphasizes the need to focus on recommendations also in the EASIT curriculum, and the need to create pan-European flexible recommendations (cf. ADLAB guidelines for audio description, Remael et al., 2015) that can serve as a reference point both for learners and for experts in E2U content.

- Experts mainly work alone rather than in a team, but they find it important to work with people who need and use easy-to-understand content when preparing E2U content. These data suggest designing a curriculum where enough room is given to end-users and their feedback. When preparing materials, partners should consider preparing specific feedback forms for end-users that can become part of the toolkit of the E2U expert (when they cannot work together with end-users of E2R, which would be the most adequate procedure), or consider suggesting them the most appropriate ways to involve end-users.

- When it comes to the areas in which an expert should have knowledge to deliver good quality easy-to-understand content, there are three that cannot be overlooked in a comprehensive curriculum. These are:
 - Target groups: types of disabilities, needs, perception and cognitive processing.
 - Easy-to-understand principles, guidelines, recommendations and standards.
 - Language and linguistics (for example, knowing the principles of text analysis, text cohesion and coherence, language complexity, simplification methods).



- Having to choose and select where to focus on when preparing training materials, we should go for clear organization of the information on the page (for example, broad margins, broad line spacing, paragraph structure, position of pictures, etc.) and production of short texts and short sentences; simple words that are easy to understand; simple structure of the sentence, so it is clear and easy to follow; starting a text with the most important information; using different accessible formats to convey information (print, large print, Braille, video, face-to-face, website, etc.). However, combining the amount of materials based on these results could be a good compromise that can contribute to designing a comprehensive and useful curriculum, and to fill in the existing gaps in a successful way.

The work performed during the lifespan of IO1 has managed to identify useful material for the construction of a methodological framework for the practice and the training in the production of E2U content. It has also contributed to define a set of recommendations that will be used as a starting point for the definition of skills cards for new professional profiles, the creation of a curriculum and course design, and the creation of open educational resources or training materials.

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10 Annex 1: IO 1 Questionnaire in English

Link to annex: <https://ddd.uab.cat/record/203967>

11 Annex 2: IO1 Results and graphics

Link: <https://ddd.uab.cat/record/203967>

12 Annex 3: IO1 Questionnaire comments in English

Link to annex: <https://ddd.uab.cat/record/203967>

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