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## **New Paths to Inclusion Network**

Progress Report

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# Executive Summary

The New Paths to InclUision Network is a European project bringing together 19 organisations, service-providers, universities and research centres from 13 European countries and Canada as a Third Country Partner.

The "New Paths to InclUision Network" builds on the experiences of the LdV-TOI "New Paths to Inclusion" (NPI) project which was carried out from 2009-2011. The main output of the project was the development of a modular and inclusive training course in person centred planning (European Training Course on Inclusion) to improving Vocational Education and further trainings capacity to stimulate organisational change (see [www.personcentredplanning.eu](http://www.personcentredplanning.eu)).

Person Centred Planning is a family of process-oriented approaches to empower people with disabilities to live a self-determined life in the community. Through extensive international research Person centred approaches have proven to be innovative and evidence based ways of connecting fundamental beliefs about inclusion with practical ways of making changes in individual life's happen and to steer developments towards person centred organisations providing high quality services and support in the community.

Decades of working towards InclUision have shown that still a substantial amount of learning has to be made in relation to a range of key challenges. In the context of the politically (UNCRPD, EU Disability strategy) declared priority of transforming the disability service sector from institution to community based support, we have chosen to address three key issues, which are

- (1) Organisational change, development and learning
- (2) Closing the gap towards community life in ways how people with disabilities can be active and contributing citizens and
- (3) Developing Inclusive Training and Learning settings for the benefit of all.

These open challenges have considerable implications for questions of re-equipping the existing workforce with the necessary knowledge, values and skills to fulfil the change requirements and actively include people with disabilities as contributing citizens in work, education, leisure, life and relationships in the community. The central aim of our network project is framed around the guiding question:

"What is needed to move towards transformative change in the ways that services for disabled people are organised and what kind of personal and organisational learning is needed to effectively facilitate this process?"

To this end the consortium has developed an innovative project design, which in itself is modelled after one of the internationally most acclaimed theoretical and methodical framework for achieving transformative Social Innovation - the Theory U - developed by Otto Scharmer ([www.presencing.com](http://www.presencing.com)). In following through the three working phases Sensing (transforming perception), Presencing (visioning an emergent future) and Realizing (transforming action) we have set out and are now half way through our ambitious work programme which should lead to the creation of a shared European infrastructure to support local, national and European Communities of Practice.

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# 1. Project Objectives

The New Paths to InclUsion Network is a European project bringing together 19 organisations, service-providers, universities and research centres from 13 European countries and Canada as a Third Country Partner. Our overarching objective is to facilitate the transformation towards inclusive and person-centred support services for persons with disabilities in Europe.

The "New Paths to InclUsion Network" builds on the experiences of the LdV-TOI "New Paths to Inclusion" (NPI) project which was carried out from 2009-2011. The main output of the project was the development of a modular and inclusive training course in person centred planning (European Training Course on Inclusion) to improving Vocational Education and further trainings capacity to stimulate organisational change (see [www.personcentredplanning.eu](http://www.personcentredplanning.eu)).

Person centred planning is a family of process-oriented approaches to empower people with disabilities to live a self-determined life in the community. Through extensive international research (ROBERTSON et. al. 2006) Person centred approaches have proven to be innovative and evidence based ways of connecting fundamental beliefs about Inclusion with practical ways of making changes in individual life's happen and to steer developments towards person centred organisations providing high quality services and support in the community.

Through the work of the successor project Person-centred planning was significantly advanced especially in the German speaking countries in Europe, with the training course having been taken up and offered at over twenty locations in Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Italy (Southern Tyrolia) and Luxembourg. A further important outcome was celebrated in 2012 when the Network on Person-centred Planning in German speaking countries was officially launched at a conference in Linz ([www.persoenliche-zukunftsplanung.eu](http://www.persoenliche-zukunftsplanung.eu)).

With the New Paths to InclUsion Network we are bringing these developments to an even broader European Scale and build upon the learning and open challenges. We want to equip organisations, service-providers and persons with disabilities with the knowledge, values and skills necessary to make sure that citizens with disabilities can actively participate in education, work, leisure, life and relationships in their community whilst incorporating that learning to drive organisational change. We believe this is an important and challenging task because:

- persons with disabilities have the RIGHT to person centred support that enables them to live in the community.
- the European Union and most Member States have ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In this way, they have committed to making sure that persons with disabilities can get the support they need to live independently and take part in the community.
- a high proportion of disability services are still provided on an institutional basis, in segregated environments which are isolated from the community and diminish peoples' opportunities to live meaningful and self-determined lives.
- the transition from institutional to community-based support requires organisations and carers to re-think the way support provision and organisational cultures and practices in services for persons with disabilities are designed, organised and delivered.

The guiding questions of our Network are:

- How can we make sure that support services respond to the individual needs of persons with disabilities and help them live included in the community?
- What kind of personal and organisational training and learning is suitable to facilitate this process?

The open challenges that we are addressing are framed as keys of achieving Inclusion:

### **Key 1: Developing person-centred organisations**

What do organisations need for a sustainable implementation of person-centred approaches that leads to transformative change?

### **Key 2: Fostering community inclusion and development**

How can service-providers become more connected and responsive to the community and thus open new possibilities for people with disabilities to become active and contributing citizens?

### **Key 3: Providing inclusive training and learning for all**

How can we improve vocational training courses to effectively include diverse groups of learners, including persons with intellectual disabilities, for the benefit of all?

These questions and open challenges have considerable implications for questions of re-equipping the existing workforce with the necessary knowledge, values and skills. Yet we are aware that in order to create change, people need more than just receiving training. Thus, the main objectives of our partnership include:

- To provide a contribution for the European Learning, Development and Networking framework for social transformation through practicing, documenting and disseminating innovatory project elements, which in itself are modelled after the logic of future oriented social innovation.
- To build a shared foundation for the development of a European Network through (re-) training of staff members from diverse organisational levels as well as of people with disabilities, in all countries of the Consortium where no structured VET formats on person centred approaches have been developed.
- To support organisational capacity on their way of becoming more Person-centred organisations
- To organise and document Learning journeys to innovative examples of achieving community inclusion in Europe
- To valorise the learning experiences in a Curriculum and European Multiplication Course addressing the three keys to Inclusion
- To develop a Best Practice Handbook on Inclusive Training & Learning
- To provide a one-stop Online Knowledge Centre for all interested stakeholders in gathering knowledge, good practices and updated information on the provision of person-centred inclusive support services in all project languages..
- To support the national Networking partners in building sustainable national Networks operating as "Communities of Practice", whilst also providing the necessary European Networking infrastructure for a strengthening of alliances between the VET and service sector working towards Inclusion.

## 2. Project Approach

Our New Paths to Inclusion Network" project takes the impetus of the EU's 2020 strategy of "ending business as usual" seriously. The challenge of transformative change requires new ways of thinking and behaving and involves an approach that is discontinuous with the past. To this end the project is following a project design which is modelled around a model for achieving transformative Social Innovation – the U-Theory developed by OTTO SCHARMER and colleagues at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology ([www.presencing.com](http://www.presencing.com)).

Theory U stands for an understanding of Social Innovation that calls people to move outside their familiar assumptions and patterns of behaviour that re-produces current reality. Instead Theory U offers a series of practices and social techniques that foster Social Innovation by learning from the best possible future possibilities that can emerge (= Presencing). To enable organisations to develop this kind of capacity, Scharmer developed the U-Process methodology as a set of interrelated steps, fields of learning and corresponding tools, with three of the central capacities providing the framework for the project. In short, these three phases can be described as follows:

### **Sensing:**

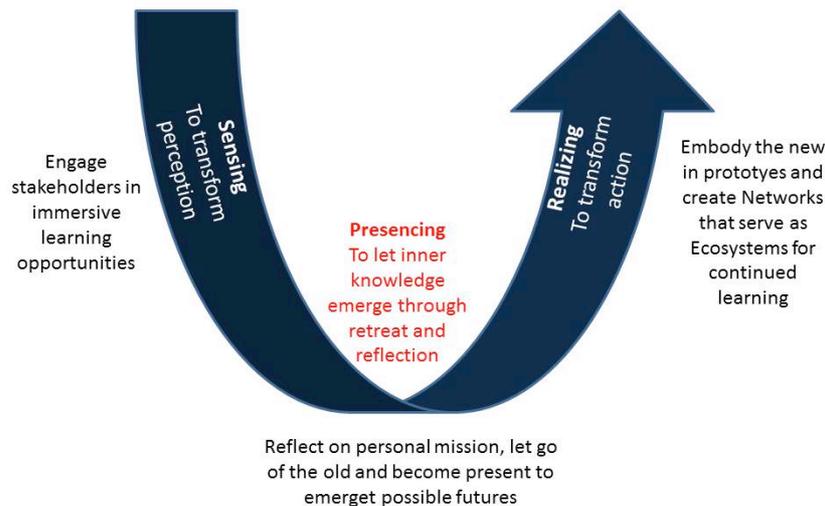
- How can we find new ways at looking at familiar topics and issues with fresh eyes?
- How can we see our own role and contribution in reproducing current patterns and power-over relations?
- Where are places of potential and learning that we can attend that might open up possibilities of redirecting our attention?

### **Presencing:**

- How can we find out what our true individual and collective purpose is?
- What is the best possible future that can come into being by us and our work?
- What is it that we need to let go of, so that we are individually and collectively open that something new can emerge?

### **Realizing:**

- How can we act fast on that learning to move into that future?
- How can we move through a series of trial and error sets (prototypes) and continue to refine what we are doing while we are doing it?
- How can we incorporate the new into the mainstream of our selves and our work?



In following the Theory U, the project aims to guide social innovation through shared observation of the social field, a commitment to the greatest improvement possible, and a goal of learning to bring that improvement into existence through rapid cycles of prototyping.

The **working programme** of our New Paths to InclUsion Network has been set up around this organising logic, under which specific working activities of the project along the three keys of achieving InclUsion as well as **transversal and process facilitating** work packages (European Coordination & Process Facilitation; Accompanying Research & Knowledge Facilitation; Dissemination/ Exploitation & Networking Facilitation) have taken and will take place.

The **three thematic Work Packages** (WP 3-WP 5) have been designed around the **three Keys to Inclusion**.

- WP3: Implementing Person Centred Support and Organisational Learning (1<sup>st</sup> key to Inclusion)
- WP4: Community Inclusion and Development (2<sup>nd</sup> key to Inclusion)
- WP5: Inclusive Training and Learning (3<sup>rd</sup> key to Inclusion)

Additionally, WP2 (European Inclusion Training) has built a shared foundation for the development of a European Network through transferring the NPI curriculum to Croatia, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia & Spain.

The **four facilitating Work Packages** include:

- European Project Coordination and Process Facilitation (WP 1)
- Accompanying Research and Knowledge Facilitation (WP 6)
- Dissemination (WP 7)
- Exploitation and Networking Facilitation (WP 8)

### 3. Project Outcomes & Results

The working activities and corresponding project Outcomes & Results that have been and will be carried out in the WPs **follow the three phases of the U-Process:**

In the First 18 months of the project we have achieved the following results:

#### **Sensing - Engage stakeholder in immersive learning opportunities to transform perception**

- We have organised two Thematic project meetings, which gave the participants an overview and introduction of the U-Theory and process, and dedicated time for experiencing a range of practical sensing exercises (Dialogue Interviews, Social Systems Sculpting, Dialogue Walks, World-Café, etc.).
- Each of the 12 participating Networking countries has developed a National Dissemination & Exploitation plan with a clear strategy for addressing and reaching the key target groups.
- Based on the national D&E-reports we have produced a European Dissemination & Exploitation strategy which includes activities that have been and will be visible on a European level (WP 7).
- We have produced a project leaflet, set up and launched a project Facebook page (currently 635 followers) and a project website ([www.personcentredplanning.eu](http://www.personcentredplanning.eu)). We have released three project Newsletters with detailed information about the overall and national activities that have been carried out.
- We have built a shared foundation for the development of a European Network by delivering the European Training Course on Inclusion in Croatia, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia & Spain. Additionally - with the support of our network - partners from Italy (Southern Tyrolia), Switzerland & Luxembourg have organised inclusive training courses in their country at their own costs. Altogether approx. 150 persons have been trained, including managers, service workers, teachers, social workers, persons from the public administration, guardians, parents of people with disabilities and self Advocates with disabilities. Including the on-going training efforts that have been and are realised as an outcome of the first NPI project, the NPI Curriculum has been offered in 11 European Countries (additionally Austria, Czech Republic & Germany).
- In order to support organisational capacity for implementing person-centred practices in a way that leads to on-going learning and organisational change as well as to improve VET`s ability to design training formats that meet the structural needs of service providers in addressing experience based solutions, we have piloted and documented three On-Site Sensing programmes at three premises of partner organisations of the consortium, which have already started their effort mission of transforming services (1<sup>st</sup> key to Inclusion, WP3).
- We have searched for innovative cross-sectoral approaches in the field of Community Inclusion and identified European Best Practise Sites. Together with partners from the project we have organised and documented three Sensing Journeys. Each Sensing Journey was attended by 6-8 members of our Networking organisations (2<sup>nd</sup> key to Inclusion, WP 4).
- We have developed an Easy to Read questionnaire to document the experiences that learners with and without intellectual disabilities have made in the five European Training courses. We have started to collect, test and document Best Practice approaches in accommodating to different learning styles and produced first guidelines on designing inclusive Training sessions. Additionally, we have made video recordings of the interactions between participants with and without disabilities, which are currently being analysed by the University of Hannover to extract successful social and didactical interventions that can support inclusive learning and group-building processes (3<sup>rd</sup> key to Inclusion, WP 5).
- In order to increase the evidence base of the sustainability of our Curriculum and gain further information for its improvements we have conducted a collegial Assessment process by carrying out focus group discussions and producing an Online survey that was directed towards former participants of the first NPI project to find out, how far their participation in the training course has had a sustainable professional and personal impact.

- We have organised first Networking Platforms with the intention of creating sustainable local, regional and national "Communities of Practice".
- Partners of the project from Germany, Switzerland and Southern Tyrolia have organised conferences on the issue of Person-centred Planning informing about 700 people directly about the project and its intentions.
- We have presented the network at the Inclusion Europe "Europe in Action Conferences" in 2013 (Ljubljana, Slovenia) & 2014 (Belfast, Northern Ireland), as well as the IASSID congress "Pathways to Inclusion" 2014 in Vienna, Austria.
- We have conducted a wide range of dissemination activities, including e.g. workshops, seminars, presentations, articles for the scientific community as well as for the most important stakeholders in the field.
- We have laid the foundation for a common infrastructure by the foundation of the Network of Person-centred Planning under the German "Vereinsrecht" (law governing associations, see [www.persoelliche-zukunftsplanung.de](http://www.persoelliche-zukunftsplanung.de))

### **Presencing – letting a vision of an alternative future emerge**

Right in the middle of the project at the time when the project switches focus from gathering knowledge and searching for new ways of understanding (Sensing), to developing and testing new ways to co-create New Paths to Inclusion and disseminate what partners are learning along the way (Realizing) we have organised the Presencing event in Sesimbra (Portugal) on 4-7 June 2014. This event in its design was strategically organised as an experimental setting and was attended by a total of 35 people including two representatives of the European Platform of Self Advocates. The three main questions that we have been focussing on were:

- How can we find out what our true individual and collective purpose is?
- What is the best possible future that can come into being through us and our work?
- What is it that we need to let go of, so that something new can emerge?

Theory-U's core concept of Presencing encapsulates the two words „presence“ and „sensing“. It follows the idea that in order to sense the highest possible future that wants to be brought into being through people and their organizations, those who hold leadership functions in this process must develop a deeper state of attention to the inner source of their ambitions to seize and learn from the future as it wants to emerge. Thus, the presencing event gave partners an extended opportunity for personal reflection, thinking and talking individually, in pairs or in small groups through Story-telling, Dialogue Walks and Interviews, World-Cafe and individual journaling exercises about what constitutes for them the heart of Inclusion and how their understanding has grown and changed with experiences in- and outside the New Paths to InclUsion Network project.

After a short solo retreat experience, the partners engaged in different aspects of the project to support each other in conceptualizing their collective experience in concrete and actionable steps (Prototyping) along the three learning fields the project focuses on:

- Transforming the structure and culture of services to increase the capacity to support inclusion in a person-centered way
- Connecting to community life in ways that offer people opportunities to act as contributing citizens.
- Creating learning environments where interested people can co-create inclusion by engaging in common projects where everyone shares responsibility

## 4. Partnerships

The rationale for setting up the project consortium has been to seek the participation of most of the Ldv-TOI project "New Paths to Inclusion" core partners and to extend it to organisations with a complementary expertise in the related and described key areas of achieving Inclusion as operative and as Networking partners.

The **operative partners** are responsible to carry out the main working activities, which are designed around a set of **thematic** (WP2-WP 5) and **process facilitating** (WP1, WP6-WP8) work packages.

- **queraum. cultural- & social research**, an experienced research and development organisation with long standing expertise in the coordination of European projects, is responsible for the project coordination and the process facilitation.
- **QUIP – association for change (CZ)**, a training organisation, which has been developing and training social service providers in different aspects of social inclusion for many years and has a strong reputation in Central and Eastern European Countries, is responsible for laying the shared foundation within all participating countries, as they are leading WP2: "European Inclusion Trainings".
- **Nexus-Support (UK)**, a well established and respected training organisation in the UK, which has been developing high quality community based services for people with severe disabilities as well as offering range of training programmes and Consultancy, has taken the lead in WP3: "Implementing Person-centred Support and Organisational Learning" and piloted the On-Site Sensing Programmes.
- The **Fachschule für Sozialpädagogik Lensahn (DE)** is a College for Vocational Education of professionals working in the social services and has been involved in the Curriculum Development of the NPI project. Within our network they are lead partner in WP4: "Community Development and Inclusion".
- **INNOVIA (AT)**, an innovative VET organisation, which has a long standing record of training people with disabilities to become peer experts as well as conducting sensitizing training for business companies and official bodies, is responsible for WP5: "Inclusive Learning and Training".
- **The University of Hannover (DE)**, a university with 21,000 students with academic programmes in the natural sciences and engineering, the humanities and social sciences as well in law and economics, is responsible for WP6: "Accompanying Research and knowledge facilitation".
- **Inclusion Europe (BE)**, one of the largest European Umbrella Association of Societies of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities and their Families having members in all EU countries, is together with queraum jointly responsible for WP7: "Dissemination", as well as for WP8: "Exploitation and Networking facilitation". Making use of their experience in European programmes as well as of their established networks, Inclusion Europe is promoting and facilitating the projects national and European Dissemination and Exploitation activities. Inclusion Europe also coordinates the participation of **The European Platform of Self Advocates (EPSA)**, which supports the project to include in selected activities directly the perspectives of people with disabilities.

Furthermore the project consortium consists of 11 **Networking partners**, both from countries which have been involved in the NPI project as well as from newly joining countries **to extend the foundation of the Network that will be developed to a representative European dimension.**

The involved Networking partners are:

- Fondation A.P.E.M.H. (Luxembourg)
- Social Work Advisory Board (Slovakia)
- Arbeitskreis Eltern Behinderter (Italy)
- Association for Promoting Inclusion (Croatia)

- FEAPS – Confederación Española de Asociaciones en Favor de las Personas con Discapacidad Intelectual (Spain)
- Pentru Voi (Romania)
- Fenacerci – Federação Nacional de Cooperativas de Solidariedade Social (Portugal)
- Interkantonale Hochschule für Heilpädagogik (Switzerland)
- Verein BALANCE - Leben ohne Barrieren (Austria)
- Leben mit Behinderung Hamburg (Germany)
- Lebenshilfe Österreich (Austria)

These organisations represent a wide range of regional and national service and Umbrella organisations in the Disability Service and related VET field, with a set of clearly defined roles and competences in the project, which are based on their experience. They participate and contribute to the development, training, dissemination and exploitation activities.

As an external adviser and project facilitator with experience in Theory-U, transformative change processes and person-centred planning the network cooperates with John O`Brien – one of the founders of person-centred planning – from the organisation Marsha Forrest Centre (Canada).

From the outset of the project **a wide number of associated organisations** have expressed their interest in the results, on-going information as well as their participation in the National and European networking activities. For a list of these organisations see [http://www.personcentredplanning.eu/images/Associated\\_Members.pdf](http://www.personcentredplanning.eu/images/Associated_Members.pdf).

By carrying out dissemination and exploitation activities we have already been able to achieve a wide visibility in the field and in the process of creating liaisons with other LLP projects as well as National and European umbrella organisations.

With the foundation of the Network of Person-centred planning in German speaking countries, with currently approx. 150 individual and 50 organisational members, the foundation for an on-going European Networking infrastructure has already been laid.

## 5. Plans for the Future

The following 18 months of the project are supposed to be guided by the U-Theory concept of **“Realizing”**: to embody the new in prototypes and create Networks (Eco-systems) that transform action. Under this framework the following activities are foreseen for the second half of the project:

- To organise a **3rd Thematic project meeting** for the entire consortium to look again at what was have learned; what has been working and what not; the presencing event; to exchange first learning experiences about prototypes that partners have implemented; to co-develop the main aspects for the three Multiplication course modules in 2015; to talk about and create realisable ideas for the Online Knowledge centre
- To further support Networking partners in bringing forth, testing, refining & documenting **Prototypes** as well as to exchange and disseminate their key learning.
- To valorise the previous experiences in a three module **European Multiplication consisting, with one module addressing the learning, best-practices and potential implications and future prototypes for each** key to Inclusion. The course modules will be developed by the respective WP-leaders, attended by members of the entire consortium and evaluated by the research partner.
- To develop and translate **training and learning materials**, which will be made available as part of the projects Online Knowledge centre.
- To develop and make available an **Online Handbook “How to design Inclusive Training & Learning”**.
- To release and translate three further project **Newsletters**.
- Each participating Country will produce a **national Sustainability report**
- To further conduct **Dissemination and Exploitation** activities visible on local, national & European level.
- To further organise **Networking Platforms** informing and talking to stakeholders about the on-going learning and to keep on mobilising efforts to create sustainable Networks operating as **“Communities of Practice”**.
- To organise **National Dissemination Events** in all Networking countries.
- To organise a **Final European Conference**, bringing together the project consortium, associated partners and other interested stakeholders to showcase and disseminate the projects findings, products and learning. The Final Conference will also be used to launch the European Network and the **Online Knowledge centre** making all of the projects result widely accessible.
- To write **National Sustainability Plans** which will provide the basis for the development of a **European sustainability Report**.
- To produce, publish and make available a **Final research report**.
- To exploit the project’s results and achieve sustainability we will continue to establish the infrastructure for an on-going **European Network and Community of Practice**.
- To produce a **Final project** report for the EACEA.

## 6. Contribution to EU policies

Pur "New Paths to InclUsion Network" is trying to contribute to a range of high priority and high complexity issues that have been set out by the European Union.

The **EU Disability Strategy** states that about 80 million people in the EU have a disability, of which 20% require considerable support, whilst also acknowledging that these numbers are going to rise due to the demographic development with more people being in the need of high qualitative support. One of the main priority issues of the EU-Disability Strategy is to promote the **transition from institutional to community-based support as a human right**. This goal is currently being threatened through the **consequences of the financial and economic crisis**, with the most disadvantaged groups of disabled people being even more endangered to remain in institutionalised support arrangements producing limited outcomes and quality of life.

Thus the transformation of support services **demands a European coordinated response** in increasing the capacity of Vocational Education in meeting the needs of the service sector, consisting of over 10.000 organisations with more than 8 Million employees (see [www.easpd.eu](http://www.easpd.eu)), which is currently undergoing **major structural adjustments**.

The **Skopje Manifesto of 2010** clearly states that the efforts of service providers to implement this transformation process needs on-going training of professionals that follows the principles of evidence based practice ([http://easpdskopjeconference.openthewindows.org/dl/-Manifesto\\_EN.pdf](http://easpdskopjeconference.openthewindows.org/dl/-Manifesto_EN.pdf)). This is also demanded in Article 4 of the UNCRPD which encourages state parties to "*promote the training of professional and staff working with persons with disabilities in the rights recognized in this Convention so as to better provide the assistance and services guaranteed by those rights*".

**All of these demands are met by Person Centred approaches** which address all of the European Disability policy goals, namely Inclusion, Participation, Citizenship, Self Determination inherent in its philosophy and practice. Person Centred Approaches have been developed over forty years ago in Canada and the USA and have seen considerable research adhering them the **quality mark of evidence based practice**.

As **research conducted in the LdV TOI-New Paths to Inclusion** project has found out (see Hinz 2011 in [http://www.personcentredplanning.eu/files/1\\_Final\\_Publication\\_PDF.pdf](http://www.personcentredplanning.eu/files/1_Final_Publication_PDF.pdf)), despite of growing organic developments transported by committed Individuals, there has been – except for the United Kingdom – **no systematic implementation process in Europe** and that there exist quite different standards and Vocational Training structures for training programs in person centred planning.

For the first time the LdV-TOI NPI project has developed a **coherent curriculum in Person Centred Planning** which through the continued effort of the New Paths to InclUsion Network is now already being offered in 11 European countries.

The activities carried out in the successor and the New Paths to InclUsion Network project so far have already seen a **deep exploitation level** that should be even strengthened by the planned **launch of a European Network**.

Finally, with our **project design** following the Theory U – the project in itself is supposed to model the necessary steps that have to be undertaken by VET, service providers and governmental bodies to change the current situation at hand. All of the organisations of the project consortium have agreed to follow (at least parts of) this process and apply the developed methodology within their own organisation whilst documenting and exchanging their learning experience.

All project consortium partners share the belief, that in order to become agents of change one has to see oneself first as a change target. Clearly documented and authentic stories of experience and success together with challenges and barriers that have been overcome – widely disseminated through the project's D&E strategy – hold a great potential of inspiring other organisations to co-create New Paths to Inclusion with us together.