

PRESS RELEASE

Social Inclusion, Innovation, and SMEs: The European Project “Mind Inclusion 3.0” Presents Its Results in Venice

The final event of the European project *Mind Inclusion 3.0*, co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme through the Spanish National Agency SEPIE, took place at the Palazzo Grandi Stazioni in Venice. The event gathered institutional representatives, academics, social innovation experts, businesses, and international networks.

The project, developed over three years through the collaboration of six partners from Italy, Spain, and Romania, aimed to promote the inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in public spaces and services through innovative tools, training, and co-design.

Among the Italian partners, a leading role was played by *Margherita Società Cooperativa Sociale* (Sandrigo), *Social IT* (Trento), and *Confartigianato Imprese Vicenza*.

Digital Tools Serving Inclusion

One of the project’s main achievements was the creation of two free online platforms:

- **OLC – Online Learning Community**, designed for social professionals to provide tools and methods to become facilitators of inclusion pathways;
- **MOOC – Massive Open Online Course**, aimed at managers of public venues and small to medium-sized enterprises to improve accessibility.

Both platforms offer practical training content, operational guidelines, and case studies designed to raise awareness and equip businesses with immediately applicable tools to improve accessibility and the customer experience for individuals with intellectual disabilities.

In many cases, simple adjustments – from lighting intensity to music management or communication adaptations – can make the difference between exclusion and full participation.

Inclusion as a Driver for SMEs

As highlighted by *Stefano Granata*, National President of *Confcooperative Federsolidarietà*, “Inclusion is no longer just an ethical or legal issue, but a concrete response to the needs of an increasingly aware, diverse, and open society.”

A sentiment echoed by *Erica Fazzini* (Social IT), who presented the *JobAut* project, focused on enhancing the skills of people with intellectual disabilities in the workplace through coaching and career guidance programs.

ENSA: A European Bridge to Spread Social Innovation

The event gained international resonance through the active participation of *ENSA – European Network of Social Authorities*, committed to promoting and disseminating results among European local and regional authorities.

Thanks to the leadership of *Annalisa Bisson*, Director of International Relations for the Veneto Region and legal representative of ENSA, the discussion was enriched by a strategic vision that goes beyond the scope of the project.

Thematic Tables and Visions for the Future

The event featured a plenary session and three thematic working groups focused on key topics for inclusion:

- *Inclusive Democracy in Action* – promoting local participation of people with intellectual disabilities – *Camilla Vedovato*
- *Co-designing Learning Opportunities* – innovating educational pathways – *Daniela Moro*
- *Co-design in Practice* – working with people with dementia and cognitive disabilities – *Cristian Leorin*

Several external contributions further strengthened European synergies. Notably, *Anthony Polychronakis* (City of Rotterdam) presented the *Sacred* project, focused on the inclusion of people with comorbidity such as dementia and neurodivergence; *Cristian Leorin* (Associazione Novilunio & Padova University) with a discussion about the active involvement of people with dementia through the “expert by design” approach, advocacy; *Camilla Vedovato* (ALDA) emphasized the importance of fostering democratic participation for people with disabilities; *Zita Krastina* (Irecoop Veneto) shared an international mobility experience; and *Elisabetta Tonini* (CSV) underscored the urgency of implementing concrete and timely solutions to promote inclusion through enterprise.

The event was moderated by *Annalisa Bisson* alongside *Pierangelo Spano*, Director of Social Services for the Veneto Region. Their guidance ensured open and meaningful dialogue among participants, contributing to a clear vision of a more accessible, participatory, and inclusive Europe.

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This communication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.