

## **NEURODIVERSE WORKPLACES IN EUROPE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

### **Background**

The Neurodiverse Workplaces in Europe Community of Practice is the result of cooperation among six partners (FORMA.Azione, Associazione Italiana Direzione Personale, European Dyslexia Association, Specialisterne Ireland, Catro, and Die Berater) within the framework of the NEW – Neurodiversity at Work project – nr. 2021-1-IT01-KA2204-VET-000033362.

Recognising the importance of neurodiversity in the workplace is extremely relevant for fostering an inclusive environment where all employees can thrive. Ensuring that employers are aware of the neurodiversity paradigm in the workplaces and fully committed to the well-being and talent enhancement of all human resources, especially neurodivergent employees, is essential for creating a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace.

In addition, working with the adoption of a multi-stakeholder approach, thus involving VET providers, trade unions, relevant civil society organisations (CSOs), policy makers it is of paramount importance to avoid fragmentation and partiality in promoting neurodiversity.

In many countries, particularly within Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), there is a significant lack of awareness about neurodiversity and how it can be effectively promoted. By understanding and embracing neurodiversity, companies can better engage neurodivergent employees, combat discrimination, and maximise the value these employees bring to the workplace.

### **Purpose of the Community of Practice**

This Memorandum of Understanding establishes a Community of Practice dedicated to sharing, exchanging, and learning about policies and practices that effectively and innovatively promote neurodiversity in the workplace. The aim is to make the world of work more open to diversity, particularly for neurodivergent individuals, by:

- enhancing awareness and understanding of neurodiversity among employers, especially within SMEs and all the relevant stakeholders (i.e. trade unions, VET providers, policy makers, etc.)
- Promoting the implementation of inclusive practices that support the engagement and development of neurodivergent employees.
- Sharing proven strategies and innovative approaches that foster an inclusive work environment.

- Facilitating the exchange of knowledge and experiences among community members to drive continuous improvement in workplace inclusion.

### **Commitment to Action**

The Community of Practice is aimed at gathering different professionals working to make workplaces more open to neurodiversity, thus HR managers and employees, consultants, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) managers and employees, VET trainers, policy-makers, Associations working with neurodivergent persons. These professionals can come together in the CoP to:

- 1) learn from each other with a Peer Learning approach, thus always showing openness to different opinions and experiences;
- 2) propose activities aimed at increasing awareness and combating prejudices and stereotypes experienced by neurodivergent persons;
- 3) promote events aimed at increasing awareness and involving key stakeholders in contributing in changing the narratives and the policies about neurodiversity at work.

Given this, by joining this Community of Practice, members commit to:

1. Actively participating in discussions and activities aimed at promoting neurodiversity in the workplace.
2. Sharing knowledge, experiences, and best practices with other community members.
3. Implementing and advocating for inclusive practices within their own organisations.
4. Supporting the development of policies and practices that enhance the inclusion of neurodivergent employees.
5. Engaging in continuous learning and improvement to ensure the workplace remains inclusive and supportive for all employees.
6. Adhering to the principles included in the Professional Code of Conduct (Annex 01).

### **Benefits of Membership**

Membership in this Community of Practice offers several benefits, including:

- Access to a network of like-minded professionals dedicated to promoting neurodiversity.
- Opportunities to participate in transnational and national events and expert exchanges.
- Resources and support for implementing inclusive practices within your organisation.

- Enhanced capacity to utilise EU funds for cooperation projects and activities aimed at promoting neurodiversity.
- Recognition as a leader in fostering an inclusive workplace.

### **Validity Period**

This Memorandum of Understanding will be effective from the date of signature and will renew on a biennial basis. Activities of the Community of Practice will be planned and approved by the coordinating body (board) on an annual basis. The board consists of national coordinators from each participating country (detailed in the following section).

### **Roles, Working Method, and Tasks**

The national coordinators are responsible for developing country-specific networks within each participating country to disseminate the outputs of the Neurodiverse Workplaces in Europe Community of Practice and activate initiatives related to neurodiversity at the national level.

As an expert community, our focus is on capacity building for promoting Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) policies and practices in the workplace. The thematic working areas and tasks (e.g. meetings, seminars, research, publications, etc.) will be discussed and defined annually by the members and decided upon by the board. The board is chaired by a community member, with the chair rotating every two years.

Thematic working groups will be formed according to areas defined by the board. The community of practice will organise regular meetings, maintain agendas and minutes, and be coordinated by the board.

A private LinkedIn group will be operated by the community of practice, with membership approved by the board based on applications submitted via LinkedIn or the project website. Synergies with other relevant communities and organisations, such as the EPAL Communities of Practices and the European Forum for Vocational Education and Training (EfVET), are strongly supported and encouraged.

Members can be organisations or individuals. The group will serve as the primary platform for exchanging information within the community of practice and will promote linguistic diversity by accepting contributions in any language.

The community of practice commits to organising at least one transnational event per year.

### **Responsibilities of the Parties**

This agreement outlines the responsibilities of the Neurodiverse Workplaces Community of Practice and the expected contributions from the partners. Coordinators are responsible for recruiting members to the thematic working groups, ensuring that their competences align with the network's goals. A balanced representation from all countries is expected within the network. Coordinators are also responsible for monitoring results and planning activities at national and transnational levels. Each country and thematic group within the community should be represented by a key expert in the relevant field.

Member organisations are responsible for presenting the names of their experts to the community and ensuring their competence for community activities.

### **Financial Issues**

The costs incurred by community members will be covered from their own resources. Participation is voluntary, and signing this Memorandum does not create any financial obligations for the parties involved.

The parties to this memorandum have read all the information and agree to its contents.

Date:

For the Coordinator:

Name of the organisation	
Legal representative	
Signature:	

For the Member:

Name of the organisation	
Legal representative	
Signature:	

### **Attachment**

01. Professional code of conduct
02. Mid-term action plan

*The project has been funded with support of the European Commission. The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.*

## **PROFESSIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE NEURODIVERSE WORKPLACES COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE**

This Professional Code of Conduct outlines the principles and standards that members of the Neurodiverse Workplaces Community of Practice are expected to uphold.

This Professional Code of Conduct is designed to ensure that all members of the Neurodiverse Workplaces Community of Practice act in ways that are respectful, ethical, and supportive of the community's goals of inclusion and diversity.

Our mission is to promote inclusion, diversity, and equitable treatment in the workplace, with specific reference to the needs of neurodivergent individuals. As members, we play a significant role in advancing this mission by adhering to the following principles:

### **Respect**

- Treating all individuals with respect and dignity, regardless of their status, role, or background.
- Fostering an environment where everyone feels valued and included.

### **Integrity**

- Being transparent in your communications and actions, ensuring that your conduct reflects positively on the community.

### **Confidentiality**

- Maintaining the confidentiality of sensitive information shared within the community.
- Protecting the privacy of individuals and organisations, adhering to applicable data protection laws and policies.

### **Inclusion**

- Promoting and practising inclusion in all activities, particularly ensuring that neurodivergent individuals are fully supported according to their needs.

Encouraging diverse perspectives and contributions, recognising the value of different experiences and viewpoints.

### **Professional Development**

- Committing to ongoing professional development and learning to enhance your understanding and promotion of neurodiversity.
- Sharing knowledge and resources to help others grow and develop professionally.

### **Collaboration and Cooperation**

- Collaborating and cooperating with other members in a spirit of mutual respect and shared purpose.
- Supporting the community's goals and initiatives, contributing your skills and expertise to collective efforts.

### **Responsibility and Accountability**

- Taking responsibility for your actions and decisions, acknowledging mistakes and learning from them.
- Holding yourself and others accountable to the community's standards and principles.

### **Advocacy**

- Advocating for policies and practices that support neurodivergent individuals in the workplace.
- Actively working to eliminate discrimination and promote a culture of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

### **Ethical Conduct**

- Upholding the highest standards of ethical conduct in all professional activities.
- Avoiding conflicts of interest and disclosure of any factors that may compromise your objectivity or integrity.

## Rules for Posting Content in the LinkedIn Community of Practice

**Relevance and quality:** share content that is directly relevant to the community's focus on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), with particular attention to neurodiversity. Ensure that the content is of high quality and well-curated, providing added value to members.

**Sharing best practices:** share practices, case studies and innovative approaches that can help improve inclusion and diversity in the workplace. Provide concrete and applicable details, avoiding overly generic content.

**Useful and practical information:** post practical and actionable information that members can implement to enhance their professional practices. Include resources, tools, and suggestions that may have a direct and positive impact.

**Transparency and authenticity:** share authentic and verified information. Avoid spreading unverified news or personal opinions unsupported by concrete data. When sharing personal experiences, ensure they are relevant and well-contextualised.

**Avoiding promotional content:** do not use the platform to promote personal or business products or services. Posts should focus on sharing knowledge and practices. Avoid publishing promotional or sponsored content that is not relevant to the community's mission.

**Highlight results:** when sharing experiences or participation in events, focus the post on the results and applicable takeaways, rather than just personal experiences. Provide concrete examples of how the information learned can be useful for the community.

**Constructive discussions:** foster constructive and solution-oriented discussions. Avoid controversial or provocative comments that do not contribute to meaningful dialogue. Respond to comments and questions in a constructive and respectful manner, facilitating positive engagement.

**Respect intellectual property rights:** respect intellectual property rights when sharing content, always citing sources and properly attributing information to its rightful owner.

**Languages:** to promote linguistic diversity and the expression of different perspectives, content can be posted in any of the official languages of the European Union.

**Privacy and confidentiality:** do not post personal or sensitive information without explicit consent from the individuals involved. Respect privacy and confidentiality of shared data.

**Consistency with community guidelines:** ensure that all posted content complies with the general community guidelines and LinkedIn's policies, maintaining a positive and professional environment.

### Compliance

By joining the Neurodiverse Workplaces Community of Practice, members agree to adhere to this Professional Code of Conduct. Non-compliance with these principles may result in a review of membership and potential removal from the community.

### Review and Updates

This Code of Conduct will be reviewed periodically and updated as necessary to ensure it remains relevant and effective in promoting the community's mission and values. Members will be informed of any changes and are expected to comply with the updated standards.



## MID-TERM ACTION PLAN (JULY 2024 – JUNE 2026)

The mid-term action plan for the Neurodiverse Workplaces Community of Practice aims to build capacity, foster collaboration, advocate for change and ensure the sustainability and growth of the community. By focusing on these key areas, the community will make significant strides towards creating more inclusive and supportive workplaces for neurodivergent individuals across Europe.

Area	Action	Activities	Outcomes	Timeframe
<b>Capacity Building</b>	<b>Developing and delivering short training experience</b>	Organising online and/or in-person training sessions for HR professionals, managers, and team leaders.	At least 1 short training experience organised and delivered yearly at country level by using the training materials already developed thanks to the NEW project. Enhanced knowledge and skills among participants.	Oct 2024 – Jun 2025 Oct 2025 – Jun 2026
<b>Capacity Building</b>	<b>Organising workshops and webinars</b>	Hosting workshops and webinars featuring experts in neurodiversity and workplace inclusion. Encouraging interactive sessions where participants can share experiences and best practices.	At least 1 short workshop and 1 webinar organised and delivered yearly at country level. Increased engagement and knowledge sharing within the community. Increased number of workplaces implementing neurodiversity-friendly practices.	Oct 2024 – Jun 2025 Oct 2025 – Jun 2026
<b>Community engagement and networking</b>	<b>Establishing online platforms and specific agreement for collaboration</b>	Setting up a dedicated LinkedIn group for community members. Setting up a Memorandum of Understanding as well as a Professional	1 LinkedIn group established Strengthened connections and collaboration among members.	Jul 2024 – Jun 2026

Area	Action	Activities	Outcomes	Timeframe
		Code of Conduct for members to join and contribute to the Community Facilitating discussions, resource sharing, and peer support through the LinkedIn group. Setting up thematic working areas and groups	A central hub for resources and discussions on neurodiversity in the workplace. At least 2 thematic working areas and groups settled at national/transnational level	
<b>Community engagement and networking</b>	<b>Organising an annual Transnational Meeting</b>	Planning and organising an annual meeting bringing together community members from different countries. Including keynote speeches, panel discussions, and networking opportunities.	Enhanced cross-border collaboration and knowledge exchange. Development of action plans tailored to specific national contexts.	Jun 2025 Jun 2026
<b>Advocacy and awareness</b>	<b>Developing advocacy and awareness raising campaigns</b>	Design and launch campaigns to raise awareness about neurodiversity and its benefits in the workplace. Utilise awareness raising strategy and materials already developed thanks to the NEW project, social media, newsletters, and partner networks to disseminate information.	Increased public and organisational awareness of neurodiversity. Greater support for neurodivergent employees to assure their wellbeing and to make value of their talents.	Oct 2024 and May 2025 Oct 2025 and May 2026
<b>Advocacy and awareness</b>	<b>Engaging with policy makers</b>	Collaborating with policymakers to influence legislation and policies that support neurodiverse workplaces. Providing evidence-based recommendations and case studies to inform policy decisions.	Improved legislative support for neurodiversity in the workplace. Recognition of the community as a key stakeholder in the field of workplace inclusion.	Jan 2025 – May 2026

Area	Action	Activities	Outcomes	Timeframe
<b>Research and Evaluation</b>	<b>Conducting surveys</b>	Administering surveys to assess the current state of neurodiversity inclusion in member organisations and other companies.	Data-driven insights on the effectiveness of community initiatives. Identification of areas for improvement and future focus.	Oct 2024 and May 2025 Oct 2025 and May 2026
<b>Research and Evaluation</b>	<b>Publishing reports</b>	Elaborating and publishing reports on the progress and impact of the community's activities.	Documentation of best practices and success stories. Enhanced visibility and credibility of the community's work.	Jun 2025 Jun 2026
<b>Sustainability and exploitation</b>	<b>Securing funding and partnerships</b>	Identifying funding opportunities to support community activities. Establishing partnerships with organisations and institutions that share similar goals.	Sustainable funding measures for community initiatives. Expanded network of partners and supporters.	Oct 2024 – Jun 2026
<b>Sustainability and exploitation</b>	<b>Developing a long-term strategic plan</b>	Engaging community members in a strategic planning process to outline goals and priorities for the next 3-5 years. Creating a roadmap for achieving long-term impact and sustainability.	A clear and actionable strategic plan guiding the community's future efforts.	Mar 2025 – Jun 2025

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