Me and the Media

Fostering Social Media Literacy Competences through Interactive Learning Sets for Adults with Disabilities

Intellectual Output 2

"Me and the Media: Social media platforms for a peer-to-peer learning"

National Report | Austria

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1. Introduction

1.1 Overview: Me and the Media – Social media platforms for a peer-to-peer learning

The Me and the Media – Social media platforms for peer-to-peer learning have never been as important as in our days. The number of smartphone users has increased to almost 100% of young adults, also of persons with intellectual disabilities.

In November 2020, Priska Unsinn and Lisa Panzierer, 2 trainers at atempo, organised therefore a first peer group meeting. The trainers wanted to work together with people with learning difficulties (atempo trainees) and the peer assistants, Markus Binder and Melanie Wimmer, on the "Me and the Media Erasmus+ project". Since then, topics around social media, internet safety, data protection and cyberbullying have been dealt with in two-week peer group meetings.

The aim of the peer group meetings was to encourage the atempo trainees to participate in the "Me and the Media Project" and to gradually train them as experts in special areas of social media. The specialisations were topics chosen by the trainees themselves. All topics were related to online media, for example, some trainees became experts on Facebook, Instagram, internet safety and so on.

The atempo peer group consisted of about 8 trainees at every Friday meeting. In order to involve as many trainees as possible in the topics, new trainees were always added to the existing group. In total, **30 different** trainees took part. The core group consisted of 21 trainees, 10 of them women and 11 men aged between 18 and 38. The trainees in the peer group are all from Styria in Austria. Most of them live directly in Graz.

1.2 Recruitment process

For the MeMe- activities, our **participants were recruited using the following** publicity to all trainees in our company:

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

We need you!

Do you use facebook or any other social media platform?
Are you interested in sharing your experiences?
Are you willing to support other people with disabilities to be able to use social media tools?

Funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

atempo

MEME
Me and the Media

Would you like to join others in influencing the image of people with disabilities in social media?

If you answer at least one question with YES,
then you are very welcome to join our expert group.
Supporters are more than welcome!

We will start in January 2020.
Please send us an email if you'd like to join us in this inspiring process.
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

We promoted the activity to the younger people with disabilities at atempo, from whom we knew that they already had a smartphone and used at least one social media channel (like YouTube, WhatsApp or at least Email). We told them that MeMe was an Erasmus+ project with the common goal to develop together a learning-homepage that would help people with and without disabilities to get in touch with social media channels and to develop skills on how to use it in a safe and protected way.

Participation in the peer group meetings was voluntary. The trainees mostly attended the peer group meetings in the form of Friday modules between 8:00 and 12:30 o'clock. The trainees mentioned different reasons why they were interested in participating in the peer group meetings:

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- I want to share experiences and exchange with others.
- I want to learn new things.
- I want to learn about and try out new social media.
- I want to learn how to use social media properly.
- I want to know how to deal with cyberbullying.
- I find the topic exciting and interesting.
- I want to be up-to-date and have a say.
- I need information on how to deal with data/privacy/passwords.
- I want to make new contacts.
- I am interested in what security measures there are online and what social media I can best use.
- I want to participate to learn more about my internet behaviour.
- I want to be safer online without getting into trouble.
- I want to have new experiences and I am open to new things. The topic of social media is very interesting for me.

- I like to support Erasmus+ projects by participating.

2. IO2 Implementation

The Me and the Media – Social media platforms for a peer-to-peer learning delivery at ATEMPO in Austria were attended by 30 different trainees, therefrom 2 peer group assistants and a core-group of 21 trainees. It was mostly accompanied by two trainers.

The trainees attended the peer group meetings in the form of a Friday module between 8:00 and 12:30 o'clock 2 times a month.

2.1 Activities and outcomes

During the peer group meetings it came out that most of the trainees already had a great knowledge about social media and had been using many offers for a long time: The atempo trainees stated that they use YouTube the most, closely followed by WhatsApp, Facebook and Instagram. Here, reasons were also collected why these channels are so popular and why the trainees are interested in them.

- YouTube - reasons for usage:
  - Listening to music and watching videos
  - Watching film scenes and trailers
  - Watching gameplay videos: A gameplay video is a clip of direct footage from a video game and is primarily used to show players how a game plays.
  - Watch cooking videos and try your hand at cooking
  - Like and comment on videos
  - There are endless interesting videos there
  - I can find practical tips for life there
  - I can watch videos that are interesting to me and help me relax, e.g. music videos, nature videos, …
  - Watch documentaries
  - Youtube is the perfect way for me to pass the time, there is any serious, relaxed or funny topic. Besides, in the free version you get perfectly personalised advertising. I have nothing against that, I don't want to do without advertising. The YouTube videos suggested to me are also perfectly personalised. It's a world I like to use a lot, who knows, maybe one day I'll even have my own Youtube channel.
- WhatsApp - reasons for usage:
  - Writing/chatting with friends/family
  - Make phone calls and video calls
  - To use group chats
  - To communicate in emergencies

- ○ To write with supporters and carers
- ○ I find this messaging service very easy to use.

  - ○ Because I can also make a voice recording.
- Facebook - reasons for usage:
  - ○ Posting and liking things
  - ○ To read comments and write some myself
  - ○ To keep in touch with friends around the world
  - ○ I can keep in touch with my school friends
  - ○ You can chat for free
  - ○ I can find out what's new
- Instagram - reasons for usage:
  - ○ To post and like photos
  - ○ I can look at a lot of things that are interesting to me
  - ○ I can see what new videos or posts are out there.

In addition, other platforms were mentioned at the peer group meetings that are used from time to time. Mentioned were: TikTok, Wire, Twitter, Telegram, Signal, Steam, Discord, Viber, SnapChat, as well as the online meeting platforms Zoom and MS Teams.

3. Evaluation

The MeMe Friday Modules became quite popular amongst our trainees.

We talked about the results every Friday noon before closing the sessions. They emphasized many times how it was interesting and a big opportunity to develop the tools for the toolbox for the MeMe-topics.

The atempo trainees are used to include digital tools in their learning. Developing presentations about topics of their daily life like their own usage of their most liked social media channels apparently was fun.

In July 2021, there was a big Friday module where the experts of the atempo peer group presented their topics in the form of PowerPoint presentations. These presentations were also broadcasted online where 3 special guests were present. Vilma Ferrari (head of the MeMe project), Lisa Franz (head of digital education at atempo) and Melanie Wimmer (expert for accessibility and presentations) gave online-feedback to the presentations of our trainees. This module was a great success, very interesting for the audience and the trainees were very proud of their achievements.

4. Deviations

In order to ensure that the contents of our weekly meetings were in line with the project goals, the trainers regularly met in between the sessions.

In total, 28 training sessions were held on Fridays between 20/11/2020 and 03/12/2021.

For more detailed information, please refer to the register of the activities by clicking the following link: O2_atempo-Register of the activities.

5. Annex: Links

For more impressions and photos of the Friday modules, take a look at Fotos & Dokumentation der Module ("photos and documentation of the modules") and see our report of the activities in the IO4 report.