



Becoming Aware of Disability: Developing a Curriculum Based on Cognitive Evolution in Higher Education

(2019-1-TR01-KA203-074191)



Intellectual Output 1 (O1) – Feasibility and Analysis Report on Measurement of the Perception and Awareness Regarding Disability and Disability Rights in Higher Education

-GENERAL REPORT INCLUDING ALL PARTNERS' COUNTRIES REPORT-



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Table of Contents

1. <u>Introduction</u>	2
2. <u>Survey</u>	4
2.1 <u>Demographic Data</u>	4
2.2 <u>Data and Analysis of Awareness Level on Disabled Persons and Their Rights</u>	8
3. <u>Conclusions/ Recommendations</u>	30



1. Introduction

It can be asserted that generating solutions for the problems caused by individuals' lack of awareness and consciousness of the rights of disabled persons is the priority goal of the activities conducted within the scope of the project "Becoming aware of disability: developing a curriculum based on cognitive evolution in higher education". Within the scope of the project, our responsibility is to eliminate the speculative barriers in front of disabled persons' participation in social life and to direct all the existing resources and scientific accumulation to discover the potential that disabled individuals have. It is considered important to carry out activities and public arrangements, which would ensure that the disabled stay healthy, benefit from rehabilitation and psychological support services, and have free access to education with awareness of their legal rights as well as increasing their quality of life and helping them be successful in life with employment opportunities for the disabled.

Today, it is a delicately approached issue in many countries to develop an understanding to enable disabled individuals to have equal living conditions with other individuals in all fields of life on the basis of human rights and lead a quality life without being exposed to discrimination by establishing empathy with the disabled. That is because the disabled experience problems in many fields of life in the process of integration with the society. The fact that individuals in the society fail to fully understand the disabled, do not notice them in the course of the life they are living, or ignore them sometimes causes the disabled to prefer staying outside the society being affected by these prejudices. This, in turn, leads to segregations in the society.

Physical and spatial improvements alone are no longer seen sufficient for the disabled to access the most basic human rights today. It is not possible to ensure that the disabled lead a happy and successful life within society by restricting disabled rights to this scope only and with a disabled approach that involves social welfare and several exemptions. It is critical to strengthen the social harmony and communication between non-disabled and disabled individuals and to ensure that they lead a life together with mutual understanding.



In this regard, the primary aim of the questionnaire applied in the first stage of the project was to determine higher education students' levels of perception and awareness of disability rights. The questions generated within the scope of the survey sought an answer to the issue. Data was obtained concerning higher education students' levels of awareness of the disabled and their ability to show empathy through the responses given to the questionnaire items.

Before preparing the survey questions, a detailed literature review was conducted by all the project partners. The members of the project team gathered information about the academic publications and research reports conducted on disabled individuals and their results included in the academic literature. Later, survey questions were written to measure higher education students' levels of awareness of disability rights. The first pilot study of the survey questions was conducted to determine the understandability of the questions. The project team from the partnering universities came together in the kickoff meeting (February 2020) to finalize the survey questions and the final form was produced with the name of ***“The Questionnaire to Measure the Level of Consciousness and Knowledge of Disability Rights”*** consisting of 16 questions.

The questionnaires, which were applied to the students of the partnering Institutions of Higher Education (Gaziantep University/Turkey Bursa Uludağ University /Turkey, Thessaly University /Greece, Ahe University /Poland Specific) aimed at collecting scientific data and receive higher education students' evaluations concerning disability rights. The analysis of the data obtained from ***“The Questionnaire to Measure the Level of Consciousness and Knowledge of Disability Rights”***, which was applied within the appropriate sample range to represent the universe on university students, was conducted in a multi-dimensional way and it was also assessed in terms of suitability for the main hypotheses of the project.

Questionnaires developed with the aim of measuring higher education students' awareness of disability rights within the scope of the project were implemented between April and July, 2020 to the partnering higher education institutions of the project. Survey results obtained provided fundamental data to determine the roadmap for the upcoming period of the project and to design and develop a curriculum, which as another outcome of the project.



2. Survey

The population of the study was determined as Gaziantep University/Turkey, Bursa Uludağ University /Turkey, Thessaly University /Greece, Ahe University /Poland, which are the partnering Higher Education Institutions of the university. 324 students participated the study voluntarily from the above-listed universities.

The questions that were expected to be included in the questionnaire form designed to receive the sample's opinions were discussed in the first transnational meeting (February 2020) held within the scope of the project and the survey thereupon was given its final form. As the first pilot study, the questionnaire was applied to 20 students from the Faculty of Medicine and Faculty of Law at Gaziantep University, the effectiveness of the questions was evaluated and ineffective ones were excluded.

The questionnaire form consisted of 16 items and the responses were mainly designed in the Likert type. The survey asked students questions to measure their attitudes, perceptions, experiences and empathy building abilities with disabled individuals. The questionnaire was applied to 324 higher education students from Turkey, Greece and Poland. The students participated in the survey on a volunteer basis. The data obtained from the questionnaires were analyzed on SPSS package program using frequencies, factor analysis and ANOVA analysis.

2.1. Descriptive Statistical Information

The questionnaire form, which aimed at measuring university students' awareness of disability rights and designing a curriculum concerning disability rights, which is among the project outcomes, consisted of 16 questions. In the first section of the questionnaire, the participants were asked about their gender, age, whether they had any type of disability, their monthly budgets and the opportunities offered by their universities.

They were later asked questions to determine their levels of awareness of disabled individuals and the difficulties faced by them in their lives.

The responses given to each question of the form are statistically presented in Table 1 titled "*Statistical Descriptions of the Questions*" in arithmetic means and standard deviation frequency distributions.



Table 1: Statistical Descriptions of the Questions

Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Mean		Sd
	Statistics	Statistics	Sd.	Statistics
University	324	3,145	,0701	1,2617
1-Gender	324	1,358	,0267	,4802
2-Age	324	2,111	,0175	,3148
4-Population size of the city you study in	324	3,380	,0782	1,4080
5-Do you have any disabilities?	324	1,978	,0081	,1456
6-Are there any disabled persons in your family?	160	1,738	,0349	,4414
7-What is the degree of your disability?	94	2,628	,1210	1,1730
8-Your ability to fulfill your daily activities?	324	4,830	,0729	1,3116
9-The degree that your monthly budget meets your expenses	324	3,852	,0693	1,2478
11A-Your state of benefiting from the educational opportunities offered by our University	324	3,991	,0759	1,3663
11B- Your state of benefiting from the opportunities of professional and skill development training offered by our University	324	3,077	,0818	1,4733
11C- Your state of benefiting from the student club activities offered by our University	324	2,840	,0773	1,3918
11D- Your state of benefiting from the sporting opportunities offered by our University	324	2,469	,0810	1,4581
11E- Your state of benefiting from the opportunities of care and rehabilitation services offered by our University	324	2,349	,0825	1,4843
11F- Your state of benefiting from the opportunities of guidance, counseling services offered by our University	324	2,429	,0815	1,4673
11G -Your state of benefiting from the opportunities healthcare services offered by our University	324	3,151	,0791	1,4247
11H- Your state of benefiting from the cultural activities offered by our University	324	2,843	,0813	1,4626
11I-I think it is beneficial that the curriculum of our university includes a course on disability rights	324	4,935	,0863	1,5536
11I-I think the physical conditions of my educational institution are suitable for the access of the disabled.	324	3,556	,0873	1,5718
12A-It is important to accept the presence of disabled individuals in the society.	324	5,722	,0462	,8309
12B-Asking questions about the disabled individuals' personal lives would not help in understanding them.	324	3,491	,0925	1,6646
12C-I believe empathizing with disabled individuals is a critical factor in cognitive transformation.	324	5,377	,0546	,9829
12D-I think families of disabled individuals should be informed specially.	323	5,105	,0741	1,3310
12E-People must try to understand how disabled persons feel.	324	5,435	,0568	1,0224
12F-Disabled persons would feel better when others understand their feelings.	324	4,975	,0739	1,3305
12G-I think it is beneficial that disabled and non-disabled students receive education together.	324	5,096	,0713	1,2834
12H-I think disabled students are luckier in finding a job after graduation.	324	2,574	,0802	1,4437
12I-I am aware of the difficulties experienced by disabled individuals.	324	5,028	,0676	1,2175
13-Are you informed about healthcare rights of the disabled?	321	1,801	,0223	,4002
13-Are you informed about legal rights of the disabled?	320	1,759	,0239	,4281
15- I pay attention to act so as to make life easier for disabled persons in daily life.	324	4,630	,0635	1,1424
16-What do you think are the most frequent difficulties faced by the disabled?	316	4,468	,0755	1,3413
16-What do you think are the most frequent difficulties faced by the disabled?	97	5,247	,0803	,7910
16- What do you think are the most frequent difficulties faced by the disabled?	16	5,813	,1008	,4031

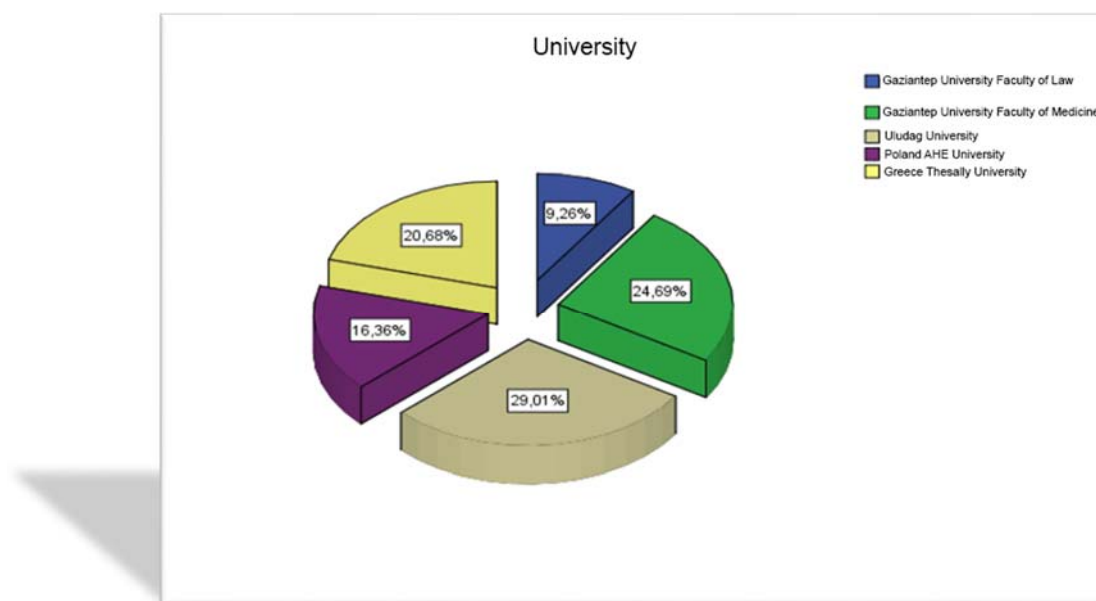
2.2. Demographic Data

Questionnaires were applied to 324 students from four universities namely Gaziantep University and Bursa Uludağ University (one being the project coordinator) in Turkey, AHE University in Poland and Thesally University in Greece which were included in the sample space and are project partners.

Table:2 Distribution of the Participants by University

University		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Gaziantep University Faculty of Law	30	9,3	9,3	9,3
	Gaziantep University Faculty of Medicine	80	24,7	24,7	34,0
	Uludağ University	94	29,0	29,0	63,0
	Poland AHE	53	16,4	16,4	79,3
	Greece Thesally	67	20,7	20,7	100,0
	Total	324	100,0	100,0	

Graph: 1 Distribution of the Participants by University



In Turkey, a total of 204 questionnaires were applied to 94 students from Bursa Uludağ University and 110 students from Gaziantep University. As for the other universities of questionnaire application, questionnaires were applied to 53 students at AHE University in Poland and 67 students at Thesally University in Greece.

The ratio of the students taking the questionnaire in the universities in Turkey is 63% of the total number of students.



As for the transnational partners, the ratios of the students who were given the questionnaire among all the students are 16,4% and 20,7% at AHE university in Poland and at Thesally University in Greece, respectively.

The number of students who participated in the survey from Gaziantep University and Bursa Uludağ University in Turkey is higher than the number/ratio of the students who participated from the other project partners, AHE university in Poland and at Thesally University in Greece. The reason behind this is the fact that the number of students in universities in Turkey is higher than the number of students in the other universities.

The questions included in the first section of the questionnaire ask about the participants' demographic information. The participants were asked about their age, gender and the population of the city they are studying in.

As seen in Table 3 below, in terms of the genders of the participants (324 participants), 208 are females and 116 are males.

Table: 3 Distrubition of the Participants by Gender

Gender		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	Female	208	64,2	4,2	64,2
	Male	116	35,8	35,8	100,0
	Total	324	100,0	100,0	

Of the total 324 respondents of the survey, 64.20% are females and 35,80% males. In this regard, it can be stated that the number of female participants was higher than that of the male participants in the survey which was conducted on a volunteer basis.

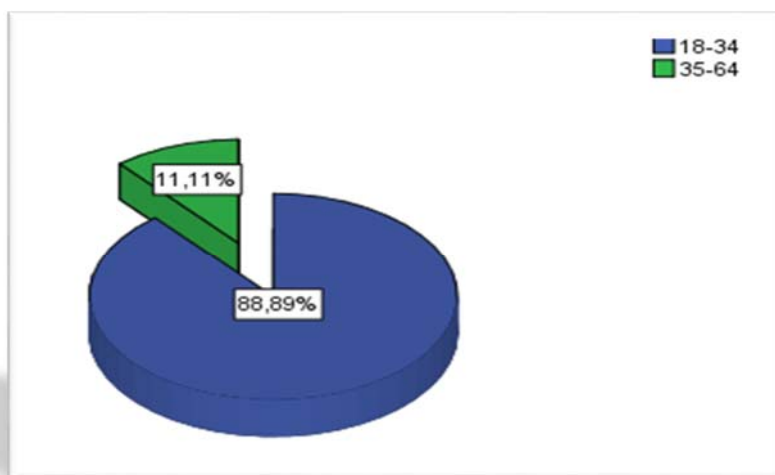
Age ranges of the participants are displayed in Table 4.

Table: 4-Distrubition of the Participants by Age

Age		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	18-34	288	88,9	88,9	88,9
	35-64	36	11,1	11,1	100,0
	Total	324	100,0	100,0	

As seen in Table 4, of the respondents who participated in the survey from the four (4) universities, 89% are aged 18-34 and 11,1% of them aged 35-64. The fact that the respondent group consisted of university students should be asserted as the main reason for the proportional greatness of the 18-34 age range.

Graph: 2 Distribution of the Participants by Age



Another question asked to the participants was about the population size of the cities they studied in.

Table: 5-The population size of the city you study in

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	Under100 thousand	46	14,2	14,2	14,2
	100thousand-500 thousand	53	16,4	16,4	30,6
	500 thousand -1 million	39	12,0	12,0	42,6
	1 million -3 million	113	34,9	34,9	77,5
	3 million -5 million	64	19,8	19,8	97,2
	5 million or over	9	2,8	2,8	100,0
	Total	324	100,0	100,0	

2.2 Data Concerning the Level of Awareness of Disabled Individuals and their Rights and Related Analysis

Data Based on Awareness Level on Disability Rights

The main aim in conducting a survey with higher education students is to measure their levels of awareness of disability rights, reveal students' approaches to the issue and analyze the results accordingly.

The results obtained from the survey will contribute to determining the roadmap for the project and the needs of the target audience as well as specifying the activities intended for designing and developing a curriculum. The survey was conducted simultaneously in April-



July period with the project partners Bursa Uludağ University, Poland AHE University and Greece Thessaly Universities

➤ **Evaluation on Question 11 of the Questionnaire**

In the following section of the analysis, some of the statements under question 11 were particularly examined, and participant responses needed for the intellectual outcomes of the project were analyzed and interpreted.

Table: 6 Your state of benefiting from the opportunities of professional skill development training offered by your University

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Completely dissatisfied	65	20,1	20,1	20,1
	Not Satisfied Enough	49	15,1	15,1	35,2
	Dissatisfied	82	25,3	25,3	60,5
	Satisfied	71	21,9	21,9	82,4
	Satisfied enough	38	11,7	11,7	9,1
	Completely Satisfied	19	5,9	5,9	100,0
	Total	324	100,0	100,0	

Of the 324 participants among the university students responding to the survey, 128 (39,5%) expressed their satisfaction regarding the opportunities of professional and skill development training offered by their universities while 196 (60,5%) of them marked choices that represented dissatisfaction.

Table: 7 Your state of benefiting from the opportunities of profession and skill development training offered by your University

University		Completely Dissatisfied	Not Satisfied Enough	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Satisfied enough	Completely Satisfied	Total
Gaziantep & Bursa	Uludağ	44	36	42	44	27	11	204
	Poland AHE		19	20	16	9	2	94
	Greece Thessaly	21	3	5	10	8	6	53
	Total	0	10	35	17	3	2	67
Total		65	49	82	71	38	19	324

When the statement measuring “the state of benefiting from the opportunities of profession and skill development training offered by the university” is analyzed by university (Table:7), it was found that 82 (40%) out of the 204 participants from Turkey expressed their satisfaction. 122 (60%) of the participants, on the other hand, remarked that they were dissatisfied.



Of the respondents who participated in the survey from AHE University in Poland, 24 (45%) showed satisfaction while 29 (55%) participants expressed that they dissatisfied with the opportunities of profession and skill development training offered by the university.

As for Thessaly University, Greece, 22 (33%) out of the 67 participants responded the statement with satisfaction. However, 45 (67%) participants expressed that they were dissatisfied with the opportunities of profession and skill development training offered by the university.

Considering the fact that the survey was participated mainly by non-disabled individuals, an important point to touch here is that non-disabled students as well as the disabled ones expressed that they needed training on professional and skill development at universities. Based on this statement, it was concluded that Certificate Programs for the Disabled could be beneficial.

Today, activities conducted with the aim of professional and skill development are considered important in the employment of disabled individuals. This is because possessing professional skills is the most critical thing for disabled individuals to find a suitable job for themselves and be productive at work. Such activities may yield positive results like increasing the working capacity of the disabled, protecting them against the challenges of working life, creating job opportunities in different fields and having them participate more in social life by encouraging those who are unwilling to work.

Table: 8 Your state of benefiting from the opportunities of care and rehabilitation services offered by your University

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Completely dissatisfied	143	44,1	44,1	44,1
	Not Satisfied Enough	42	13,0	13,0	57,1
	Dissatisfied	68	21,0	21,0	78,1
	Satisfied	38	11,7	11,7	89,8
	Satisfied enough	20	6,2	6,2	96,0
	Completely Satisfied	13	4,0	4,0	100,0
	Total	324	100,0	100,0	

As seen in Table 8, out of the 324 participants, 253 (78%) expressed dissatisfaction marking the options completely dissatisfied, not satisfied enough, dissatisfied concerning the care and rehabilitation services offered by the University whereas 71 (22%) of the 324 participants marked options indicating their satisfaction.



Table: 9 Your state of benefiting from the opportunities of care and rehabilitation services offered by your University

University	Completely Dissatisfied	Not Satisfied Enough	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Satisfied Enough	Completely Satisfied	Total
Gaziantep & Bursa Uludağ University	108	23	27	27	13	6	204
Poland AHE	35	1	2	3	6	6	53
GreeceThessally	0	18	39	8	1	1	67
Total	143	42	68	38	20	13	324

In Table 9, when the participant opinions about their states of benefiting from the opportunities of care and rehabilitation services are analyzed, it was seen that 158 (77%) out of the 204 participants from Turkey marked options indicating dissatisfaction. 46 participants (23%), on the other hand, stated that they were satisfied.

38 (72%) of the 53 participants from AHE University in Polan were found to be dissatisfied while 15 (28%) participants indicated they were satisfied.

57 (85%) out of the 67 participants from ThessallyUniversity in Greece marked the options indicating dissatisfaction whereas 10 (15%) participants stated that they were satisfied.

In this respect, it can be asserted that care and rehabilitation services should be offered in a more effective way for non-disabled and particularly for disabled students at universities. This result is true for all partnering universities of the project.

Table: 10 Rate your state of benefiting from the guidance/counseling services offered by your university from 1 to 6

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Completely dissatisfied	129	39,8	39,8	39,8
	Not Satisfied Enough	49	15,1	15,1	54,9
	Dissatisfied	70	21,6	21,6	76,5
	Satisfied	41	12,7	12,7	89,2
	Satisfied enough	24	7,4	7,4	96,6
	Completely Satisfied	11	3,4	3,4	100,0
	Total	324	100,0	100,0	

As seen in Table 10, responding to the question “rank your state of benefiting from guidance/counseling services offered by your university, 248 (76,5%) out of 324 participants expressed their dissatisfaction while 76 (23,5%) marked options indicating satisfaction.

Based on this data, it can be stated that there is a need for studies for both non-disabled and disabled students to benefit more from guidance, counseling services of universities.

Table: 11 Opinions about the inclusion of a course on disability rights in the university curriculum

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Completely dissatisfied	22	6,8	6,8	6,8
	Not Satisfied Enough	13	4,0	4,0	10,8
	Dissatisfied	26	8,0	8,0	18,8
	Satisfied	25	7,7	7,7	26,5
	Satisfied enough	55	17,0	17,0	43,5
	Completely Satisfied	183	56,5	56,5	100,0
	Total	324	100,0	100,0	

As seen in Table 11 and Graph 3, 263 (81%) out of the 324 participants expressed their satisfaction concerning the inclusion of a course on disability rights in the university curriculum while only 61 (19%) of them stated they would not feel satisfied.

Graph: 3 Opinions about the inclusion of a course on disability rights in the university curriculum

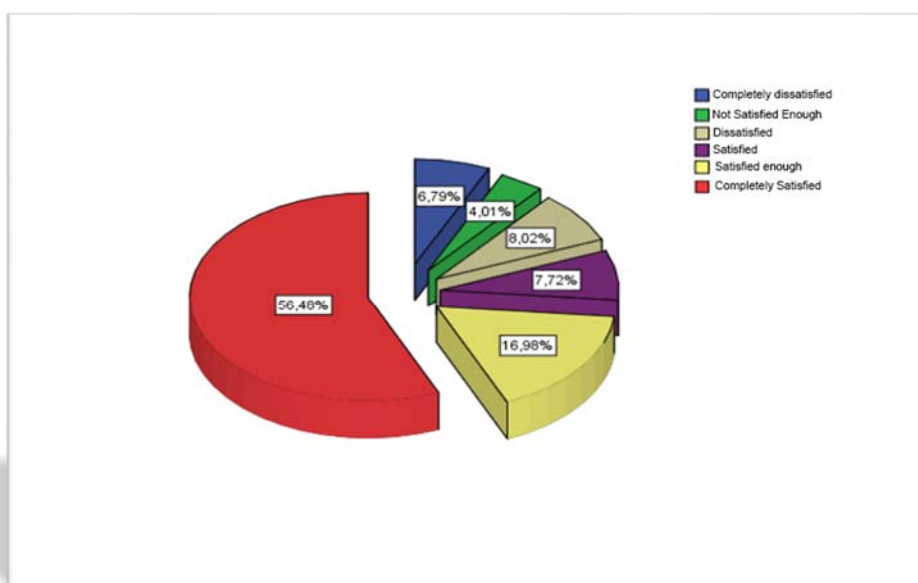




Table:12 I think it is beneficial that the curriculum of our university includes a course on disability rights

University							Total
	Completely Dissatisfied	Not Satisfied Enough	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Satisfied Enough	Completely Satisfied	
Gaziantep & Bursa Uludağ	13	8	19	20	29	115	204
Poland AHE	9	5	6	5	5	23	53
GreeceThesally	0	0	1	0	21	45	67
Total	22	13	26	25	55	183	324

Evaluating the statement considering the universities;

164 (80%) out of the 204 participants from Turkey marked the options indicating satisfaction for the statement “I think it is beneficial that the curriculum of our university includes a course on disability rights”. 40 (20%) participants, on the other hand, expressed their dissatisfaction.

33(62%) out of the 53 participants from AHE University in Poland marked the options indicating satisfaction for the statement “I think it is beneficial that the curriculum of our university includes a course on disability rights” while 20 (38%) participants expressed that they would be dissatisfied.

66(98,5%) out of the 67 participants fromThesallyUniversity in Greece marked the options indicating satisfaction for the statement “I think it is beneficial that the curriculum of our university includes a course on disability rights” while only 1 (1,5%) participant expressed that they would be dissatisfied.

One of the remarkable outcomes of the project is the inclusion of a course on Disability Rights in the curricula of the partnering universities. As seen in the survey results, it can be asserted that such a course is a significant need.



Participants' opinions on the statement "I think the physical conditions of my educational institution are suitable for the access of the disabled" under question 11 in the questionnaire can be seen in Table 13.

Table: 13 I think the physical conditions of my educational institution are suitable for the access of the disabled.

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Completely dissatisfied	39	12,0	12,0	12,0
	Not Satisfied Enough	50	15,4	15,4	27,5
	Dissatisfied	76	23,5	23,5	50,9
	Satisfied	53	16,4	16,	63
	Satisfied enough	63	19,4	19,4	86,7
	Completely Satisfied	43	13,3	13,3	100,0
	Total	324	100,0	100,0	

It is significant that awareness of disability rights has increased and studies have been carried out to increase the physical possibilities that make disabled individuals' easier at higher education institutions especially in the last 10 years. A positive improvement can be seen in raising awareness of the issue.

In question 12, the participants were asked to evaluate some basic statements. Related analysis is presented below:

The main perspective of the project is to move disability rights away from the shallow and narrow viewpoint based on improving physical living conditions only. By making both disabled individuals and their circles have basic knowledge of their rights in every field, the disabled could be helped in having more equal living conditions.

In many sociological studies carried out on disability, it is seen that the most important point which the disabled are affected by others is about the reactions made by people. Doubtlessly, the generation and formation of these reactions is influenced by the socio-cultural structure of the related society and the sufficiency level of awareness of the subject.

In the next section of the survey, attention was also paid to determining the perceptions and awareness levels of particularly university students regarding the disabled and their rights.



➤ ***“It is important to accept the presence of disabled individuals in the society.”***

No matter what the socio-economic development level is, making the place of the disabled stronger in all fields of life is highly important. With international and national legal regulations, certain rights are entitled to achieve equal opportunity in the fields of access to education, participation in employment and social life like every individual.

The responses made by the participants from three countries and four different universities to the statement “It is important to accept the presence of disabled individuals in the society” are seen in Table 14:

Table: 14 It is important to accept the presence of disabled individuals in the society

University	It is important to accept the presence of disabled individuals in the society.						Total
	Totally Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Totally Agree	
Gaziantep & Bursa Uludağ	3	2	6	3	9	181	204
Poland	0	1	2	4	7	39	53
Greece	0	0	0	0	9	58	67
Total	3	3	8	7	25	278	324

Concerning the statement “It is important to accept the presence of disabled individuals in the society.”, 193 (94,6%) of the 204 participants from the universities in Turkey stated agreed, 50 (94,3%) out of 53 participants from AHE University in Poland stated they agreed and 100% of the 67 participants from Thessaly University in Greece stated they agreed.

The fact that a majority of the respondents made positive judgments about accepting the presence of disabled individuals in the society indicates that disability phenomenon is considered on the basis of human rights and that it is considerably embedded in the perceptions of university students. It should be seen as a significant result that the social prejudice concerning the disabled is overcome and that non-disabled university students believe the presence of disabled individuals must be accepted. It can be said that developments towards the elimination of the negative approach to the disabled is a topic to be assessed positively for disabled students who will get a start in business in the future.



➤ ***“Asking questions about the disabled individuals’ personal lives would not help in understanding them”***

Understanding the emotions of the disabled and the difficulties faced by them while conducting their lives would be beneficial in eliminating these difficulties for them and helping them more. Based on this fact, the related statement was used to see the tendencies of people around the disabled to ask questions to understand disabled individuals and to receive their opinions about the issue. The results concerning the statement are presented in Table 15.

Table: 15 Asking questions about the disabled individuals’ personal lives would not help in understanding them

University	Asking questions about the disabled individuals’ personal lives would not help in understanding them						Total
	Totally Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Totally Agree	
Gaziantep & Bursa Uludağ	44	27	54	32	14	33	204
Poland AHE	3	6	3	11	16	14	53
GreeceThesally	5	10	23	0	25	4	67
Total	52	43	80	43	55	51	324

125 (61,2%) of the 204 participants from Gaziantep University and Bursa Uludağ University expressed that they did not agree with the statement stating that questions must be asked to understand the disabled. On the other hand, 79(38,8%) of the 204 participants agreed with the statement and thought that asking questions to the disabled individuals’ would not help in understanding them. The responses showed that the participants have a greater tendency to ask questions to understand the disabled.

12 (22,6%) of the 53 participants from AHE University in Poland did not agree with the statement and marked the choice indicating that questions must be asked to understand the disabled. On the hand, 41(77,4%) of the 53 participants stated that agreed with it and thought that asking questions to the disabled individuals’ would not help in understanding them. It was seen that the participants from AHE University in Poland to expressed opinions implying that asking questions to the disabled individuals’ would not help in understanding them.

38 (57%) of the 76 participants from Thessaly University in Greece did not agree with the statement and marked the choice indicating that questions must be asked to understand the



disabled. 29 (43%) of the 67 participants agreed with the statement and thought that asking questions to the disabled would not help in understanding them.

It could be asserted that the participants who think disabled individuals should not be asked questions think that the questions to be asked about the disabled will bother them.

- ***“I believe empathizing with disabled individuals is a critical factor in cognitive transformation.”***

This statement aimed to measure the participants’ judgments about the role and impact of developing empathy between all the members of the society and the disabled on achieving cognitive transformation concerning the approach towards the disabled and disability rights.

Table:16 I believe empathizing with disabled individuals is a critical factor in cognitive transformation.

University		I believe empathizing with disabled individuals is a critical factor in cognitive transformation					Total
		Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Totally Agree	
	Gaziantep&Uludağ	4	11	17	32	140	204
	Poland AHE	2	4	5	12	30	53
	GreeceThesally	0	5	0	30	32	67
Total		6	20	22	74	202	324

While 189 (93%) of the 204 participants from the universities in Turkey stated they agreed with the opinion that empathizing with the disabled is a critical factor in cognitive transformation, 15 (7%) participants disagreed.

While 47 (89%) of the 53 participants from AHE University in Poland stated they agreed with the opinion that empathizing with the disabled is a critical factor in cognitive transformation, only 6 (11%) participants disagreed.

62 (93%) of the 67 participants from Thesally University in Greece stated they agreed with the opinion that empathizing with the disabled is a critical factor in cognitive transformation, only 5 (7%) participants expressed that they disagreed with this opinion.

Among the students who participated in the survey and who had no disabilities, the ratio of those thinking that empathizing with the disabled is a critical factor in cognitive transformation is very high. Agreement with this statement by a majority of the participants reveals the significance of the feeling “empathy”. Individuals who can empathize with the disabled would display more behaviors that can make life easier for disabled individuals.



Based on this statement, it could be said that it is important to empathize about the disabled and their living conditions in many subjects concerning the disabled as well as in the cognitive transformation, which would enable disabled individuals to participate in all areas of life free of barriers and to protect their rights.

➤ ***“I think families of disabled individuals should be informed specially.”***

It is important that families also be informed of the rights of disabled individuals (education, healthcare, employment, taxing etc.). In this context, this statement asked about the participants' related opinions.

Table: 17 I think families of disabled individuals should be informed specially.

University							Total
	Totally Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Totally Agree	
Gaziantep & Bursa Uludağ	2	1	17	13	25	146	204
Poland	9	3	8	6	13	14	53
Greece	0	2	10	0	29	25	66
Total	11	6	35	19	67	185	323

184 (90%) of the 204 participants from the universities in Turkey think that families of disabled individuals should be informed specially. Only 20 (38%) participants disagreed with the statement.

33 (62%) of the 53 participants from AHE University in Poland think that families of disabled individuals should be informed specially. 20 (38%) participants disagreed with the statement.

54 (82%) of the 66 participants from Thessaly University in Greece think that families of disabled individuals should be informed specially. 12 (18%) participants disagreed with the statement.

Considering the results obtained from this statement, it was seen that it would be beneficial to design the curriculum on disability rights in the scope of the project as a separate training program for the families of disabled individuals. It must be accepted that the presence of a disabled member in a family has its effects on the family's life and social relationships. Therefore, it is aimed that the training program to be developed for the family



of the disabled must have a content that would help make the family's life easier and generate knowledge of disability rights.

➤ ***“People must try to understand how disabled persons feel”***

Understanding the feelings of disabled individuals in many events and situations (may be) faced in their every day lives is important in terms of making life easier for them. Thus, the responses made by the participants for this statement were seen as important data for the curriculum to be designed.

Table: 18 People must try to understand how disabled persons feel.

University	People must try to understand how disabled persons feel						Total
	Totally Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Totally Agree	
Gaziantep & Bursa Uludağ	0	4	14	13	22	151	204
Poland AHE	1	2	4	4	11	31	53
GreeceThesally	0	0	4	0	21	42	67
Total	1	6	22	17	54	224	324

186 (91%) of the 204 participants from the universities in Turkey agreed with the statement “People must try to understand how disabled persons feel”. Only 18 (9%) out of the 204 participants disagreed with the statement.

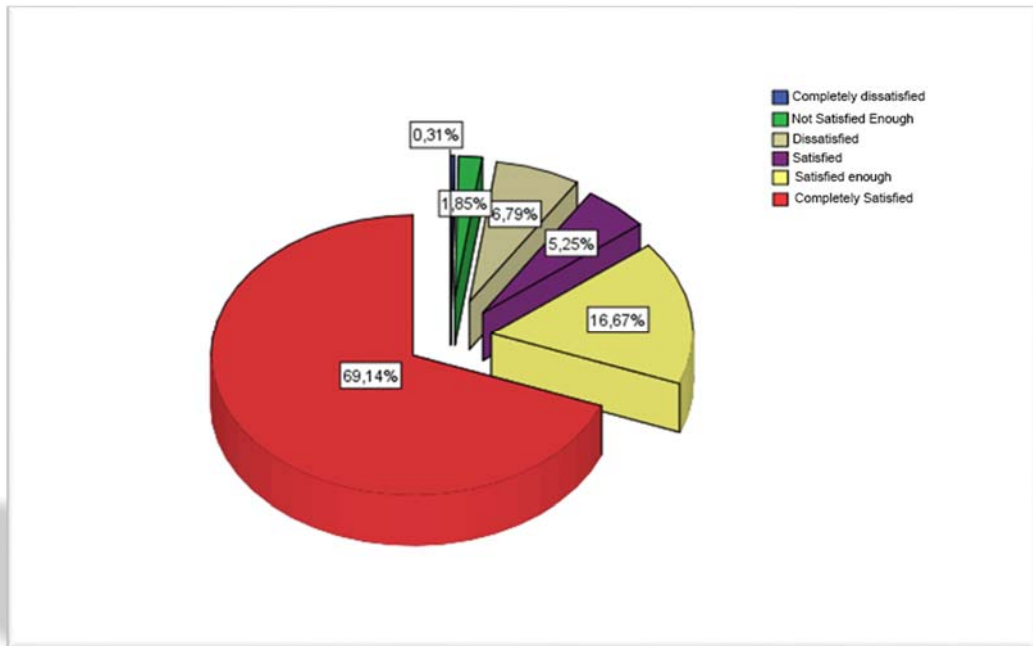
46 (87%) of the 53 participants from AHE University in Poland agreed with the statement “People must try to understand how disabled persons feel”. 7 (13%) participants disagreed with the statement.

63 (94%) of the 67 participants from Thesally University in Greece agreed with the statement “People must try to understand how disabled persons feel”. Only 4 (6%) of the participants disagreed with the statement.

A total of 295 (91%) out of the 324 participants from the universities stated that they agreed with the given statement. This ratio is considerably high.

Concerning this question, it can also be said that empathizing with the disabled is an approach that is adopted by the participants. It is important that other people are able to feel empathy and understand their living conditions to make life easier for disabled individuals.

Graph: 4 People must try to understand how disabled persons feel



Graph 4 shows the responses made by all the participants for the statement.

- ***“Disabled persons would feel better when others understand their feelings”***

The statement was included in the questionnaire to measure the effects of individuals’ ability to empathize about the disabled on disabled persons.

Table: 19 Disabled persons would feel better when others understand their feelings.

University	<i>Disabled persons would feel better when others understand their feelings</i>						Total
	Totally Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Totally Agree	
Gaziantep & Bursa Uludağ	5	6	20	28	28	117	204
Poland AHE	2	2	6	2	13	28	53
Greece Thesally	1	1	16	0	29	20	67
Total	8	9	42	30	70	165	324

173 (85%) of the 204 participants from the universities in Turkey agreed with the statement “Disabled persons would feel better when others understand their feelings”. 31 (15%) out of the 204 participants disagreed with the statement.



43 (81%) of the 53 participants from AHE University in Poland agreed with the statement “Disabled persons would feel better when others understand their feelings”. On the other hand, 10 (19%) participants disagreed with the statement.

49 (73%) of the 67 participants from Thessaly University in Greece agreed with the statement “Disabled persons would feel better when others understand their feelings”. On the other hand, 18 (37%) participants disagreed with the statement.

In total, 265 (82%) of the 324 participants from the four universities stated that they agreed with the statement. 59 (18%) out of 324 participants disagreed with the statement.

A great majority of the university students who participated in the survey from all four universities and a majority of whom had no disabilities think when disabled persons' feelings are understood by others around them, they will feel better in their relationships in society. This also makes it possible to be of more help for the disabled. It is considered that disabled persons will feel better if non-disabled individuals display sensitivity for their feelings and behave accordingly.

➤ ***“I think it is beneficial that disabled and non-disabled students receive education together.”***

Primary education is a right and it is among the governments' main responsibilities to ensure that each individual enjoys the right to education freely. Studies to be conducted on the educational environments and conditions of disabled students, their spatial and technical competencies vary by the status and degree of disability. Those who are considered suitable for receiving education together with non-disabled students depending on their disability status can receive this education through practices implemented with different educational methods and resources. The model is called inclusive education.

In this regard, the survey aimed to get the participants' opinions concerning the benefits of receiving education together with non-disabled students for disabled students.



Table 20 I think it is beneficial that disabled and non-disabled students receive education together

University	I think it is beneficial that disabled and non-disabled students receive education together						Total
	Totally Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Totally Agree	
Gaziantep& Bursa Uludağ	4	5	27	25	24	119	204
Poland AHE	2	1	3	4	7	36	53
GreeceThesally	1	0	9	0	28	29	67
Total	7	6	39	29	59	184	324

168 (82%) of the 204 participants from the universities in Turkey agreed with the statement “I think it is beneficial that disabled and non-disabled students receive education together”.

On the other hand, 36 (18%) of the participants disagreed with the statement.

47 (89%) of the 53 participants AHE university in Poland agreed with the statement “I think it is beneficial that disabled and non-disabled students receive education together”. On the other hand, 6 (11%) of the 53 participants disagreed with the statement.

57 (85%) of the 67 participants from Thesally University in Greece agreed with the statement “I think it is beneficial that disabled and non-disabled students receive education together”. On the other hand, 10 (10%) 67 of the participants disagreed with the statement.

272 (84%) of the 324 respondents who participated in the survey agreed with the statement while 52 (16%) disagreed.

The statement “I think it is beneficial that disabled and non-disabled students receive education together” was considered significant to make the disabled accepted by their peers and have the opinion that receiving education together is beneficial in such an educational environment at university which is one of the most critical areas of social life. Receiving education in a friend circle that can empathize with and help them during university education will have positive impacts on the academic achievement, emotional states and motivations of the disabled.



➤ ***“I think disabled students are luckier in finding a job after graduation.”***

Participants’ opinion about disabled students’ opportunities to find a job after graduation are presented in Table 18.

Table: 21 I think disabled students are luckier in finding a job after graduation.

University	I think disabled students are luckier in finding a job after graduation						Total
	Totally Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Totally Agree	
Gaziantep & Bursa Uludağ	48	46	61	26	10	13	204
Poland AHE	18	5	11	9	6	4	53
GreeceThesally	28	27	8	0	2	2	67
Total	94	78	80	35	18	19	324

155 (76%) of the 204 participants from the universities in Turkey disagreed with the statement “I think disabled students are luckier in finding a job after graduation”. On the other hand, 49 (24%) of the participants agreed with the statement.

34 (76%) of the 53 participants from AHE University in Poland disagreed with the statement “I think disabled students are luckier in finding a job after graduation”. On the other hand, 19 (36%) of the 53 participants stated that they disagreed with the statement and that they did not think the disabled were luckier in finding a job.

63 (94%) of the 67 participants from Thesally University in Greece disagreed with the statement “I think disabled students are luckier in finding a job after graduation”. Only 4 (6%) participants marked the options indicating they agreed that the disabled were luckier in finding a job.

252 (78%) of the 324 total participants of the survey indicated that they disagreed with the statement “I think disabled students are luckier in finding a job after graduation”. 72 (22%) of the participants, on the other hand, agreed with the statement and expressed that disabled students were luckier after graduation.

Although the participants’ opinions about disabled students’ access to education are better, a majority of the participants think that the disabled have difficulty finding a job after graduation.



In this respect, positive differences for the disabled in public personnel selection examinations and additional placement opportunities offered in public for the disabled in Turkey are developments that can be seen positive. In addition, the obligation to hire disabled personnel at a certain percentage of the labor employed by the private sector is another example of good practice.

➤ ***“I am aware of the difficulties experienced by disabled individuals.”***

The statement “I am aware of the difficulties experienced by disabled individuals” indicates results on whether empathy is developed around disabled persons for their disability status and conditions. Related opinions of the participants from the four universities are given in Table 22.

Table: 22 I am aware of the difficulties experienced by disabled individuals

University	I am aware of the difficulties experienced by disabled individuals						Total
	Totally Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Totally Agree	
Gaziantep & Bursa Uludağ	2	7	19	25	43	108	204
Poland AHE	1	1	2	4	11	34	53
YunanistanThesally	2	1	13	0	40	11	67
Total	5	9	34	29	94	153	324

176 (86%) of the 204 participants from the universities in Turkey agreed with the statement “I am aware of the difficulties experienced by disabled individuals”. On the other hand, 28 (24%) participants disagreed with the statement.

49 (92%) of the 53 participants from AHE University in Poland agreed with the statement “I am aware of the difficulties experienced by disabled individuals”. On the other hand, 4 (8%) participants disagreed with the statement.

51 (75%) of the 67 participants from Thesally University in Greece agreed with the statement “I am aware of the difficulties experienced by disabled individuals”. On the other hand, 16 (25%) participants disagreed with the statement

276 (85%) of the 324 total participants of the survey indicated that they agreed with the statement ““I am aware of the difficulties experienced by disabled individuals”. 48 (15%) of the 324 participants, on the other hand, disagreed with the statement.

As seen in the responses given to the question, university students consider that disabled individuals experience difficulties in the course of their lives.

➤ **Question 13: Evaluation on the question Are you informed about healthcare rights of the disabled?**

Question 13 aimed to measure university students' awareness of healthcare rights, which is an important problem area for the disabled. The results of the respondents related to the question are seen in Table 23.

Table: 23 Are you informed about healthcare rights of the disabled?

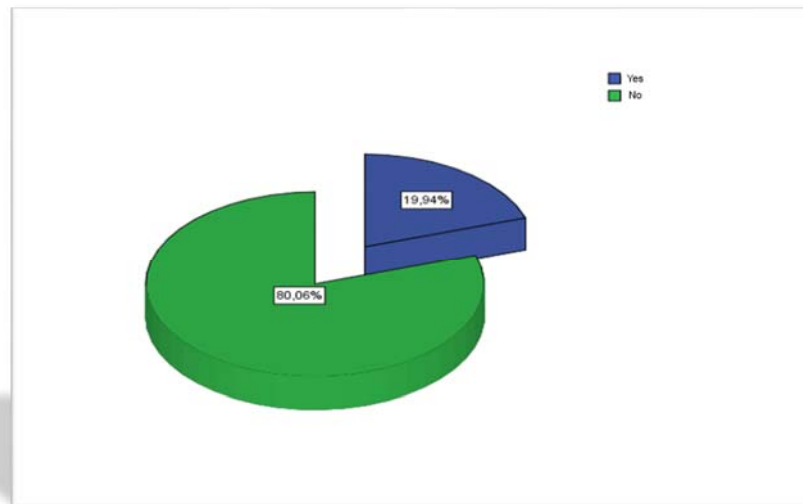
University		Are you informed about healthcare rights of the disabled?					Total
		.	..	Yes	No		
Gaziantep Üniversitesi & Bursa Uludağ		0	0	0	22	182	204
Poland		1	1	1	26	24	53
Greece		0	0	0	16	51	67
Total		1	1	1	64	257	324

As seen in Table 23, 182 (89%) out of the 204 participants from the two universities in Turkey responded the question “are you informed about healthcare rights of the disabled?” with Yes while 22 (11%) participants responded with No.

24 (45%) of the 53 participants from AHE University in Poland responded the question “are you informed about healthcare rights of the disabled?” with No, 26 (49%) with yes while 3 participants made no responses.

51 (76%) of the 67 participants from Thessaly University in Greece responded the question “are you informed about healthcare rights of the disabled?” with No while 16 (24%) of them responded with yes.

Graph:5 Are you informed about healthcare rights of the disabled?





As seen in Graph 5, 257 (80%) of the 324 total participants of the survey from all the universities responded the question “Are you informed about healthcare rights of the disabled?” with no and 64 (20%) responded with yes.

This response made by the university students who participated in the survey and a majority of whom were non-disabled confirms the hypotheses of the project. The fact that one of the project outcomes is to design a curriculum on disability rights reveals the necessity that particularly healthcare rights must be included in the curriculum as an important topic.

Informing disabled individuals about the health policies and implementations concerning different types of health conditions they might face is thought to be considerably beneficial based on the survey finding. Disabled people worldwide encounter many barriers when they want to apply to healthcare services.

➤ **Question 14 : Evaluation on the question Are you informed about basic rights of the disabled?**

The results of the responses given to Question 14 asking “Are you informed about basic rights of the disabled?” are presented in Table: 24.

Table: 24 Are you informed about basic rights of the disabled?

University	Are you informed about basic rights of the disabled?		Total
	Yes	No	
Gaziantep& BursaUludağ	26	178	204
Poland	27	22	49
Greece	24	43	67
Total	77	243	320

178 (87%) of the 204 participants from the two universities in Turkey responded the question “are you you informed about basic rights of the disabled?” with no. On the other hand, 26 (13%) of the participants answered yes stating that they were informed about basic rights of the disabled.

49 of the 53 participants from AHE University in Poland gave acceptable answers to this question. The answers of 4 participants were not accepted. 22 (45%) of the survey participants answered the question “are you you informed about basic rights of the



disabled?" no. 27 (55%) of the participants answered yes stating that they were informed about basic rights of the disabled.

43 (64%) of the 67 participants from Thessaly University in Greece answered the question "are you you informed about basic rights of the disabled?" no. 24 (36%) of the survey participants answered yes stating that they were informed about basic rights of the disabled.

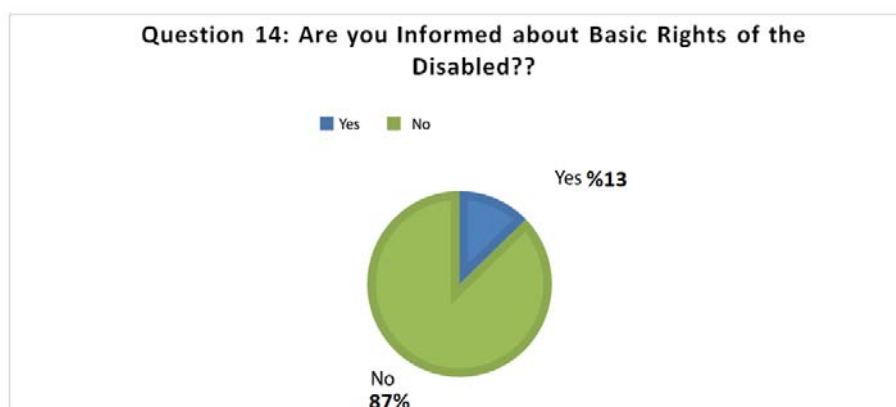
The answers given to the question by all 324 participants from the 4 universities participated in the survey can be seen in Table 22. 320 of the total 324 participants answered the question while 4 participants left the question unanswered. 243 (76%) of the 324 participants answered the question "Are you informed about legal rights of the disabled persons? No. 77 (24%) participants, on the other hand, answered the question yes.

Table:25 Are you informed about basic legal rights of the disabled persons?

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Yes	77	23,8	24,1	24,1
	No	243	75,0	75,9	100,0
	Total	320	98,8	100,0	
	Unanswered	4	1,2		
Total		324	100,0		

One of the aims of the project is to "Ensure that disabled students in higher education reach more comfortable life standards with higher social sensitivity and benefit from educational opportunities as well as other life opportunities equally by enjoying basic rights and freedoms equally". To this end, a course on the basic rights of the disabled and a course content designed accordingly in the curriculum to be developed as a project outcome is of great importance.

Graph: 6 Are you informed about legal rights of the disabled?





➤ **Question 15: “I pay attention to act so as to make life easier for disabled persons in daily life”.**

In question 15, the participants were asked to rank their responses to the statement “I pay attention to act so as to make life easier for disabled persons in daily life” from 1 to 6.

Table:26 “I pay attention to act so as to make life easier for disabled persons in daily life.”

University								Total
		Totally Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Totally Agree	
	Gaziantep & BursaUludağ	4	9	20	42	69	60	204
	Poland	2	0	2	12	19	18	53
	Greece	0	0	10	29	28	0	67
Total		6	9	32	83	116	78	324

171 (84%) out of the 204 participants from the universities in Turkey agreed with the statement “I pay attention to act so as to make life easier for disabled persons in daily life” indicating that they showed attention to making disabled persons’ lives easier. 33 (16%) participants marked the options expressing disagreement with the statement.

49 (%92) of the 53 participants from AHE University in Poland agreed with the statement “I pay attention to act so as to make life easier for disabled persons in daily life”. Only 4 (8%) participants disagreed with the statement.

57 (85%) out of the 67 participants from Thesally University in Greece indicated that they agreed with the statement “I pay attention to act so as to make life easier for disabled persons in daily life”. 10 (15%) participants, on the other hand, disagreed.

The fact that there was a predominant tendency to pay attention to make life easier for disabled persons in the participants’ responses reveals that university students have a high level of sensitivity and awareness of the disabled.

➤ **Question 16: What do you think are the most frequent difficulties faced by the disabled?**

The open-ended question 16 was “What do you think are the most frequent difficulties faced by the disabled?” The participants made a variety of responses to the question. The responses are grouped as shown in Table 27.



Table: 27 What do you think are the most frequent difficulties faced by the disabled?

Difficulties		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
	Unemployment	32	9,9	10,1	10,1
	Access to Healthcare Services	2	,6	,6	10,8
	Adequacy of Knowledge of Legal Rights	1	,3	,3	11,1
	Transportation	77	23,8	24,4	35,4
	Access to/ Participation in Social Life	159	49,1	50,3	85,8
	Other	45	13,9	14,2	100,0
	Total	316	97,5	100,0	
Unanswered		8	2,5		
Total		324	100,0		

316 of all 324 participants from 4 universities answered the question. 8 participants left the question unanswered. It was seen that disabled persons had difficulty accessing/participating in social life most (49%). It was found that the second greatest difficulty was in transportation (23%). Unemployment (10%) is another point of difficulty for the disabled.

Difficulty in accessing and participating in social life for disabled persons is among the critical problem areas around the world. People with disabilities may be exposed to social exclusion. According to World Report on Disability 2011, one of the main reasons behind this fact is that poverty rate is higher among persons with disabilities than other individuals. Such requirements as personal care, receiving support services, buying medical care equipment bring about the need for financial resources of varying sizes for disabled individuals. In addition to the insufficient financial conditions; individuals' prejudice against persons with disabilities in society and the lack of knowledge and awareness of the living conditions and rights of disabled persons can be listed among the factors restricting disabled persons' access to and participation in social life.

The problem needs to be overcome through social aid programs for low-income and disabled individuals as well as studies to raise social awareness of disability rights. In this regard, the outcomes of the present project are expected to provide useful results.



3. Conclusion/ Recommendations

The data, findings and analyses obtained from the survey study conducted as the first intellectual outcome of the project are of great importance for the project activities to be conducted in the following days. With the survey study conducted, data was obtained regarding the opinions of higher education students who responded to the questionnaire and were our target group about disability and disability rights and their level of awareness of disability rights was tried to be measured.

The data and findings obtained from the survey carried out with higher education students in Turkey, Poland and Greece set the foundations for designing a curriculum that will make the approaches towards the disabled change and develop in a positive way.

The implementation of the curriculum will help to raise the society's awareness of persons with disabilities as well as increasing the level of consciousness of all the participants of the project about the rights of disabled individuals. It is among the primary goals to create value for people with disabilities so as to maintain the culture of living together for disabled and non-disabled individuals on an accurate basis and to decrease the problems they face both during their higher education process and in their business and social life after graduation.

When questions 12 and 13 are analyzed, it is seen that students who participated in the survey in the universities where the survey was conducted think that they have a lack of knowledge of both healthcare and other legal rights of people with disabilities. Moreover, considering the responses made to the statement "I think it is beneficial that the curriculum of our university includes a course on disability rights"; there is a need for arrangements for restructuring to overcome the deficiencies in terms of both cognitive changes and legal acts that will remove all the barriers preventing the disabled from participating in the university environment, business life and social life.

Efforts made to remove the physical barriers in overcoming such difficulties as accessibility and transportation especially in the participation of the disabled in education and integration to social life are significant. However, just as important as physical conditions,



approaches based on discrimination and prejudice against people with disabilities must be removed.

Difficulty in accessing and participating social life is among important problem areas all around the world. Disabled individuals may be exposed to social exclusion.

According to World Report on Disability 2011, one of the main reasons behind this fact is that poverty rate is higher among persons with disabilities than other individuals. Such requirements as personal care, receiving support services, buying medical care equipment bring about the need for financial resources of varying sizes for disabled individuals.. In addition to the insufficient financial resources and poor physical conditions, individuals' prejudice against persons with disabilities in society and the lack of knowledge and awareness of the living conditions and rights of disabled persons can be listed among the factors restricting disabled persons' access to and participation in social life.

In addition, difficulties faced by disabled persons about unemployment and transportation are also notable. In this respect, it is considered significant that the importance of disabled employment will be referred by the curriculum to be developed by raising the awareness of future individuals of professional business life.

The problem needs to be overcome through social aid programs for low-income and disabled individuals as well as studies to raise social awareness of disability rights. In this regard, the outcomes of the present project are expected to provide useful results.

In conclusion, increasing the level of social consciousness and awareness has a great impact on removing all the barriers obstructing the opportunity of equal participation of all disabled and non-disabled individuals in all areas of life. To this end; the following could be recommended for universities;

- Disability units especially in higher education institutions should be active in guidance and counseling activities,
- Innovative and technological resources should be used in access to educational materials,
- Information centers should be established to inform disabled students about their rights during higher education.