



Welcome to the Able to Include Project Newsletter

The internet is very useful for people with disabilities to talk to each other or to other people. But sometimes the internet is not easy to use.



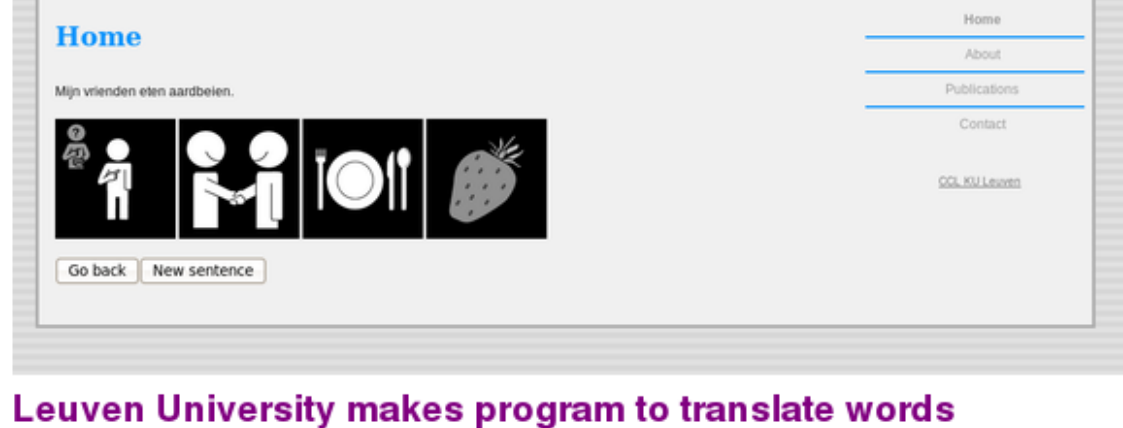
A project called Able to Include wants to help people with intellectual disabilities use social media, like Facebook, on a phone or tablet.

9 organisations from 5 countries in Europe are working together to make apps easier to use. Some tools will change written words into easy-to-read. Other tools will change written words into voice or images.

This newsletter tells you what is happening in the project. We hope you will like this newsletter. If you have any questions or comments, you can write to us at information@inclusion-europe.org



What we've been up to



Leuven University makes program to translate words into images

The University of Leuven is a partner in the Able to Include Project. Leuven is a city in Belgium.

The University of Leuven is making a computer program to change words into pictures. This program will help people with intellectual disabilities better understand the information they are reading. It will also help them use social media like Facebook, Twitter or WhatsApp.

They are using two picture languages:

- one is called Beta
- and the other is called Sclera

Beta pictures are in color. They look like this:



Sclera pictures are black and white, like this:



In some countries, students learn these picture languages in school.



What do people with intellectual disabilities like to do on social media?

Thomas More is a University in Belgium. They are also partners in the Able to Include Project.

Thoman More wanted to see what people with intellectual disabilities know about social media and what they expect when they go online. Thoman More organised a focus group. They sat down with a group of people with intellectual disabilities to see how they use social media.

The group could try different applications, like Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp and talk about what they think. Thomas More found that people with intellectual disabilities and very interested in social media. If people have large networks on social media they are more likely to want to use it. Even people who had never tried social media were excited about learning how to use it and about the opportunities it could give them.

People with intellectual disabilities told researchers that they prefer applications that are easy to use such as Facebook, WhatsApp and Skype. They did not use Twitter so much. People with intellectual disabilities use social media to keep in contact with friends and family members. They generally talked to people they knew in real life. In particular, they liked to take and share pictures.

Some of the people with disabilities also had some problems. Some found the letters of the keyboard too small or had a hard time trying to spell words. All their thoughts and suggestions will be used to develop the new Able to Include accessible programs.



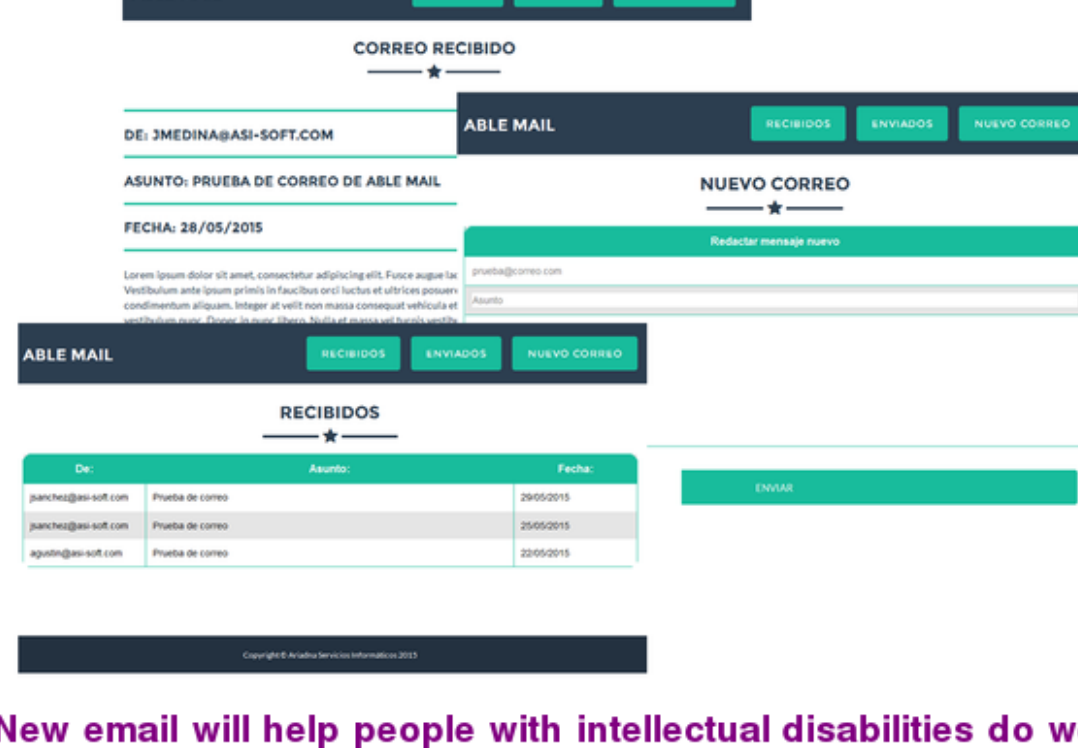
People with intellectual disabilities like Facebook most

Building Bridges Training (in short, BBT) is an organisation from the United Kingdom. They talked to many people with intellectual disabilities to find out what type of technology their use and what they do when they go online.

They found out that three quarters of the people had access to internet. Most of them went on the internet from home. Most people went on Facebook, Google, Youtube, and on videogame sites. They also used the Internet to shop, to find things about their hobbies, and to read about sport.

Many people liked tablets best. They thought tablets were fast, thought they were easy to take with you everywhere and had many useful apps.

Some people also found going online difficult. They thought websites needed too many passwords and that payments were too hard for them to do online. They were also worried that people they didn't know could see their personal information.



New email will help people with intellectual disabilities do well in their jobs

The Able to Include Project wants to help people with intellectual disabilities in all parts of their lives. A lot of people with intellectual disabilities want to get jobs. To get a job, they need a lot of skills. For example they need to be able to send emails. That is hard for some people with intellectual disabilities. Able to Include Partners decided to help them. They will create an email that is very easy to understand and that people with intellectual disabilities can use without problems. The email will offer the possibility:

- to translate text into easy-to-read
- to turn written text into spoken words
- to change written text into pictures

This email will be tested in Spain by people with intellectual disabilities themselves.



