



News digest

Welcome to the first issue of the Able to Include Project Newsletter

Able to Include is an innovative new project run by [partners](#) from five European countries. Knowing that many technological tools suitable for mainstream use, and even some particularly designed for disabled people, are not accessible for persons with intellectual disabilities, **Able to Include** aims to create a technical solution that ensures people with intellectual disabilities can use applications to lead fulfilling, independent lives.

In this groundbreaking project, partners will integrate a set of existing technologies to create an open-source and context-aware accessibility layer which will integrate with current and future technological tools. The project will test the accessibility layer in three usage scenarios over a 14-month period.

In practice, partners will create three key tools:

- A text and content simplifier
- A pictogram-text, text-pictogram and pictogram-pictogram translation tool
- Text-to-speech functionalities

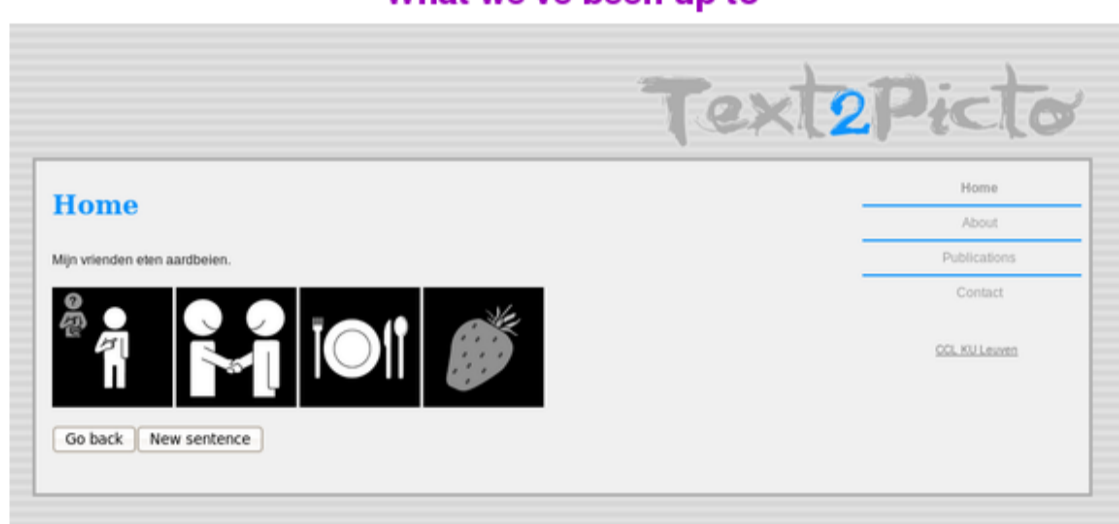
Able to Include will also produce an open source Software Developer Kit that will promote the introduction of the accessibility layer for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in any software development environment.

We hope you will enjoy this newsletter, and look forward to your comments and suggestions.

Best regards,
The **Able to Include** Consortium



What we've been up to



CCL Leuven develops Text-to-pictograph and Pictograph-to-text Translation

Within the **Able to Include** framework, the [Centre for Computational Linguistics \(CCL\) at the University of Leuven](#) has been working on the creation of fully automatic tools to convert natural language texts into pictographs and pictographs into natural language texts. Three natural languages (Dutch, English and Spanish) and two pictographic languages (Beta and Sclera) are currently involved in the translation process. By developing systems for translating text to pictographs and vice versa, which make websites and mainstream applications, such as social media and web mail, accessible, the CCL will contribute to the e-inclusion of persons with intellectual disabilities. Moreover, supporting written text with simplified images allows organizations and companies to easily reach out to a large group of people that previously had none or only very limited access to digital written content. [Read more](#)



People with intellectual disabilities take part in Thomas More focus groups

In October and the beginning of November, Able to Include partner [Thomas More](#) held their first two rounds of focus groups designed specifically for people with intellectual disabilities. Working together with applied psychology students who will write their theses on the focus groups, they interviewed many enthusiastic participants who were happy to discuss their experiences with social media.

Thomas More also invited the same participants to train them about all of the possibilities that using social media could open up for them. Occupational therapy students created a game for them that included three types of tasks: a "to do" task, multiple choice questions and a bonus challenge. The tasks included learning how to work with a tablet, opening the right application, posting a picture on Facebook, leave a comment on someone's profile, or having a video conversation. While learning and enjoying themselves, participants helped the organisers collect a large amount of relevant data. [Read more](#)



Ariadna presents Able to Include project at large mobility congress

Innovative technology company [Ariadna Services Informáticos](#) presented the **Able to Include** project to an audience of stakeholders at the 'Ciudades que caminan' (Walking Cities) Congress in Pontevedra. The project was introduced to academics, organisations from the intellectual disabilities field and self-advocates.

The [Ciudades que caminan Network](#) is an international association open to all municipalities and government agencies interested in improving the situation of pedestrians through the implementation and sharing of initiatives focusing on the improvement of universal accessibility, road safety and the environment. [Read more](#)

A User-Centred Accessibility Layer

Able to Include aims to improve the quality of life of people with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities (IDD) by creating a new open User Centred Accessibility Layer that will empower our target group to use internet and social media applications on their phone, tablets and personal computers. This will be done by providing text simplification, pictograph conversions and text-to-speech services that will make the applications extremely easy to use.

The system will be tested in three pilot studies involving real life situations, implemented in Spain, Belgium and the UK, in close collaboration with several associations for intellectually disabled individuals. [Read more](#)

Where we've been

[MAC](#) disseminated **Able to Include** at the Irish Horizon 2020 Information Day. They have also presented the Accessibility layer at the ICT Proposers Day in Florence.

KU Leuven presented the Text2Picto tool at the Third Symposium of the Support Fund Marguerite-Marie Delacroix. Leen Sevens, Vincent Vandeghinste, and Frank Van Eynde from the same university also had a paper accepted at the [LG-LP 2014 workshop](#), while Vincent Vandeghinste and Ineke Schuurman presented means of using pictographs at the International Conference on Language Resources and Evaluation.

Simplext was featured on the Pompeu Fabra University's [web page](#). Horacio Saggon, from the Pompeu Fabra, also talked about [numerical simplification](#) at the International Conference on Language Resources and Evaluation.



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