

ANALYSIS OF THE SELF-EVALUATION TOOL: A PILOT STUDY*

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ABSTRACT

This article focuses on the analysis of the self-evaluation tool developed under the SET4Inclusion project, with a particular emphasis on its application within the context of a pilot study. Pilot studies are crucial for testing the validity and reliability of new tools or methods. The primary objective of this pilot study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the Self-Evaluation Tool (SET) developed within the SET4Inclusion project in facilitating e-inclusion processes in higher education institutions (HEIs). The pilot study began with the preparation of an invitation letter, which was sent to potential participants. The pilot study involved participants from higher education institutions in five different European countries: Turkey, Portugal, Slovenia, Italy, and Spain. The number of HEIs participating in the piloting was at least five, with at least fifty HEI teachers involved.

KEYWORDS

SET4Inclusion project, Self-Evaluation Tool, Micro Learning Units

1 INTRODUCTION

The rapidly evolving dynamics within higher education have made inclusivity and accessibility more significant than ever before. The increasing number of students with diverse learning needs, including those with disabilities, necessitates a comprehensive approach to ensure equitable access to education. The rise of digital tools and technologies offers novel opportunities to foster e-inclusivity, particularly within Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). This process not only contributes to enhancing student success rates but also plays a vital role in promoting fairness and justice in education. Inclusivity is closely linked to student satisfaction and academic achievement, making it a strategic priority for HEIs [2].

Modern higher education systems are increasingly focused on acknowledging student diversity and creating educational environments that effectively respond to this diversity.

The SET4Inclusion project is a European collaborative initiative designed to tackle these challenges by developing and implementing self-evaluation tools tailored for HEIs. These tools are intended to help institutions critically assess their current practices, identify gaps, and take concrete steps toward creating a more inclusive educational environment. By enabling institutions to analyze their performance, self-evaluation tools create an internal cycle of continuous improvement [1]. They provide not just a snapshot of the current state but also support the development of forward-looking improvement strategies. When viewed through the lens of inclusivity, such tools significantly enhance the capacity of learning environments to cater to the needs of all students, irrespective of their backgrounds or abilities.

This article focuses on the analysis of the self-evaluation tool developed under the SET4Inclusion project, with a particular emphasis on its application within the context of a pilot study. Pilot studies are crucial for testing the validity and reliability of new tools or methods. They serve as a foundational step before wider implementation and can provide valuable insights into the practical challenges and opportunities associated with new initiatives [3]. In this study, key elements such as the functionality of the self-evaluation tool and the developed micro-learning units in diverse contexts, areas requiring improvement, and user feedback will be thoroughly evaluated. The results of the pilot study have facilitated necessary adjustments to the tool and units before their broader application in various HEIs across Europe.

*Article Title Footnote needs to be captured as Title Note

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Figure 1: Home page of Self-Evaluation Tool



Figure 2: Home page of e-learning materials

2 METHODOLOGY

The primary objective of this pilot study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the Self-Evaluation Tool (SET) developed within the SET4Inclusion project in facilitating e-inclusion processes in higher education institutions (HEIs). The pilot study began with the preparation of an invitation letter, which was sent to potential participants. This letter provided detailed information about the project, the scope of the pilot study, and the tools that participants would be evaluating. Links to the tools and a survey were included in the invitation, allowing participants to engage directly with the materials.

The tools developed for the project, including the Self-Evaluation Tool and the associated micro-learning units, were distributed to participants via email. Participants were given a two-week period to complete their evaluations. At the end of this period, they were asked to complete a survey that provided feedback on their experiences with the micro-learning units and the self-evaluation process.

2.1 Participants

The pilot study involved participants from higher education institutions in five different European countries: Turkey, Portugal, Slovenia, Italy, and Spain. The number of HEIs participating in the piloting was at least five, with at least fifty HEI teachers involved. Participants were selected based on voluntary participation, and efforts were made to ensure diversity by including individuals from various departments and academic levels. This approach aimed to gather a wide range of perspectives and insights, thereby enriching the study's findings.

Table 1: Number of participants

No	Participants	f(x)
1	HEI participating	5
2	HEI teachers	50

2.2 Instruments

The key instruments used in this research were the Self-Evaluation Tool and the Micro Learning Units developed within the SET4Inclusion project. The Self-Evaluation Tool was designed to assist HEIs in assessing their e-inclusion processes,

identifying areas for improvement, and implementing strategies to enhance inclusivity. The Micro Learning Units complemented the tool by providing focused, easily accessible learning content that could be used to support inclusive practices within the institutions. Participants used these tools to evaluate and reflect on the e-inclusion processes in their respective institutions.

2.3 Data Collection

The key instruments used in this research were the Self-Evaluation Tool and the Micro Learning Units developed within the SET4Inclusion project. The Self-Evaluation Tool was designed to assist HEIs in assessing their e-inclusion processes, identifying areas for improvement, and implementing strategies to enhance inclusivity. The Micro Learning Units complemented the tool by providing focused, easily accessible learning content that could be used to support inclusive practices within the institutions. Participants used these tools to evaluate and reflect on the e-inclusion processes in their respective institutions.

2.4 Data Analysis

The data collected from the surveys were systematically analyzed using graphical representation methods to visualize the feedback and results. These graphs provided clear insights into the effectiveness of the Self-Evaluation Tool and the micro-learning units. The feedback from participants was thoroughly reviewed, with particular attention paid to their suggestions for improvements and their overall experience with the tool. The analysis revealed several key areas where the tool could be refined and optimized to better meet the needs of HEIs and their diverse student populations.

The pilot study's findings provided valuable information that will inform the further development and dissemination of the Self-Evaluation Tool. The insights gained from this study will help ensure that the tool is effective, user-friendly, and capable of supporting HEIs in their efforts to create more inclusive learning environments. As the tool is refined and prepared for broader application, these findings will serve as a crucial foundation for its successful implementation.

In conclusion, the pilot study of the Self-Evaluation Tool developed under the SET4Inclusion project has yielded significant insights into the tool's effectiveness and the user experiences associated with it. The feedback gathered from participants has highlighted both the strengths and areas for improvement, which will be addressed in the subsequent development phases. By incorporating these insights, the tool will be better equipped to support HEIs in fostering inclusivity and accessibility in their educational offerings. The study also underscores the importance of pilot testing in the development of educational tools, as it provides a critical opportunity to refine and enhance the tools before they are implemented on a larger scale.

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