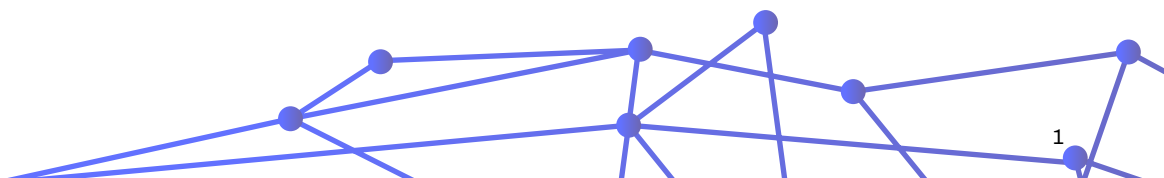


SEKEHE

CO-TEACHING

Handbook Part 2/4



SEHEKE
Co-teaching
Handbook part 2/4

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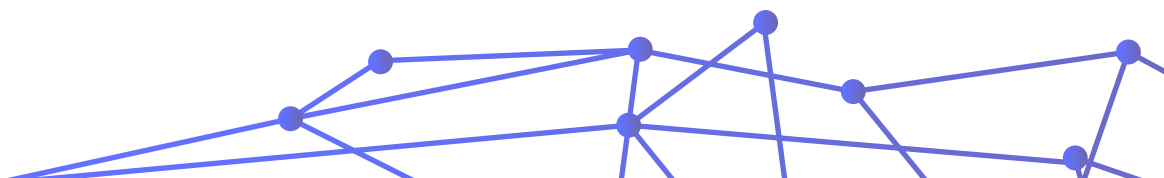
2025



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Introduction

The SEKEHE project represents a strategic partnership between The University of Applied Sciences and Arts Ghent, the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Ghent University, the University of Milano-Bicocca and the University of Ostrava. This international collaboration brings together a wide range of expertise focused on the structural embedment of experiential knowledge in higher education.

One of the core objectives of the SEKEHE project is to structurally embed experiential knowledge into the curriculum and culture of each partner organisation through co-teaching practices. Co-teaching is understood as a collaborative approach involving experts by experience and teaching staff in the design, delivery, and evaluation of academic courses.

Recognizing that each partner organisation has unique cultural contexts, strengths and challenges, the SEKEHE project developed the 'flower framework' as a tool for mapping these elements and monitoring the co-teaching process. The flower framework consists of eight dimensions related to (1) the actors involved in co-teaching activities and (2) the embedment of experiential knowledge within these activities. It provides a structured approach in both visualising and analysing the dynamics of co-teaching.

Each partner documented their co-teaching practice using the flower framework, which included a summary, an abstract and a detailed description. These comprehensive overviews capture the essence of each partner's co-teaching practice, highlighting relevant key elements. To further facilitate knowledge exchange and deepen collective insights, the SEKEHE project employed a variety of complementary methods:

- a. Chain letter on experiential knowledge: Initiated at the project kick-off in Ostrava in December 2022, the chain letter allowed the project partners to share perspectives on experiential knowledge, fostering mutual understanding, and the development of a shared conceptual framework.
- b. Posters of co-teaching practices: Each partner developed visual posters representing their co-teaching activities. These posters illustrate the context and implementation of co-teaching practices, as well as the lessons learned and current challenges.
- c. Key incidents: Each partner identified two key incidents—meaningful or impactful events or moments within co-teaching. These incidents were used as analytical tools to examine pivotal moments that offered insights, prompted change or emphasized critical aspects of a situation, behaviour or process.
- d. Group discussion in Trondheim: Held in September 2023, an evaluation meeting provided the opportunity to collectively reflect on the meaning and significance of both experiential knowledge and co-teaching, generating new insights.
- e. Photovoice: This participatory methodology was employed to assess the impact of co-teaching practices across the various domains of the flower framework. It provides a platform for capturing the perspectives of all stakeholders involved, enabling ongoing reflection and improvement of our co-teaching practices.

The resulting documentation offers a rich and multidimensional overview of the innovative co-teaching practices developed within the project. It consolidates key reflections, lessons learned and shared experiences into a comprehensive synthesis. As such, it serves as a valuable resource for advancing co-teaching methodologies, strengthening institutional practices and fostering a deeper understanding of experiential knowledge within academic settings.

2. The flower framework

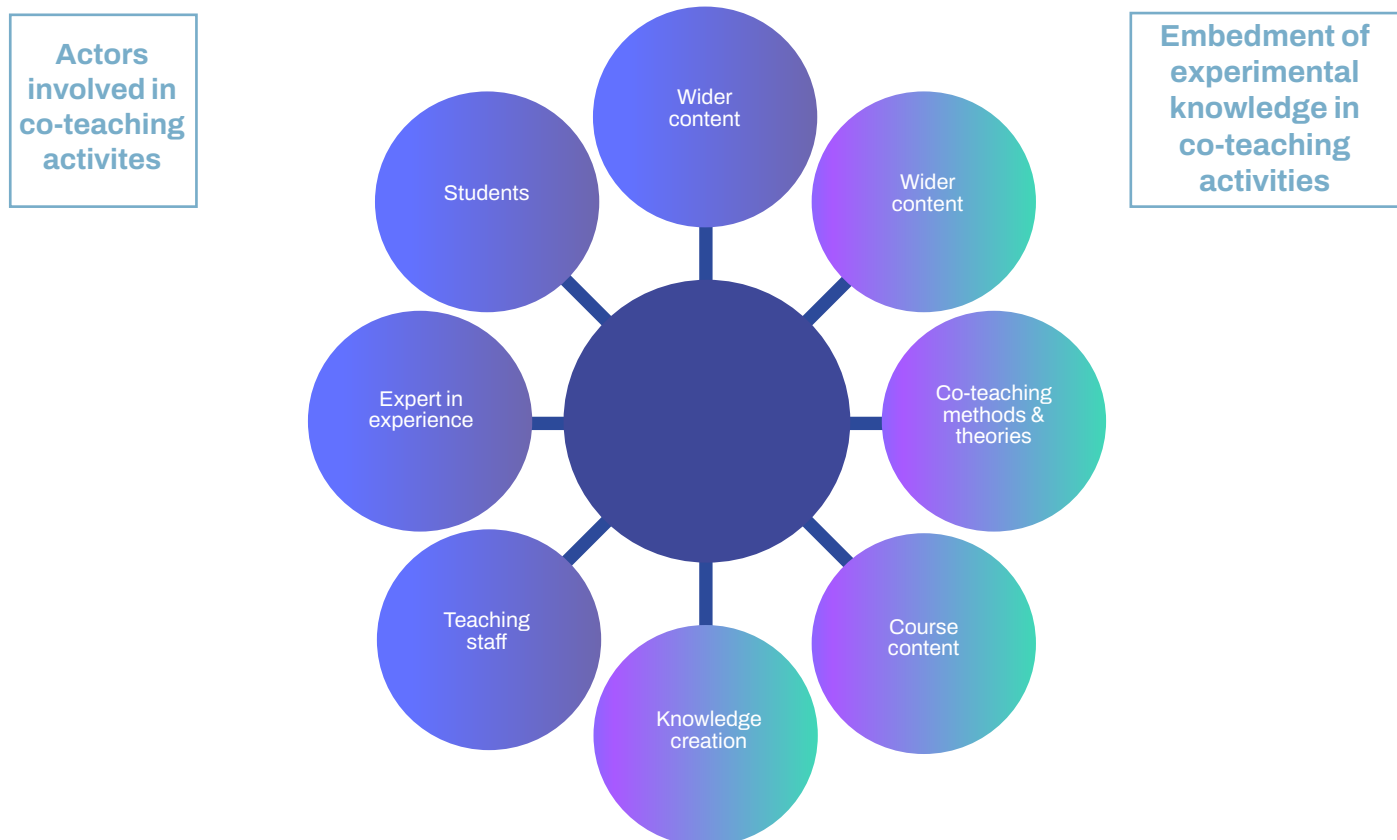
The flower framework provides a structured approach in both visualising and analysing the dynamics of co-teaching. It was developed with an appreciation for the unique cultural contexts, strengths and challenges of each partner organisation. The flower framework consists of eight dimensions related to (1) the actors involved in co-teaching activities and (2) the embedment of experiential knowledge within these activities.

2.1 Development of the flower framework

In the first phase of the SEKEHE project, we developed the flower framework to help monitor the process of embedding co-teaching into our teaching practices. This framework supports the documentation of key aspects such as the involved actors, timelines, processes, dynamics, and envisioned milestones for each co-teaching activity. The framework's supports learning from individual co-teaching practices, fosters collective understanding, and inspires others.

The development of the flower framework followed a two-stage process. In the first stage, we gathered information from each partner regarding their perspective on experiential knowledge and its integration through co-teaching. This allowed us to identify, organise and categorise common elements, resulting in the creation of the initial version of the flower framework. In the second stage, we refined this framework based on feedback from each project partner. Additionally, piloting the framework in our co-teaching practices helped us identify ambiguities and improve the clarity and relevance of the guiding questions.

This process resulted in a flower-shaped framework, as shown in Figure 1, consisting of eight dimensions related to (1) the actors involved in co-teaching activities and (2) the embedment of experiential knowledge within these activities.

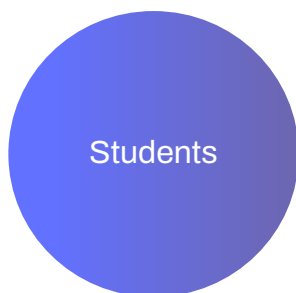


2.2 Guiding questions

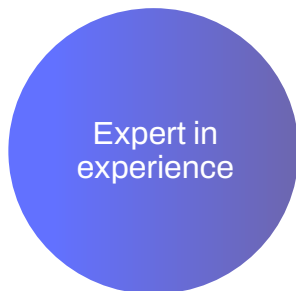
Each dimension of the flower framework is accompanied by a non-exhaustive list of guiding questions, as outlined in Figure 2. These questions serve as practical tools to explore each dimension, enabling users to better understand their co-teaching practice, recognize strengths, identify challenges and establish future goals.



- What is the vision and policy on co-teaching knowledge in your organization?
- How do you monitor the way the co-teaching activities also might influence the organization?
- Which theoretical framework underpins the co-teaching activities?
- Who is considered an expert by experience in your organization?
- Do teaching staff and experts by experience receive a training in co-teaching?



- How do students experience the co-teaching activities?
- What methods do you use to monitor student experiences?
- Is there attention paid towards students with experiential knowledge on the taught topics? How?



- What are the experiences of the experts by experience on the co-teaching activities?
- What are the experiences of experts by experience regarding their relationship with the co-teacher?
- How do you currently monitor these experiences?
- How are involved experts by experience paid/ acknowledged for their work?



- What are the experiences of the teaching staff on the co-teaching activities?
- What are the experiences of the teaching staff regarding their relationship with the expert by experience?
- How do you currently monitor these experiences?



Wider content

- What is the vision and policy regarding the role of experiential knowledge in your organization?
- Which aspects underlie this vision? Is there any theoretical framework?
- When is this vision challenged?
- What status are you willing and able to assign to experiential knowledge? To what extent does this status fit within the system of higher education? How do you ensure it fits?
- What counts as experiential knowledge in your organization and what not?
- When do you (do not) use experiential knowledge?
- How do you implement experiential knowledge into co-teaching?
- Which conditions are necessary to make co-teaching successful?

Co-teaching methods & theories

- How do the teaching activities take shape?
- Which teaching methods (e.g. lecture, storytelling, interactive group work,...) do you use in the co-teaching activities?
- How do you monitor and evaluate these methods?
- What is monitored? And how? What is done with the collected information? What lessons have you learned from this?
- How does the evaluation of the course take place?

Course content

- How and when is experiential knowledge embedded in the content of the teaching activities?
- How do you co-create the content of the teaching activities? Who sets the agenda?
- How do you monitor the content creation of the teaching activities?
- What is monitored? And how? What is done with the collected information? What lessons have you learned from this?

Knowledge creation

- Which (type of) knowledge do you want to create? / What is the purpose of using experiential knowledge?
- What conditions must be met to realize this?
- How do you translate this into your vision about experiential knowledge and co-teaching?
- How do the teaching activities contribute to this?
- How could we monitor this? What is monitored? And how? What is done with the collected information? What lessons have you learned from this?

3. Innovative co-teaching practices

This section presents the innovative co-teaching practices employed by each partner organisation within the scope of the SEKEHE project, using the flower framework as a central guide.

3.1 Innovative co-teaching practice: The University of Applied Sciences and Arts Ghent

The School of Social Welfare at The University of Applied Sciences and Arts Ghent acknowledges the importance of knowledge by experience and embraces it as a strategic policy choice. As such there is an explicit choice to integrate experts by experience through co-teaching in social work and special needs education.

The general idea is that knowledge by experience is crucial to integrate professional and academic knowledge. This integration of knowledge is essential for the education of students, so that they are fully aware of their impact and possibilities to contribute to the realisation of human rights in practice. Co-teaching is one way of developing a more lived experience-oriented education. In the Erasmus+ project SEKEHE we're experimenting with two courses.

The course on 'Community Based Work' has been built by two teachers and one expert by experience from scratch. As a team they decided on the structure, goals, and content of the course. They worked towards an integration of academic, professional and experiential knowledge.

There were 12 classes in which 10 were co-taught by an expert by experience and a lecturer. The other classes were performed by professionals from practice, but they were asked to integrate lived experience of knowledge by experience through video, audio, and/or texts written by people with knowledge by experience. So, the team performed 80 hours of co-teaching. In addition, for each class they had four hours of preparation time in order to integrate perspectives and create the content of the class. So, they also had 40 hours of preparation time together.

The course on 'Poverty and Social Exclusion' integrated an expert by experience in tandem with one lecturer. This means that they are responsible for the co-teaching of two class groups, which are 280 students in total. The content of the course was already developed. In order to develop the co-teaching time was needed to get to know each other and integrate perspectives on the content of the course.

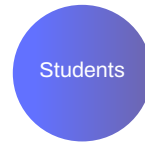
There were 5 theoretical classes that were co-taught for two groups, with each 140 students. So, in total ten classes of two hours were taught to 280 students. The preparation of each class took 3 hours, so we see a total of 15 hours preparation time. Additionally, the wider team met three times which took 6 hours in total.

This tandem of a lecturer and an expert by experience also co-taught a group of 15 students that are combining working with studying. This group received 4 co-taught classroom meetings of 3 hours, which also required 9 hours total preparation time. They also provided one online feedback moment of 3 hours and were present in the presentation of their assignments which also took 3 hours.

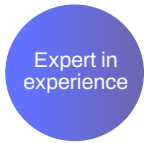
There were also 5 practice-oriented classes that were co-taught. Info on this is coming soon. More comprehensive details about this co-teaching practice can be found on our project website.



The experience of concrete stories and insights that relate to 'here and now' contribute to a deeper learning: students are able to switch perspectives and to put themselves in other people's shoes. However, mixing knowledge by experience and theory can create uncertainty.



Knowledge by experience is crucial to integrate professional and academic knowledge. Co-teaching is one way of developing a more lived experience-oriented education. There is however not a clear vision or framework on the why, how, and what of co-teaching.



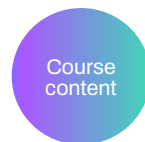
Experts by experience feel that their contributions are valued and relevant for the learning processes of students. Experiences are the most positive when there is space to determine the content, structure and goals of the course. Taking time to get to know each other is crucial for successful co-teaching. However, the institutional problem of fragmentation of assignments diminishes time for exchange and relation building.



Teaching staff values the lived experiences and stories 'from the inside' as essential to support the learning of students. They refer to the importance of time, common ground, respect and safety regarding relation building.



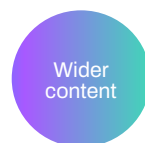
The kind of knowledge that is being created is an integration of professional, academic and experiential knowledge. Knowledge is also created on the process of co-teaching and bringing together different sources of knowledge.



Knowledge by experience is embedded during the preparation and the teaching of the classes. This translates itself in giving examples from day-to-day life, by rewriting the theoretical framework together, through mutual decision making ..



Lived experiences are being integrated through video and text written by people with knowledge by experience, storytelling, interactive teaching and shared presenting.



Knowledge by experience (individual and/or collective) is being developed from embodied experiences in relation to a wide scope of 'social problems'. Our policy acknowledges its importance and embraces it as a strategic policy choice, for example through being supportive of the integration of paid experts by experience.

3.2 Innovative co-teaching practice: Norwegian University of Science and Technology

The Department of Education and Lifelong Learning at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) is a knowledge environment for research, education and communication in the social sciences. The department contributes with research-based knowledge on childhood and adolescence, school, education and work life in a lifelong perspective. The department's fields of study and research are education, adult learning, counselling science, educational development and child research. We have long acknowledged the importance of including knowledge by experience in both research and teaching. Also, the University as such has a general and recognized focus on supporting and including lived experience in promoting wellbeing and mental and physical health.

This has long facilitated the university collaboration with National Center for Experienced Knowledge, and also KBT Occupational College. The underlying premise is to ensure equal participation in research and education, maintaining human rights and including lived experience as an equal source of knowledge. Co-teaching is one way of developing a more lived experience-oriented education. In the Erasmus+ project SEKEHE we're experimenting with two courses.

The two courses on (1) 'Relational Welfare and Well-being' were co-created between two university teachers and three experts by experience having different forms of lived experience. As a team they decided on the structure, goals, and content of the course. They worked towards an integration of academic, professional and experiential knowledge. There were seminar-based classes in which all were co-taught by an expert by experience and a teacher. (2) The course on 'Leading Relational Welfare and co-creation' integrated involvement of two experts by experience in planning and teaching. The most meaningful and important topic was how to integrate lived experience with the theory on the curriculum and skills training for the students.

More comprehensive details about this co-teaching practice can be found on our project website.

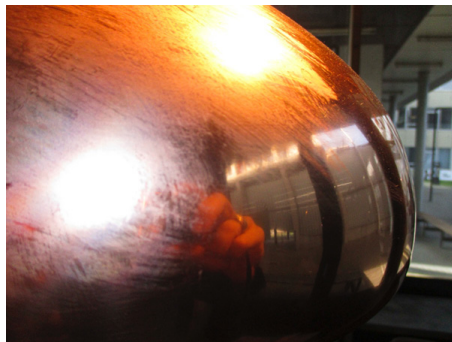
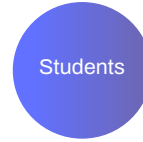


Photo 1: Looking for change - researcher

Photo 2: Opening up to different worlds - researcher



NTNU envisions co-teaching as a means to enhance collaboration between experts by experience (hired individuals and academics with lived experiences) and academics to promote more useful and equal knowledge and practice development. This practice is grounded in collaborative, dialogical and participatory theories.



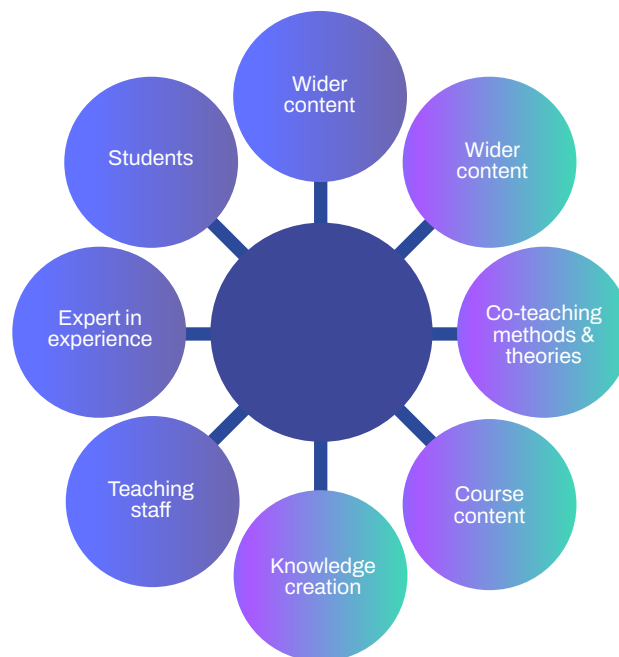
Students find that co-teaching activities help them better understand theory, apply it in practice, grasp real-life complexities and enhance their overall understanding and reflexivity. Theory can create uncertainty.



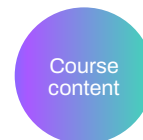
Experts by experience feel valued and believe they can influence teaching activities and student development.



Teaching staff believes that students are more engaged and have a better grasp of complex topics. They have a good collaboration with experts by experience



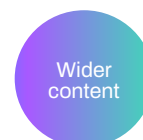
Theoretical and practical knowledge is created. Experiential knowledge also changes mindsets and attitudes.



Experiential knowledge is embedded into the teaching content. At the start of the semester, courses are collaboratively planned, including literature, sessions and exams.



Courses are co-created using storytelling, interactive group work, brief lectures, debates and other collaborative methods.



NTNU in general doesn't have a specific vision on co-teaching, but NTNU ~: Nordic Research Centre for Wellbeing and Social Sustainability aims to integrate experiential knowledge (personal challenges and professional insights gained from working with affected individuals) with academic knowledge. This co-teaching framework is based on social justice, mattering, capabilities

3.3 Innovative co-teaching practice: Ghent University (UGent)

The Department of Special Needs Education at Ghent University defines Clinical Orthopedagogics as a science of action that focuses on improving living situations, quality of life, inclusion and participation of people in complex, socially vulnerable living situations. The concept of science of action implies a strong connection between theory and practice. This is translated into the embedment of knowledge by experience as a learning path throughout the entire training.

This discourse can be traced back to the early years of the Department, when students received their training in practice. Although an increase in the number of students put pressure on this way of working, the belief that professional and experiential knowledge are essential to a high-quality and client-oriented vision on orthopedagogics persisted.

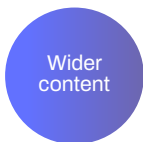
The Department believes the potential of the structural embedment of experiential knowledge is twofold. Experiential knowledge enables the concretization of complex academic concepts. To share a story or to ask an open question opens a debate that triggers critical reflection on these concepts and their meanings in people's daily lives. The ability to flexibly use and reflect on these academic concepts contributes in turn to the development of a basic orthopedagogical attitude with respect, openness, trust, involvement, and professionalism as core values. Vice versa, this attitude makes it possible to keep an open mind and a critical approach.

In order to realise this vision, the close involvement of partner organisations and individual experts by experience, as well as a supportive university framework, are crucial. For example, Onze Nieuwe Toekomst ('Our New Future') and Steunpunt voor Inclusie by Ouders voor Inclusie ('Support Center for Inclusion' by 'Parents for Inclusion') have their office at the Department. Individual experts by experience, whose experiential knowledge as well as their degree of involvement differs, also easily find their way to the Department. The proximity of these experts by experience makes it possible to respond appropriately to their educational ambitions and (support) needs. Conversely, their presence offers the opportunity to easily provide feedback and adjust the mutual collaboration if necessary. An equal, human interaction lies at the basis of this.

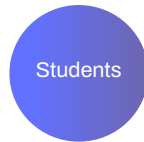
The teaching staff, who are all part of the Department's collective, contribute to this vision through the (co-)creation of their courses. Already in the design of each course, the agendas of the expert by experience and the teaching staff are aligned with each other aimed at co-creating substantive added value to the course. The way in which this happens varies depending on the involvement of the expert(s) by experience in a certain subject. In the case of co-teaching, this asks for a more intense collaboration



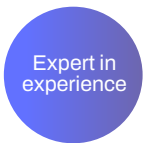
Photo 3: Belonging - experts by experience, teacher & researcher



The close involvement of partner organisations and individual experts by experience as well as a supportive university framework is crucial for embedding experiential knowledge as a learning path.



Students embrace experiential knowledge as part of the curriculum. Nevertheless, it remains a challenge to give students' experiential knowledge a respectful place within the department. Theory can create uncertainty.



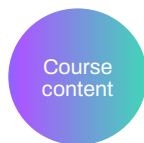
Experts by experience acknowledge receiving the necessary support but critique the various barriers that impede equal participation.



The close collaboration between the department and experts by experience is viewed as an opportunity to address fundamental injustices and to educate future practitioners about integrative-holistic



Experiential knowledge challenges and complements academic knowledge, fostering a more comprehensive and holistic learning environment. It deepens and concretizes academic knowledge, changes and optimizes students' foundational attitudes and provides insight into real-world practices.



The agendas of the expert by experience and the teaching staff are aligned with each other aimed at creating substantive added value to the course. Sufficient space is always reserved to evaluate the experiential knowledge imparted.



In addition to various formats (such as case studies, testimonials, internship experiences, podcasts, group assignments, co-teaching, etc.), certain conditions must be met to effectively integrate experiential knowledge within the academic context of the department.



Experiential knowledge is embedded in the DNA of the Department of Special Needs Education. Despite its prominent presence, the great attention and appreciation for it, experiential knowledge does not always receive the recognition it deserves.

In what follows, we present one specific course in which co-teaching is currently embedded. Disability Studies explores the transdisciplinary research area of Disability Studies, Mad Studies, Crip Studies, Dis/Crit... and looks at how ableism affects the lives of people with disabilities. It is developed together with students, external stakeholders, and international colleagues and tries to link to following strategic goals: multiperspectivism, diversity and how to handle it, critical paradigm and research, scientific research and how to link it with trying to get societal impact. It involves experiential knowledge in three ways:

1. Lived experiences are an important part of the theoretical component: researchers with disabilities present their research.
2. Every assignment relates back to things that matter to people with disabilities: actions have a direct impact on their lives. Additionally, ways are sought in which people with disabilities and/or their networks can guide these exercises.
3. People labelled as disabled are actively invited to participate in the course. The larger group of students observes the interactions between the teaching staff and the person with a disability, making them part of the learning experience.

More comprehensive details about this co-teaching practice can be found on our project website.

3.4 Innovative co-teaching practice: University of Milano-Bicocca

In the realm of mental health, the University of Milano-Bicocca (UNIMIB) assumes the responsibility of equipping education professionals to actively contribute to the development of a community that nurtures the mental well-being of its population. This involves the cultivation of innovative educational perspectives to champion the dimensions of inclusion, recovery and empowerment, often overlooked in the practicalities of daily life. Experts by experience in mental health play a pivotal role in this process, offering a distinctive contribution to educational practices. However, the opportunities for EBEs to engage in the university's teaching are frequently confined to sharing their personal illness narratives.

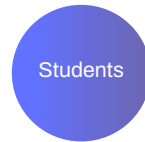
The Department of Human Sciences for Education from the University of Milano-Bicocca, building upon these principles and aligned with the goals of the Erasmus+ SEKEHE project (Structural Embedding of Knowledge by Experience in Higher Education through Processes of Co-creation), has for the first time enlisted two EBEs as formal collaborators in departmental teaching activities.

Specifically, within SEKEHE, UNMIB engaged two experts by experiences in mental health from the Cooperativa Lotta Contro l'Emarginazione (CoopLotta) in designing and delivering select lessons in the Course 'Pedagogy of Social Inclusion', which is part of the Bachelor's Degree in Educational Sciences in the third year of the academic year 2022/2023. The goal was to co-create experiential knowledge addressing the importance of considering experiential learning in educational work and the establishment of educational services, emanating from a formative and self-formative movement grounded in lived experiences.

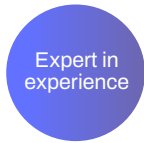
The course comprises 19 lessons (attended by approximately 40 students), with 6 co-facilitated by the two experts by experiences. These 6 lessons were dedicated to the following topics: 'experience of inclusion/exclusion', 'prejudice and social representations in the services landscape', and 'educational experience and method' — two lessons per topic. Within these lessons the following themes were explored: the realm of experience, self-training/the work experts by experience have undertaken on their own experiences, external training and experts by experience in services.



First experience of involving EBEs as formal collaborators for didactic activities in our Department of Human Sciences for Education + individual interviews (IPA) with the employees from the University's Accounting and Administration Office.



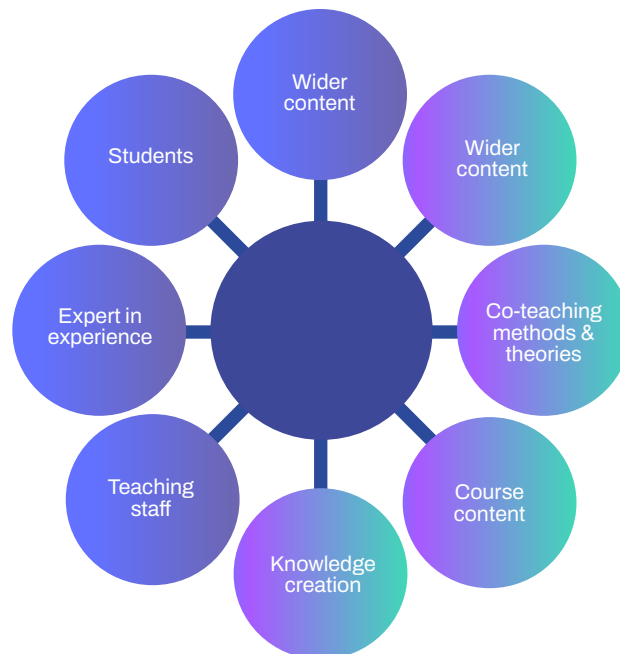
Students were attending the lessons and a final meeting with a reflective and participatory posture (thanks to course's methodologies). Some of them attended a focus group at the end of the course (Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis -IPA).



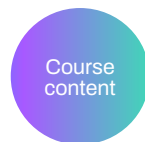
EBEs prepared each lesson during a preparatory meeting with the teaching staff and attended a final meeting at the end of the course. Individual interviews were conducted, using photovoice (IPA), when the course ended.



Teaching staff participated in preparatory meeting with EBEs to prepare the different lessons and attended a final meeting at the end of the course. Individual interviews were conducted, using photovoice (IPA), when the course ended.



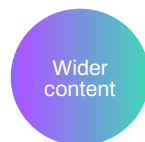
The aim was to create knowledge about the importance of considering experiential knowledge in educational work and in the creation of educational services.



Main topics: a. Experience of Inclusion/Exclusion, b. Social Prejudices and Representations in the Service Landscape and c. Educational Experience and Method Specific themes: a. The experience plan, b. Self-training/work EBEs and c. "External" training and EBEs in services.



Involving two EBEs, not in defining learning goals, but in defining the organisation of the lessons and the instruments used: storytelling, reflective writing, group work creating images and metaphors, group discussions, poster creation, use of photovoice, artbased activities. etc.



1. Starting to reflect about the possibility to embed knowledge by experience in teaching activities. 2. Involving EBEs in co-teaching activities in the "Pedagogy of Social Inclusion" course, part of the Bachelor's Degree in Educational Sciences.

The initial lessons for each topic focused on the sharing of experiences by the experts by experience, while the subsequent lessons delved into individual and group activities for students. The first lessons on each of the three topics recounted the experiences of the two experts by experience. These narratives were dynamic, guided by probing questions from the instructor concerning the pivotal moments in the experts' stories, aiming to foster dialogue and interaction between the narratives of the two experts by experiences. The experts' stories were complemented by more didactic segments, including contributions from the two instructors, the representative from the experts' Cooperative, and the experts by experience themselves (utilizing slides) with the objective of solidifying key concepts emerging from the narratives and collective reflections. Opportunities for dialogue and exchange between the experts by experience and the students were consistently incorporated.

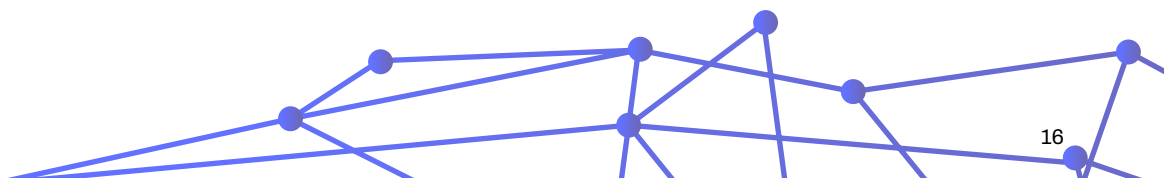
The second lesson on each topic primarily involved student group work (reflective writing, group activities creating images and metaphors, group discussions, poster creation, use of photovoice, art-based activities, etc.). In this context the experts played a supportive role for the students. The experts by experience, along with some classroom tutors, supported the different groups by responding to student queries during various group tasks.

The stakeholders in this co-teaching experience included the teaching-research team, a representative from CoopLotta, the experts by experience, and the students along with two employees from the University's Accounting and Administration Office. The role of the teaching staff (teaching-research team and representative from CoopLotta) was to collaborate with the experts in designing classes and organising a final meeting at the end of the course. The experts by experience co-designed and co-facilitated the classes with support of the teaching staff. They also participated in a final meeting at the end of the course in order to reflect on their experiences with the co-teaching. Thanks to the methodologies employed during the sessions, the students engaged in the lessons with a reflective and participatory posture. The employees from the University's Accounting and Administration Office managed the entire selection process for the experts by experience in the project, involving the experts by experience for the first time as formal collaborators at UNIMIB.

We opted for a comprehensive evaluation involving the different stakeholders for monitoring of co-teaching.



Photo 4: Overcoming barriers - researcher

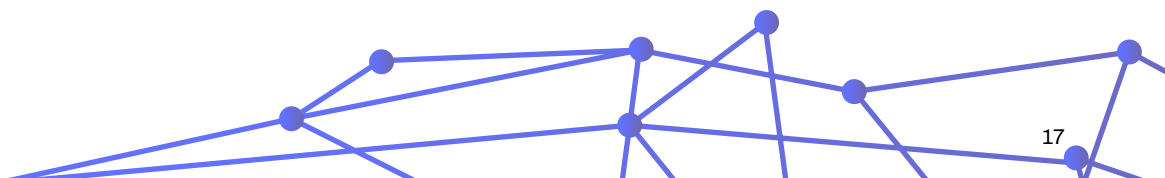


A subset of these stakeholders participated in an exploratory qualitative investigation, based on the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) approach, conducted from March to July 2023. The objective was to understand the meanings, opinions and perspectives of the stakeholders regarding this educational experience.

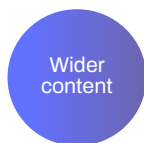
A focus group was conducted with four students, while the other stakeholders (a researcher-faculty from the SEKEHE working group at the University of Milan Bicocca, the coordinator from the CoopLotta, the two experts by experience, and the employees of the University's Accounting and Administration Office) were interviewed through semi-structured individual interviews. Except for the interviews with the two employees, the Photovoice technique was employed in support of the focus group and interviews.

Overall, this experience translates into significant personal and organisational impacts related to the consolidation, expansion, and activation of carefully designed practices in the practicalities of everyday life, albeit facing the constraints that it imposes.

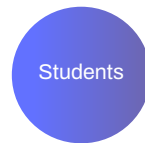
More comprehensive details about this co-teaching practice can be found on our project website.



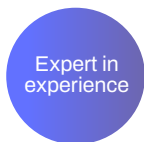
3.5 Innovative co-teaching: practice University of Ostrava (UO)



Our vision is to include application of lived experience as a minimum standard of Social Work programmes, which serves as guidance to all Czech departments of Social Work. Further we wish to sustain and develop coteaching activities and cooperation between experts by experience and academicians at our Faculty.



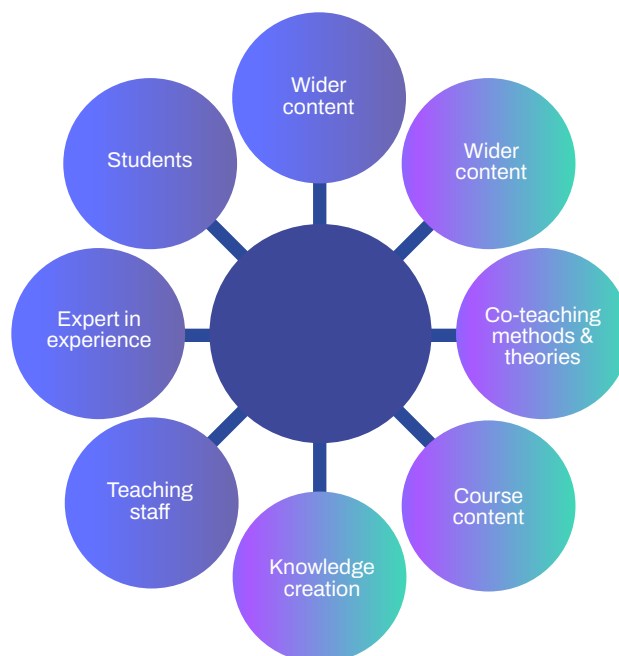
Students are very supportive towards experts by experience, but they less reflect on their own experiences and application of the stories into their future practice. Some students became our experts by experience, and vice versa so we recognize there are overlaps in those two groups. But we have not systematically approached this issue yet.



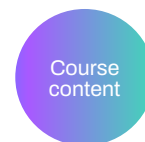
We currently have a group of 14 experts by experience. They are paid at the same rate as external teachers/practitioners. We also organize team meetings, Christmas party, and once a year a weekend training (a trip in the mountains).



Teaching staff independently communicate with experts by experience. Contact is facilitated by the coordinators (2 academicians and 1 PhD students) and at a large meeting of teachers and experts in September.



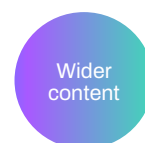
Through the co-teaching activities we create mostly conceptual knowledge (understanding the principles, models, interrelationships between elements in life situation, social services) and procedural knowledge (what are desirable or undesirable procedures) in social work.



The negotiation activity with teachers about the content typically occurs before teaching, but is more “ad hoc” and not a standard part of co-teaching. Experts by experience are rather informed about learning goals, or they are consulted about them. We do not monitor the content creation of the teaching activities.



We use a concept of co-production of knowledge. It is based in critical realism, critical social work, critical pedagogy and poststructuralism. We use storytelling, living library, videos, workshop, role playing, PCS analyses (Thompson), techniques of theatre of the oppressed ...



Our goal is to provide a safe space for expressing this knowledge in the classroom and a learning environment where we can all benefit from sharing this knowledge. The policy of the organization is to support and develop co-teaching activities on the basis of regular evaluation. The organization contributes by partial financing of the salaries of experts by

At the Faculty of Social Studies, we support and develop co-teaching activities on the basis of regular evaluation. Our ultimate vision is to include application of lived experience into the minimum standard of Social Work programmes, which serves as guidance to all Czech departments of Social Work. Our understanding of knowledge by experience is underpinned by the concept of knowledge co-production rooted in critical perspective in social science. By expert by experience we understand the person who uses/used social and/or health services and is willing and able to reflect upon this experience and share it with others. We recognize that our students can also hold such experience, and they have joined our team of experts by experience in the past. Our model of involvement of lived knowledge into higher education consists of collaboration with a team of experts by experience, supported by coordination team (two academicians and one PhD student) who facilitate the communication with interested teachers. Teachers and experts by experience are matched at a large Faculty meeting in September, after which they communicate and prepare their encounter independently. A coordination team provides necessary support, weekend training in storytelling is organised annually and regular meetings are held with experts by experience every two months. As well, a meeting is organised at the beginning of the academic year in September. Methods used in the classroom vary, most of which include storytelling combined with PCS analyses (analysis of oppression according to Thompson), large group discussion, role play, videos, living library format, workshops, and techniques of theatre of the oppressed. Our experts by experience are paid and institutionally are assigned to the position of 'external teachers'. For monitoring our activities on co-teaching, we use photovoice, anonymous written feedback, and group reflection tools. The evaluation is three-sided, completed by teachers, experts by experience, and students.

More comprehensive details about this co-teaching practice can be found on our project website.



Photo 5: Coming home from ribbed travels - expert by experience

4. Synthesis of key elements and challenges in co-teaching practices in higher education

This section presents a comprehensive synthesis of key reflections, lessons learned and shared experiences derived from the rich data collected within the SEKEHE project. The data includes insights from the flower framework, chain letter, posters, key incidents, group discussions, and photovoice. These reflections are organized according to the dimensions of the flower framework. Each subchapter is illustrated with examples and photovoice material from each partner, offering concrete illustrations of the concepts discussed.

4.1 Wider context // Actors involved in co-teaching

Breaking Barriers — Collaborative solutions to involving experts by experience at the University of Milano-Bicocca

The University of Milano-Bicocca faced several challenges in involving experts by experience as formal collaborators for didactic activities. Key obstacles included the lack of formal recognition of the role and competencies of experts by experience within the Italian context, as well as unresolved legal issues concerning one of the candidates. Despite these challenges, the empathetic predisposition and professionalism of the administrative staff played a crucial role in facilitating the process of engaging experts by experience in the SEKEHE project. Furthermore, the staff's clear understanding of the SEKEHE project's objectives and their perception of being part of a collaborative team were instrumental.

Integrating experiential knowledge into higher education through co-teaching requires a collaborative effort among various stakeholders, each playing a vital role in its effective implementation.

The active involvement of experts by experience, supported by a receptive university framework, is essential to establish experiential knowledge as a meaningful and valued learning pathway. Their integration fosters the development of a shared language and understanding around experiential knowledge, creating stability and trust among partners.

A successful co-teaching model relies on forming a collaborative team within an open and supportive environment. Clear expectations, ongoing alignment, active engagement, and close collaboration are essential for building trust and ensuring that each partner feels valued and heard. Although this process requires significant time and effort, it is fundamental for effectively embedding experiential knowledge while maintaining the flexibility needed to adapt to the evolving needs of teachers, experts by experience and students.

Interdependence and interaction are central to this approach. The partnership between experts by experience and academic staff is rooted in mutual respect and the preservation of each partner's unique skillset. Operating within a flexible framework, the collaboration allows for adjustments, including the option for either party to step back if the partnership becomes ineffective. This dynamic, adaptable approach supports a continuous exchange of ideas, refining how experiential knowledge is woven into the curriculum over time.

4.2 Students

Creating safe spaces – Fostering reflective learning at the University of Ostrava

At the University of Ostrava, the combination of the ‘living library’ and essay writing with self-reflective questions helped create an open and trusting atmosphere among students, experts by experience, and teachers. This atmosphere encouraged students to focus on their personal reflections regarding the life stories of experts by experience, the context of these reflections, and the factors influencing their thinking. The course emphasized the importance of identifying personal attitudes and understanding how these attitudes shape professional practices of social work. Students were reassured that their attitudes would not be judged but rather explored collaboratively to deepen self-awareness and better understand social situations encountered in the field. To foster such an atmosphere, the teaching team needed to be transparent, non-judgmental, and as supportive of the self-reflective process as possible. The experience highlighted the sensitivity of students to these qualities in the student-teacher relationship and their critical role in the learning process. At the same time, the team recognized the fragility of fostering and sustaining such attributes in the classroom. While the degree of success varied among individual students, the course demonstrated the potential of this approach to enhance reflective learning and professional growth.

Students highly value co-teaching models for their ability to uncover and challenge implicit biases. Experiential knowledge transforms discomfort and distress into valuable educational tools, creating opportunities for reinterpretation and new meaning. Co-teaching encourages students to engage deeply with lived experiences, enriching their understanding of academic concepts and their practical applications. This process underscores the importance of continuous self-reflection and critical thinking, fostering personal and professional growth.

Living Colourfully: Challenging beliefs and embracing life’s potential at the University of Milano-Bicocca (Lorex image)

“I chose this photo, taken in the corridors of the Milan Porta Garibaldi metro station, because, in my view, it represents the need to broaden our perspective, avoid prejudice, move away from rigid beliefs, embrace reasonable doubts, refrain from judging or dismissing others’ life choices as irrational, remain optimistic and focus on both our own potential and that of others. It’s about believing in change, daring to travel—even with our imagination—living experiences that enrich us and allowing us to spread colour and beauty in the world.” Student



Photo 6: Living Colourfully: Challenging beliefs and embracing life's

The involvement of experts by experience further supports students in reflecting on their own experiences. Experts by experience provide a supportive environment for students to acknowledge and process these reflections. However, engaging with such material can also evoke personal memories, emphasizing the importance of appropriate aftercare to address emotional responses.

Despite these benefits, students often feel that their own experiential knowledge is overlooked or undervalued in training programs. Many express the need for informal, safe and anonymous spaces to express vulnerabilities without fear or judgment. Balancing the visibility of their experiences with the risk of being defined solely by these experiences is a frequent struggle. Academic pressures can also lead students to distance themselves from their own insights, creating obstacles and taboos around sharing personal stories, hindering the full use of these valuable experiences as learning opportunities. This reluctance or inability to share personal stories can significantly affect their educational experiences and professional growth.

4.3 Experts by experience

Navigating the campus – A journey toward belonging at the University of Applied Sciences and Arts Ghent

An expert by experience describes a significant event that had a decisive impact on her sense of belonging:

“I had a meeting with Luc on a campus in Ghent. I was given the address, and the idea was to go through the entrance, follow the road and go through the central hallway. There were all these parking lots and buildings, and I felt like getting lost in the whole thing. This meeting was meant to make me feel welcome, but I felt so small compared to the size of the institute and to the size of the buildings.”

This experience highlights the emotional and psychological challenges experts by experience may face when engaging with large institutional environments. Despite the meeting's intention to create a sense of inclusion, the physical scale and unfamiliarity of the surroundings underscored feelings of alienation, illustrating the importance of considering environmental and logistical factors in fostering a genuine sense of belonging.



Photo 7: Institutional searching - researcherpotential - student

Experiential knowledge, whether individual or collective, stems from embodied experiences where human rights and quality of life have been compromised. While such experiences are often marked by suffering, social exclusion, stigma, trauma and vulnerability, they are equally shaped by resilience, hope, creativity and strength. Recognizing the unique and embodied nature of these experiences is fundamental to fully grasp the depth and scope of experiential knowledge.

What distinguishes experts by experience from others with experiential knowledge is their ability to go beyond recounting personal stories. They know when and how to share these experiences in ways that offer hope and meaning, avoiding self-centred narratives. Their knowledge is grounded in authenticity and self-reflection, marked by a willingness to question everything, including themselves.

Experts by experience generally feel their contributions are most valued when they have the autonomy to shape the content, structure and objectives of the courses they co-teach. Their experiential knowledge becomes a powerful tool for challenging societal myths and prejudices about people in difficult life situations. It is widely recognized as an essential element in students' professional development, fostering empathy, critical thinking and inclusivity. Additionally, experts by experience bring a unique sensitivity—a 'radar'—for identifying and addressing certain themes or situations that may otherwise go unnoticed. This enhances the educational experience but also raises questions about the role of academic training in supporting students who may face vulnerable situations. By sharing their lived experiences, experts by experience contribute to a more inclusive and reflective learning environment, benefiting students, faculty, and themselves.

Experts by experience navigate a complex reality when integrating their knowledge into higher education. They are often placed in a critical role, expected to address challenging questions or confront uncomfortable truths. While this critical voice is vital, it can also lead to feelings of isolation. Experts by experience may feel pressured to avoid being perceived as overly difficult or confrontational. Many have expressed feelings of alienation and insignificance within the academic environment, often overwhelmed by the institution's scale and culture. They face the ongoing challenge of proving their intellectual value in spaces that may not fully recognize the depth of their experiential knowledge. In response, some adopt behaviours such as using complex language in an attempt to align with academic norms and gain recognition as equal among their academic peers. At the same time, they strive to remain accessible and relatable, maintaining the authenticity of their lived experiences. This duality reveals an inner conflict: the desire to belong and be respected within academia while simultaneously grappling with the perception of being outsiders.

Stigma and prejudice remain issues for experts by experience within academic settings. Instances where they are excluded from formal meetings or questioned about their professional qualifications reflect underlying biases that undermine their status as equal colleagues. The informal and evolving nature of experts by experience's roles frequently places them in a precarious position, where they must continuously prove their value while navigating the complexities of their contributions. This situation emphasizes the ongoing need for institutional change and greater inclusivity. Academic institutions must address the structural barriers and biases that hinder the full participation and recognition of experts by experience.



Photo 8: evolution of co-teaching - teacher & expert by experience

4.4 Teaching staff

Beyond theory – Embracing the diversity of lived experiences in family therapy at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology

At the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, one professor shared this pivotal realization:

“Being interested in family therapy, I needed to learn that my lived experiences are different than other families and I never can ‘really’ understand how other families experience their lives. In that sense, we as professionals need to be reverent to all people’s lived experiences, instead of privileging theoretical and abstract knowledge.”

The integration of experiential knowledge into higher education curricula has gained substantial support from teaching staff, who recognize its potential to enhance educational outcomes and foster professional development. Teaching staff view experiential knowledge as a powerful means of illustrating how experiences of adversity can become meaningful educational resources, benefiting both those who share these experiences and those who engage with them.

Teaching staff emphasize that successful collaboration with experts by experience requires time, mutual understanding, respect and safety. These are critical for building relationships among educators, students and experts by experience. When co-teaching is conducted effectively, it fosters a collaborative environment where all participants feel valued as active members of a shared learning process. This facilitates the co-construction, comparison and reflection on the knowledge shared, enriching the educational experience for everyone involved. This process also underscores the importance of providing space within this collaborative process to support not only the professional but also personal growth among educators.

Nonetheless, integrating experiential knowledge comes with its challenges. Insights from working with experts by experience are not consistently applied across all teaching staff, highlighting the need for additional support in engaging with experiential content. Some teaching staff report a lack of facilitation skills necessary to connect these narratives to theoretical concepts and to guide students in avoiding stereotypical interpretations. Additionally, the presence of experts by experience may sometimes evoke feelings of uncertainty or resistance among some teaching staff, as it disrupts established teaching practices and content, posing a perceived threat to the traditional curriculum framework.

On the other hand, the openness and vulnerability often exhibited by experts by experience can promote a safer environment for discussing mental well-being and professional identity. This dynamic prompts teaching staff to reconsider what it means to be ‘professional,’ encouraging a broader, more inclusive understanding of professionalism that resonates with individuals’ lived experiences. By illuminating overlooked areas within the curriculum, experts by experience enrich the educational experience, challenging both students and faculty to reexamine conventional perspectives and deepen their critical engagement with the material.

Finally, it is essential to recognize that teaching staff often draw on their own experiential knowledge in shaping their approach to research, teaching and service. However, identifying effective ways to make this knowledge visible without reducing colleagues solely to their experiences remains challenging. Striking this careful balance is crucial for fostering a culture where experiential knowledge enhances the curriculum while supporting the professional growth and well-being of all involved.

4.5 Wider context — Focus on co-teaching

The historical foundations provide the basis for the current practices of the Department of Special Needs Education at Ghent University.

Maria Wens, the first professor of Orthopedagogics at Ghent University, founded a medical-pedagogical consultation centre for children with behavioural and emotional difficulties in 1942. Professor Wens and her predecessors were convinced that science and research should begin with practical experiences and, therefore, be closely connected to the orthopedagogical practice. In the 1960s, the first students began working in the so-called 'laboratories'. An increase in the number of students put pressure on this way of working, resulting in a search for new ways to incorporate practice.

Eric Broekaert, Maria Wens' successor, was the founder of the first Therapeutic Community in Belgium (De Kiem, °1976) and a key figure in the establishment of a cooperation between De Kiem and the Department of Special Needs Education from Ghent University. Professor Broekaert introduced the concept of 'plays'. Based on a script, experts by experience, with or without their family members, shared their stories as part of the therapeutic process. He extended the concept of experiential knowledge to other target groups (self-advocates, parents of a disabled child, etc.) and to research under the guise of 'co-creation'.

In the 1990s, various conferences for and by individuals with (intellectual) disabilities took place. Driven by Professor Geert Van Hove, Onze Nieuwe Toekomst ('Our New Future'), the only self-advocacy movement in Flanders, was established. Self-advocates together with students of Geert Van Hove jointly developed a vision on coaching based on the needs of individuals with (intellectual) disabilities. This cooperation marked the beginning of a structural collaboration between the Department of Special Needs Education and Onze Nieuwe Toekomst.

Subsequently, parents of children with disabilities expressed their questions, fears, and uncertainties regarding inclusive education. They felt the need to connect with other parents. Profs. Geert Van Hove and Elisabeth De Schauwer were the driving forces behind the creation of Ouders voor Inclusie ('Parents for Inclusion'), solidified the collaboration between the parent organization and the Department of Special Needs Education and contributed to the establishment of Steunpunt voor Inclusie ('Support Center for Inclusion') as a point of contact for parents of children with disabilities.

Thanks to these influences, experiential knowledge has become indispensable in the education and research of the Department of Special Needs Education.

Institutional frameworks often fail to adequately support the inclusion of experiential knowledge. A key issue is the lack of a shared understanding of what experiential knowledge entails, making it difficult to define the roles and contributions of experts by experience.

Successfully incorporating experiential knowledge into higher education requires a nuanced and flexible approach that facilitates its meaningful integration into curricula and institutional practices. This involves identifying key reference points that articulate the diverse interpretations, perspectives, and applications of experiential knowledge. These reference points might include conceptual frameworks, illustrative case studies, and guiding principles that reflect the diverse interpretations and perspectives of experiential knowledge. By providing these tools, institutions can create accessible pathways that enable teaching staff, students, and experts by experience to engage with experiential knowledge in a cohesive and purposeful manner. This clarity and structure ensure that its value is both recognized and effectively integrated into academic and professional contexts.

Small barriers, big impact - The obstacles experts by experience face at Ghent University

Despite the long-standing tradition of embedding experiential knowledge within the Department of Special Needs Education at Ghent University, experts by experience still face various barriers today. These barriers range from minor to more significant obstacles. One such small yet impactful barrier is the access badge. This badge grants all paid and volunteer staff access to the department. However, not all experts by experience have one, meaning they are often required to register before being granted access. This seemingly minor procedure significantly affects the mobility of experts by experience and their sense of being welcomed within the department. (Photo taken by a member of Our New Future)

Successfully navigating institutional systems, adapting to their complexities, and fostering a sense of belonging requires considerable time and effort. A thoughtful, collaborative approach is necessary—one that embraces diversity, fosters flexibility and promotes a shared understanding between academic institutions and experts by experience. By co-creating adaptable frameworks, both parties can ensure that experiential knowledge is integrated meaningfully into educational practices that are continuously adapting to evolving educational needs and societal contexts. Developing a shared language is crucial for fostering mutual understanding and collaboration, ensuring the successful embedding of experiential knowledge within the educational framework. The diversity of experiential knowledge and the variety of methods for integrating it into academic curricula are both inspiring and essential. They contribute to the creation of an inclusive educational environment that values and welcomes multiple forms of experiential contributions. In fields such as social work, establishing connections between research, education and practice is particularly important. Experiential knowledge plays a significantly role in enhancing this connection, enriching the development of a comprehensive educational framework.

By addressing institutional barriers, developing comprehensive frameworks and valuing the unique contributions of experts by experience, higher education can create a more holistic and inclusive learning environment. These efforts flesh out the interplay between theory and practice, enriching their connection rather than merely bridging a gap. This dynamic integration ultimately enhances the educational experience for all involved, fostering deeper understanding, practical relevance and critical engagement.



Photo 9: Small barriers, big impact - expert by experience

4.6 Co-teaching methods and theories

Interactive learning – Co-teaching Pedagogy of Social Inclusion with experts by experience at the University of Milano-Bicocca

The teaching methods used in the ‘Pedagogy of Social Inclusion’ lessons, co-facilitated with experts by experience, were designed to be interactive and engaging for both students and the experts by experience.

The initial lessons for each of the three topics focused on the experts by experience sharing their personal experiences. These narratives were enriched by stimulus questions by the lecturer, highlighting pivotal moments in their stories. This approach fostered dialogue and interaction between the stories of the two experts by experience, creating a dynamic learning environment.

These narratives were complemented by more structured presentations delivered by the two teachers, the Cooperative representative, and the experts by experience themselves, using slides to reinforce key concepts and reflections drawn from the shared experiences.

In the second lesson of each topic, the focus shifted to student-centred activities, such as group discussions, poster creation, photovoice projects and art-based exercises. In these sessions, the experts by experience took on supportive role, working alongside classroom tutors to assist the student groups by answering questions and providing guidance.

This blend of personal storytelling, collaborative exploration, and creative methods ensured a rich and inclusive learning experience that connected theoretical concepts with lived experiences.

Co-teaching is a dynamic and multifaceted pedagogical approach that extends beyond the mere sharing of personal stories or insights. It positions experiential knowledge not as supplemental testimony but as a core element of the curriculum. This method actively involves experts by experience in shaping both educational content and teaching practices, fostering a more equitable and inclusive learning environment.

The effective implementation of co-teaching requires careful consideration of several factors and practices. Integrating multiple sources of knowledge through co-teaching demands time, collaboration and alignment between teaching styles. It involves meticulous planning and the use of diverse interactive methods to create an engaging and inclusive educational experience. Central to this process is the development of a genuine partnership between co-teachers, characterized by both shared and distinct responsibilities throughout the course.



Photo 10: To make space for the lived experience - researcher

Photo 11: work is progress - teacher

The engagement of experts by experience within co-teaching operates on a spectrum, allowing for varying levels of participation. Their involvement does not necessitate their presence in every session or all aspects of lesson planning. By incorporating their perspectives into the design of lessons and educational tools, educators can enrich the learning process while preserving flexibility. This approach ensures that their contributions remain meaningful without overburdening the experts or diminishing their role to a tokenistic presence.

Nevertheless, the role of experts by experience can become ambiguous when their input is valued yet they are excluded from shaping the established learning objectives. To amplify their impact, it is crucial to invest in capacity building and equip them with the necessary knowledge and methodological tools, enabling them to navigate the complexities of the academic system effectively.

While co-teaching is a valuable strategy for integrating experiential knowledge, it represents only one of many possible methods. Other impactful approaches include storytelling, living libraries, imaginative workshops, role play, case studies, podcasts, cartoons, film fragments, reflective writing, interactive teaching techniques, shared presentations, and collaborative group work. By adopting a diverse range of methods and maintaining adaptability, higher education institutions can effectively embed experiential knowledge into their curricula.

Co-teaching should not be regarded as inherently superior to other participatory teaching methods. A testimony, when rooted in equality and quality, can hold as much educational value as co-teaching. In all cases, it is essential to avoid instrumentalizing experiential knowledge, ensuring that its inclusion respects the voices and agency of those who share it.

4.7 Course content

From planning to practice: Matching teachers and experts by experience at the University of Ostrava

The co-teaching process at the University of Ostrava begins with an annual weekend dedicated to the development of co-teaching activities, involving experts by experience and teaching staff. During this weekend, co-teaching methods and materials are collaboratively designed and refined. At the start of the academic year, the co-teaching opportunities are introduced to all Faculty members at a joint meeting. Experts by experience are then paired with teachers based on the alignment of their expertise with the topics covered in the courses. By the time the academic year begins, the co-teaching method is developed and ready for implementation.

Deciding whose voices to highlight and which stories to share is a complex and nuanced challenge. A key strength of co-teaching lies in its potential to amplify the voices of individuals whose lived experiences are often marginalized or undervalued in traditional academic settings. However, it is equally important to acknowledge that not everyone with lived experiences is in a position to share their story. Ethical considerations must guide every step of this process, even when individuals express a willingness to share their experiences.

Furthermore, not all stories are suitable for public sharing; some are deeply personal and better kept private. The distinction between public and private narratives is critical. Public stories are crafted for a wider audience and often highlight impactful experiences that resonate broadly, while private stories remain intimate, intended for personal reflection rather than public discourse. Public narratives, however, incorporate elements of private experiences.

Ensuring that experts by experience retain full control over their narrative is paramount. Teaching staff must remain vigilant to prevent exploitation or tokenism, striving to authentically and respectfully represent both the shared stories and the broader insights gained through a metaperspective. By thoughtfully navigating these considerations, co-teaching can become a transformative platform that honours diverse voices, fosters inclusivity, and values

4.8 Knowledge creation

When laughter becomes a lesson: Challenging perceptions at the University of Applied Sciences and Arts Ghent

During a communication skills course, Ielde (expert by experience) is teaching alongside a colleague. At one point, the conversation takes an unexpected turn. Ielde recalls a moment from her time in psychiatry: “I remember, during my stays in psychiatry, how we met up in the smoker’s area and laughed with the staff.” Suddenly, one of the students stands up, visibly upset, and says, “Madam, why are you laughing at or with the people who want to help you?”

This moment sparks a deep reflection. Initially, Ielde wonders if she may have been too blunt, potentially shocking the students. However, she later expresses a sense of relief that the issue was raised. “If I had been less direct, I might have danced around it and I wouldn’t have said that sometimes we do laugh at those who take care of us and imitate them.” This honesty becomes the foundation for a meaningful conversation.

For Ielde, it is crucial for students to understand that wanting to help does not automatically equate to actually helping. She also values the student’s boldness in speaking up. “It’s something many care providers think but don’t say. He voiced it, even though he lacks the language that is ideal for social workers.” This exchange ultimately turns into a pivotal learning moment for the students, where both challenging assumptions and developing critical communication skills are at the forefront.

Embedding experiential knowledge into higher education serves several critical purposes. Primarily, it aims for fostering a more useful and equitable approach to knowledge and professional development. The involvement of experts by experience significantly enhances the authenticity of the learning environment by fleshing out the connection between theory and practice. Concrete stories and lived experiences render academic concepts more tangible and relatable for students.

Experiential knowledge promotes a multi-voiced approach within the academic setting, incorporating diverse perspectives that enrich the learning experience. The interaction among various viewpoints broadens vision, uncovers blind spots and fosters deeper insights for both students and teaching staff. This shift is crucial for recognizing the need for social change and understanding the cultural and structural dimensions of oppression.

Furthermore, experiential knowledge contributes to the professionalization of the curriculum and teaching staff. This professionalization arises from synthesizing various sources of knowledge, creating learning opportunities for all involved. Through co-teaching, the exchange of expertise between academic staff and experts by experience has the potential to drive curriculum innovation, ensuring it remains relevant, inclusive, and responsive to real-world challenges.

Sharing experiential knowledge, especially narratives rooted in social disadvantage, offers both the storyteller and the listener an opportunity to reinterpret and reframe these experiences. This process fosters a crucial reflective process for the development of education professionals. This knowledge challenges students to critically analyse and understand the complexities of roles and theories in practice, equipping them to navigate the intricacies of their future professions.

Integrating experiential knowledge into the curriculum sheds light on invisible disadvantaging processes, encouraging students and teaching staff to confront these realities. However, the commitment to addressing inequality extends beyond the academic sphere. It requires a transformation from being passive witnesses of disadvantage to becoming active participants in combating these inequalities, in close collaboration with experts by experience.

5. Conclusion

The integration of experiential knowledge into higher education through co-teaching offers both valuable opportunities and significant challenges.

Co-teaching, which involves collaboration with experts by experience, represents a transformative shift in education. By honouring lived experiences, it contributes to a more inclusive, reflective, and equitable learning environment. Co-teaching enriches learning by deepening the connection between theoretical concepts and their practical application. Involving experts by experience infuses authentic and diverse perspectives that not only strengthen students' critical thinking but also foster their professional development. Moreover, co-teaching has the potential to drive social change, cultivate empathy and challenge prevailing societal norms.

However, successfully implementing co-teaching requires careful planning, mutual respect, and open communication among all involved parties—students, teaching staff and experts by experience. Academic institutions must evolve their frameworks to ensure that these collaborations are fully supported, with experiential knowledge being recognized and valued in the educational process.



Photo 12: perspective is power - teacher

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